THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRUNEI DURING THE BRITISH RESIDENTIAL ERA

1906 - 1959:

A SULTANATE REGENERATED

Being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOUTH-EAST ASIAN STUDIES

in the University of Hull

by

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October 1985

A B S T R A C T

The revival of Brunei, after centuries of seemingly-irreversible decline, dates from January 1906, when Mr MSH McArthur assumed office as the first British Resident in the Sultanate. In this study it will be shown how a moribund, bankrupt and isolated backwater, troubled by internal disaffection and living under a Brooke 'sword of Damocles', was regenerated by more enlightened British administration, coupled later with the fortuitous discovery of petroleum, into a peaceful, flourishing and prosperous little State, the '*Shangri-la* of the East' (*Tunku* Abdul Rahman, 1958).

Originally the initiative rested firmly with the imperial power: but after the Second World War the balance shifted towards an increasingly literate and healthy local population. British administrators, instead of initiating policy (as formerly) found themselves obliged increasingly to react to demands made upon them by an emerging Brunei nationalist movement led by the charismatic *Sheikh* Azahari. In the end, however, it was the monarchy which was most strengthened during the Residential Era; and it was overwhelmingly to the crown, rather than to the people, that power was transferred when Brunei regained internal autonomy on 29 September 1959.

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The correct captions to photographs 2.1 and 8.2 are as written above. There are minor errors in the captions to the corresponding photographs between pages 556 and 557.

ABBREVIATIONS

abd	abdicated.
AD	Christian dating system.
AH	Muhammadan dating system (beginning 622 AD).
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations.
ASPC	Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company (Shell).
b	born.
BA	British Adviser.
BAR	*Brunei Annual Report*.
BAS	Brunei Administrative Service.
BBCAU	British Borneo Civil Affairs Unit 1945-6.
BBC WAC	British Broadcasting Corporation's Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park.
BBMAG	*British Borneo Military Administration Gazette*.
BCG	Bacillus of Calmette and Guerin.
BGA	Borneo Garrison Army (BGA).
BGG	*Brunei Government Gazette*.
BMA/BB	British Military Administration/British Borneo.
BMDAR	*Brunei Medical Department Annual Report*.
BMJ	*Brunei Museum Journal*.
BMPC	British Malayan Petroleum Company 1922-56 (renamed BSPC).
BNBC	British North Borneo (Chartered) Company.
BPB (*Barip*)	*Barisan Pemuda Brunei* (Brunei Youth Movement).
BPU	Borneo Planning Unit.
BR (B)	British Resident (Brunei).
BREOGC	Borneo Rubber Estates Owners' Guarantee Company.
BSPC	Brunei Shell Petroleum Company (1957-date; formerly BMPC).
c	*circa*
CAB	Cabinet Series (PRO).
CAO	Civil Affairs Officer (BMA/BB).
CBC	Central Borneo Company.
CCAO	Chief Civil Affairs Officer (BMA/BB)
Ch	Chinese

CO	Colonial Office.
cr	created.
CUP	Cambridge University Press.
d	died.
DCL	Doctor of Civil Law.
DDFB	Daily Digest of Foreign Broadcasts (BBC WAC).
DDT	dichloro diphenyl trichloroethane.
Def Sec	Defence Secretary.
DK	Darjah Kerabat, Darjat Kedua (Brunei Family Order, Second Class).
DKDP	Darjah Kerabat, Darjat Pertama (Brunei Family Order, First Class).
DPMB	Dato Paduka Makhota Brunei (Crown of Brunei Order, Second Class).
DO	District Officer.
DSLJ	Dato Seri Laila Jasa (Brunei honour).
DSNB	Dato Setia Negara Brunei (Brunei honour).
DSO	Distinguished Service Order.
50 CAU	Fiftieth Civil Affairs Unit.
FMS	Federated Malay States (Pahang, Perak, Negri Sembilan and Selangor).
fn	footnote.
FO	Foreign Office.
Gov	Governor.
HC	High Commissioner.
HM	His/Her Majesty.
HMOS	Her Majesty's Overseas Service.
HMS	His/Her Majesty's Ship.
ITC/ITS	Island Trading Syndicate (1900-11), renamed Island Trading Company (1911-57).
IWM	Imperial War Museum.
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malayan (later Malaysian) Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
JSBRAS	Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
JSEAS	Journal of South-East Asian Studies.

lbs	pounds (weight).
m	married/million.
MC	Military Cross.
MCS	Malayan Civil Service.
MHM	Mill Hill Missionary.
MP	Member of Parliament.
MSIA	Malay States Information Agency (London).
n.a.	not available.
n.d.	no date.
NKPM	Nederlandsche Koloniale Petroleum Maatschappij.
no	number.
OAG	Officer Administering the Government.
OB	Order of the Bath (in ascending order: CB, KCB, GCB).
OBE	Order of the British Empire (in ascending order: MBE OBE CBE KBE/DBE GBE).
OMG	Order of Saint Michael and Saint George (in ascending order: CMG KCMG/DCMG GCMG).
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Companies.
OSS	Order of the Star of Sarawak.
OUP	Oxford University Press.
para	paragraph.
PHBS	Sultan Hassanel Bolkiah Medal.
PJK	Pingat Jaya Kebaktian ("a medal for meritorious service issued by some State Governments" - Mr LHN Davis CMG, letter to the author, 2 March 1985, paragraph 4).
POAS	Pingat Omar Ali Saifuddin (Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin III Medal).
PRB	Partai Rakyat Brunei (Brunei People's Party).
PRO	Public Record Office (Kew).
PWD	Public Works Department.
r	reigned.
RC	Roman Catholic.
RCS	Royal Commonwealth Society.
RHO	Rhodes House, Oxford.
RHS	Royal High School.

RVO	Royal Victorian Order (in ascending order: MVO LVO CVO KCVO GCVO).
$	Straits Dollar (renamed Malayan Dollar after the Second World War) - the currency of Brunei, 1906-59, when its value was fixed at 2s 4d (or $0.12).
SACSEA	Supreme Allied Commander South-East Asia.
SCAO	Senior Civil Affairs Officer (BMA/BB).
SCS	Sarawak Civil Service.
SEAC	South-East Asia Command.
Sec (to HC)	Secretary (to High Commissioner).
SG	Sarawak Gazette.
SMB	Seri Makhota Brunei (Crown of Brunei Order, Third Class).
SMJ	Sarawak Museum Journal
SOL	Sarawak Oilfields Limited (associated with the BMPC).
SPDK	Member, First Grade, Order of Kinabalu (Sabah).
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.
SPMB	Seri Paduka Makhota Brunei (Crown of Brunei Order, First Class).
SRD	Services Reconnaissance Detachment.
SS	Straits Settlements.
SSAC	Sarawak State Advisory Council (London).
SWPC	South-West Pacific Command.
TNKU	Tentara Nasional Kalimantan Utara (National Army of Northern Borneo).
UK	United Kingdom.
UMS	Unfederated Malay States (Brunei, Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis and Trengganu).
USA	United States of America.
WHO	World Health Organization.
WO	War Office.

GLOSSARY

adat	customary law.
amanat	will (i.e. final testament).
amok	run amuck.
atap	roofing, especially of thatch.
Barisan Pemuda Brunei	Brunei Youth Movement (political party founded just after the Second World War).
Batu Tersilah	genealogical tablet.
belian	type of timber.
beri-beri	disease caused through lack of vitamin B.
bilal	muezzin (man who makes the call to prayer).
blukar	secondary jungle.
bubu	cage (type of fishing method).
bumipatra	indigene.
Capitan China	Headman of the Chinese part of the population.
chandu	prepared opium.
chegu	form of address (abbreviation of inche, Mr, and guru, teacher).
cheteria	"a major order of traditional noble officials ranking beneath the wazirs". *
chettiar	money-lender.
daerah	district.
dagang serah	forced trade tax (abolished 1906).
dato/datuk	"an element in traditional titles; also used modernly as an equivalent to 'Sir'". * In this work dato is used to indicate a Brunei honour, datuk an honour from one of the Malaysian States.
Dato Di-Gadong	Resident headman of Tutong district.

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* Definitions marked with an asterisk are derived from DE Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate (Brunei 1970), pp 206-10.

Dato Hakim	Malay judge.
fitrah	Muslim religious poll tax payable, subject to exemptions on the grounds of poverty, at the rate of one gantang of rice for every two members of each household.
gahara	child of Sultan, wazirs or cheteria when the mother is of pengiran (noble) rank.
gantang	"a gantang of rice is equivalent to about 8 lbs" (An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, Vol. 5: The Far East (HMSO 1955), p 109.
getah	rubber latex.
haji/hajjah	one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.
hakim	judge.
hamba	servant, follower, slave. *
hukum kanun	Muslim administrative law. *
hukum sharia	Muslim religious law.
ijma	consensus (of Muslim scholars).
imam	leader of prayer in a mosque.
inche (or awang)	Mr.
istana	palace.
Jawatan Abu Bakar	one of the pehin (see Brown, op.cit., pp 114-5)
jelutong	"a kind of wild rubber tree" (its rubber is used in making chewing gum, the timber is valuable).
jungkat	a method of fishing.
kajang	palm frond used in roofing, baskets, mats and bags.
Kalimantan Utara	'Northern Borneo' (title used by the Partai Rakyat to designate Brunei, Sarawak and North Borneo).
kampong	village.
Kampong Ayer	'River Village' (Brunei Town).
kathi	Muslim religious judge.
kati	catty (16 tahils or 1.33 lbs).
kelekati/kelekatu	flying ants.
Kempeitai	Japanese Military Police.
kerajaan	appanages (land and serfs) of the crown (abolished 1906).

Kesatuan Melayu Brunei	Brunei Malay Union.
ketua	village elder.
khatib	reader and preacher in a mosque.
kilong	type of fishing equipment (deep water trap).
Koran	'Recital' (of Allah to the Prophet Muhammad).
kuripan	appanages (land and serfs) of a wazir (abolished 1906).
lapau	Sultan's audience hall.
lauk	materials cooked for consumption with rice.
makan tahun	the annual feast of the Kedayans.
masuk Melayu	to 'enter the Malay race'.
Mentri Besar	Chief Minister.
merdeka	independence.
mudim	muezzin.
mukim	parish; area served by one mosque.
mui tsai	(Ch) "little sister", Chinese household 'slave'.
nibong	tall tufted palm.
nobat diraja	royal orchestra.
ondong-ondong	traditional written law of Brunei.
Orang Bukit	'Hill People'
Orang Kaya	"literally 'rich man', a common element in non-noble titles of office". *
padang	plain, playing field.
padi	paddy, rice in the husk.
padian	traditional fish market in Brunei Town, dating at least as far back as 1521 and having died out only in the past decade. The women hawkers, who operated from their boats, were characterized by their broad-rimmed hats.
Partai Rakyat Brunei	Brunei People's Party (founded 1956; won 90% of poll in August 1962 election; outlawed following revolt of December 1962).
pehin	"a non-noble of sufficiently high rank to have been inaugurated with chiri, sacred formula". *
penghulu	headman.
pengiran	a 'noble'.

Pengiran Anak	"the title of non-gahara sons of Sultans, of Sultan's daughters, of all children of the Pengiran Di-Gadong other than his eldest gahara son and at least of all remaining gahara children of wazirs" (i.e. other than those just mentioned and those children entitled Pengiran Muda). Brown, op.cit., p 24.
Pengiran Bendahara	highest-ranking wazir.
Pengiran Di-Gadong	second-ranking wazir (post vacant 1900-68).
Pengiran Muda	"title used for sons of the Sultan and Pengiran Bendahara and for the eldest son of the Pengiran Di-Gadong if their mothers are noble (i.e. if the sons are gahara)". Brown, op.cit., p 24.
Pengiran Pemancha	third-ranking wazir.
Pengiran Shahbandar	highest-ranking cheteria, but of similar status de facto as a wazir.
Pengiran Temenggong	fourth-ranking wazir (post vacant 1885-1967).
pengkalan	landing place.
pertolongan	tax imposed on the occasion of a birth, marriage or death in an overlord's family (abolished 1906).
pikul	100 katis (133 lbs).
prahu/perahu	boat.
pulai	an inferior wild rubber.
pulau/pulo	island.
punkah	fan.
quiyas	analogical reasoning.
raja	ruler, noble.
Rajah Isteri	Consort of a Sultan.
Rajah Muda	heir to the throne (Sarawak).
rakyat	people.
Ranee	Consort of a Rajah of Sarawak.
ronggeng	"dance with singing in pairs".
rotan	rattan (cane).
rumbia	sago palm.
sago/sagu	sago.
Sahabat Pena	'Penpal Friendship' (friendly society, 1930s).
saisat	political activity.

sarong	skirt.
selesilah	genealogy.
sha'er	a poetic form. *
sheikh	a Muslim title. *
silat	traditional sword dance.
sireh	betel vine.
Sunna	Way of the Prophet Muhammad.
tahil	1⅓ ounces.
tahun hijrat	Muslim calendar year (Anno Hegirae, AH). The months are as follows: Muharram, Safar, Rabiul-awal, Rabiulakhir, Jamadilawal, Jamadilakhir, Rejab, Syaaban, Ramadan, Zulkaidah & Zulhijah.
tanah	land, soil.
Tengku Ampuan	title of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin's mother.
Tentara Nasional Kalimantan Utara	National Army of 'Northern Borneo'.
terusan	channel.
tongkang	sea-going barge.
towkay	Chinese businessman.
Tuan Muda	Second son of a Rajah of Sarawak.
tugu	a type of fishing net.
tulin	private hereditary property, land and serfs (abolished 1906).
tunku	prince.
ulama	theologians.
ulu	upriver district.
ulun	domestic servant/slave.
wazir	"the four highest noble officials beneath the Sultan".*
Yang Dipertuan	'Overlord' (crowned Sultan).
zakat	'purification' (Muslim religious tax) - a 5% tithe paid by padi-growers and when collected applies to people who grow more than 400 gantangs of rice (per annum, presumably).

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Introduction

This attempted thesis comprises an enquiry into the development of Brunei during the British Residential Era, which lasted from 2 January 1906 until 29 September 1959. There was an interlude between December 1941 and June 1945, when the country came under illegal Japanese wartime occupation, followed by thirteen months (June 1945 to July 1946) of British military administration.

The installation of Mr MSH McArthur (1872-1934) as the first British Resident in 1906 remains a fundamental point of departure in the history of modern Brunei, marking the conclusion of a prolonged period of decline which had begun in the sixteenth century and seemed certain to culminate in Brunei's disappearance from the map of nations. Having at one time controlled the coastal areas of north-west Borneo and the southern Philippines (including Sulu), Brunei on the eve of the Residential Era had been reduced to a small, rump State entirely surrounded by Sarawak except along the coast. The country's subsequent regeneration under British administration is the subject of this work.

2. Sources

Already available are several excellent studies of Brunei's virtual partition before 1906;[1] and essential to any understanding of

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1. See bibliography (p 657ff, below), especially the work of CN Crisswell, G Irwin, N Tarling and LR Wright.

modern Brunei is DE Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate (1970). There is, however, no study dealing specifically with the Residential Era.

The present writer has been denied permission to use the Brunei Museum's archives.[2] This thesis, therefore, is based principally upon the original departmental files available in the Public Record Office, Kew. Further source material of a primary nature has been found in a number of libraries, namely Rhodes House (Oxford), the National Newspaper Library (Colindale), the Royal Commonwealth Society, the Foreign Office Library, the Imperial War Museum, and the BBC Written Archives Centre (Caversham). A third quarry of information was provided by the living testimony of people connected with the Residential Era. Fourthly, there are various published eye-witness accounts, such as Peter Blundell, The City of Many Waters (1923). The author, properly called Mr Frank Butterworth (1875-1952), was engineer and then manager of the outch factory in Brunei Town (1901-13). Finally, there are items in fictional form, notably Mr A Burgess, Devil of a State (1961).

There are, on the other hand, certain difficulties with regard to source materials which leave some blank spaces. First, almost all sources are of British origin. Secondly, only the more important matters were referred to Whitehall; hence even those files are not so complete as the student would wish. (The principal reason for this, however, is

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2. PA Haji Awang Chuchu (for State Secretary, Brunei) to Dr DK Bassett, SUK/BH.44/51/82, 17 November 1983. Permission to consult the Brunei Museum's archives was denied "in view of the Government policy at the moment".

that little of internal political importance occurred in the Sultanate until the last few years of the Residency; before then there was mostly routine administration unhampered by vociferous nationalist agitation). Nor were there any newspapers in Brunei until the appearance, in late 1953, of the weekly Borneo Bulletin. In addition, the Malay population long remained overwhelmingly illiterate, so that their opinions have not been recorded (at least before the advent of the Partai Rakyat in 1956). Finally, much remains to be discovered about the Japanese interlude. (1941-5). The student of history, however, can learn only so much as the past is willing to yield up.

3. Acknowledgements.

Although this thesis has been researched, written, typewritten and photostated by the present writer; and although responsibility for all errors - whether of fact, interpretation, typewriting or photo-copying - remains mine alone; nevertheless I am delighted now to pay tribute to many people for their assistance whilst the work was in progress.

I am grateful to the British Social Science Research Council for the financial support which made this research possible.

A great number of individuals have been kind enough to offer their academic expertise, or personal recollections of the Residential Era, or personal papers, or photographs (or various combinations of all four): Sir AF Abell KCMG DKDP (SCS), Haji Zaini Ahmad (PRB), Mr E Banks (SCS), Mr ER Bevington CMG (HMOS), Mr JG Black (MCS), Professor DE Brown,

Mrs Carrie C Brown, Rev AS Budgett, Major GS Carter DSO (SOL/SRD), Mr L Chin PBS AMN PPB (Curator, Sarawak Museum), the late Dr LJ Clapham CBE (Colonial Medical Service), Mr J Cook CBE (Colonial Agricultural Service), Datuk RJF Curtis PJK (MCS), Mrs M Daubeny, Mr LHN Davis CMG (MCS), PW Ellis, Dr OE Fisher MD (Malayan Medical Service), Mr HL Fountain (SOL), Mr JO Gilbert CMG (SCS), Mrs P Gilbert, Mr A Gilmour CMG (MCS), JT Hayward, the late Professor R Heussler, Tan Sri Datuk AHP Humphrey PMN CMG OBE (MCS), Mr WM Johnson (SOL), Professor AR Maxwell, Sir JC McPetrie KCMG OBE (CO), Sir WBL Monson KCMG CB (CO), Mr R Nicholl MA (Brunei Museum), Dato Sir WJ Peel Kt DSLJ DSNB (MCS), Datin Lady R Peel, Mr EE Pengilley ED (MCS), Rev DR Rawlins, Mr AJN Richards (SCS), Rev Fr J Rooney (MHM), Mr P Scanlon (SCS), Tan Sri Dato' Dr M Sheppard PSM DJPD JMN CMG MBE, Mr BE Smythies (Colonial Forestry Service), Datuk RN Turner SPDK CMG (MCS), Rev Fr P de Wit (MHM) - now deceased, and Mr MH Wood (MCS). The present writer certainly has several hefty files bulging with letters; and so, to all these people - some of whom, for no reward, have maintained a continuous correspondence for upwards of two years - and to one or two others who prefer not to be named, I remain especially grateful. As far as possible, every page in the text with a footnote marking a "letter to the author" has been seen and approved by the particular correspondent concerned.

A number of organizations have assisted the present writer with sundry enquiries: the Brunei Shell Petroleum Company, the House of Commons Library, the Malaysian High Commission, the Quotations Department of the Stock Exchange, and, finally, the Office of Who's Who.

I thank those who have granted permission to quote from copyright material in their control: apart from the correspondents just named, Sir JD Boles Kt MBE (Mss Pac s52 in Rhodes House, Oxford), Mr EB Elam (RHO: Mss Pac s62), Mrs D Macaskie (RHO: Mss Pac s71), Awang Matassim bin Haji Jibah (MA Thesis, University of Hull), Rev Fr AF Owen CJ (RHO: Mss Pac s103) and the Sarawak Foundation (RHO: Mss Pac s74 and Mss Pac s83).

For permission to reproduce copyrighted photographs, I am indebted to the following:

Number	Copyright Holder:
(a) Between pp xxvi and 1:	
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2.1 and 9.2	Mr JG Black.
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3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 4.1	HMSO.
3.4, 4.2, 4.3 and 5.1	Datin Lady R Peel.
4.4	Oxford University Press (N Tarling, Sulu and Sabah - OUP, 1978 - facing p 278).
5.2	Mr LHN Davis CMG
6.1	The British Library (no reply received from the Borneo Bulletin itself).
7.2	Dato Sir AF Abell KCMG DKDP.
8.1 and 8.2	Mrs P Gilbert POAS.
9.1	Sarawak Museum (negative number CG281).

I am grateful, also, to the University of Hull's photographer, Mr A Marshall, and the staff of the Photocopying and Photographic Department of the Brynmor Jones Library, viz. Vivien Peverley, Tilly Rogers, John Spencer and Sheila Sutherland.

I thank Miss Tonn Aelbers of East Leake, who kindly translated a number of articles from Dutch to English for me.

Finally, but by no means least, I am immensely indebted to Dr DK Bassett, who first suggested and then supervised this research project with meticulous thoroughness.

4. Minor Points

With regard to weights and measures, standard Malaysian and British Imperial units are used in this text.

In footnotes, all documentary references, unless otherwise stated, relate to archives held in the Public Record Office, Kew. For Foreign Office departmental records only, the page number given usually indicates the first page of the letter concerned (or the first page of the covering despatch in which the letter is enclosed), e.g. footnote 27 on p 26:

"27. FO 12/96 p 19ff, Mitchell to FO, No 4, 16 November 1896, para' 4".

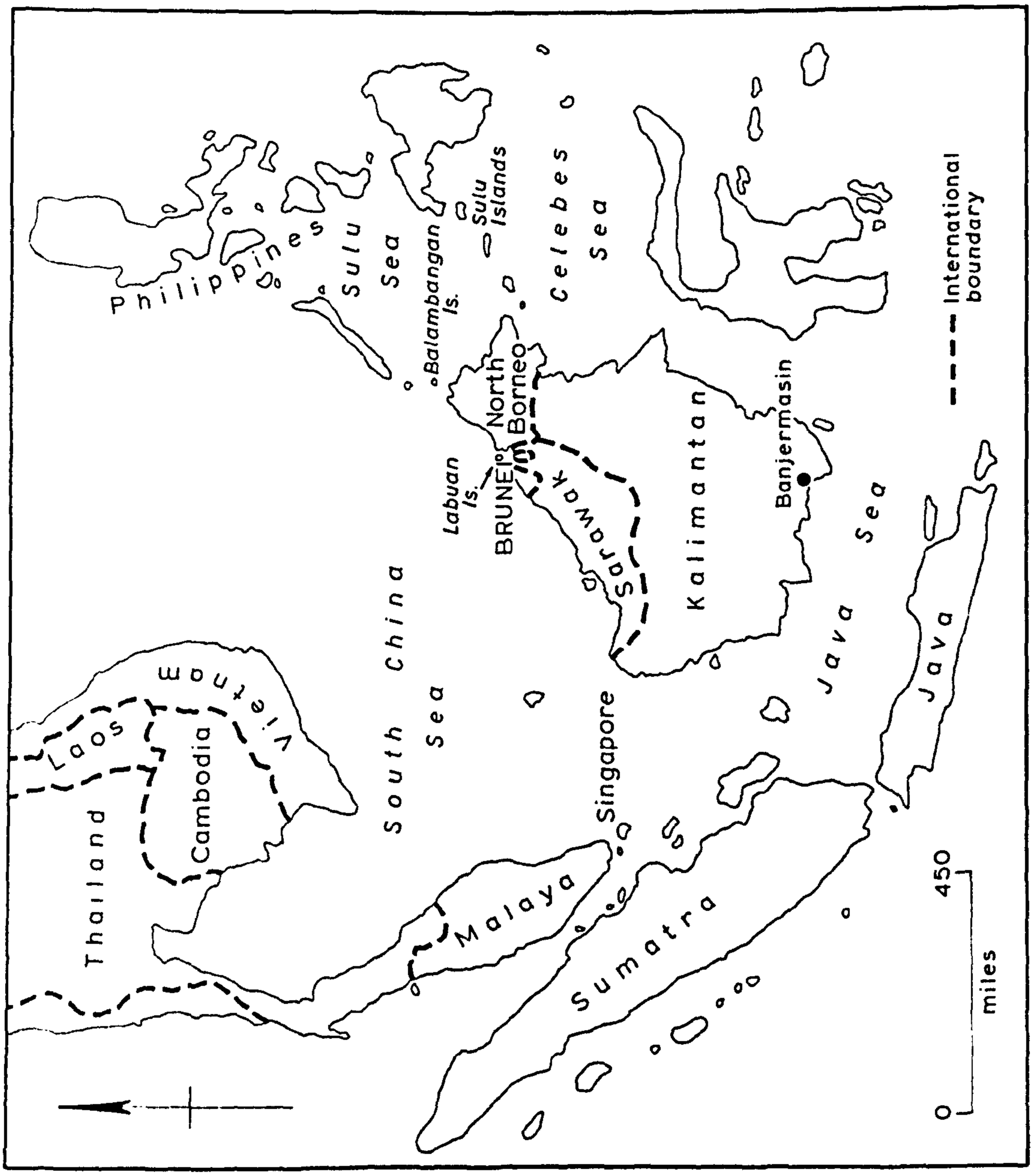
This means paragraph 4 of a letter from Sir Charles Mitchell to the Foreign Office, dated 16 November 1896, which begins on page 19 of FO 12/96.

A few spellings have been standardized throughout the text: e.g. Muhammad, Kedayan, Labu, Belait. Since 1970 Brunei Town has been known as "Bandar Seri Begawan".

Finally, where a date is marked c (circa, i.e. approximately), this refers only to the figure immediately following. Thus "c1866-1948" means "born about 1866, known definitely to have died in 1948".

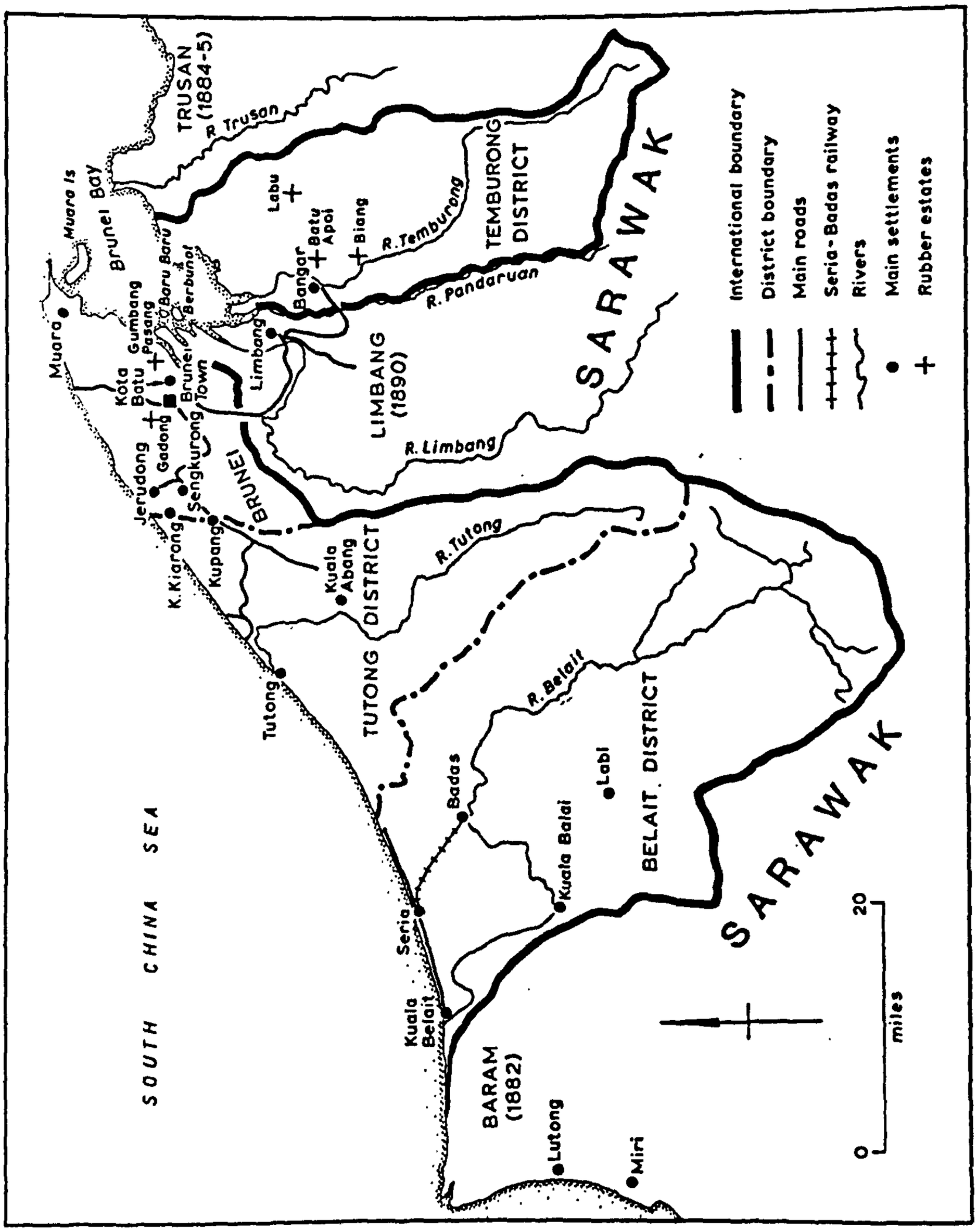
Map 1:

Brunei's Situation in South-East Asia 1906-59



Map 2:

Brunei in the 1930s





His Highness Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin in 1934

PART I: A 'DYING KINGDOM' REPRIEVED

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION (BRUNEI: LAND AND PEOPLE IN 1906)

1. Introduction

The installation of a British Resident in Brunei in 1906 marked a major point of departure in the history of the Sultanate, preserving the existence of what had been a 'dying kingdom' and paving the way for its subsequent regeneration. In this opening chapter it is necessary to provide a general profile of Brunei on the eve of the Residential Era. After describing the geography of the country, I shall examine its population in terms of numbers and distribution, ethnic groups, religion and occupation. Then, in the following chapter (No 2), I shall account for the British decision to accept responsibility for the regeneration of the moribund Bornean Sultanate.

2. Brunei: Geographical

The State of Brunei is a small, predominantly Muslim-Malay Sultanate, situated on the north-west coast of Borneo between latitudes $4^{\circ}2'$ - $5^{\circ}3'$ north and longitudes $114^{\circ}4'$ - $115^{\circ}22'$ east. Apart from minor adjustments, the State had been reduced to these limits by the beginning of the Residential Era.[1] The country is split by the Limbang

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1. The last major territorial loss was Limbang in 1890; but cession of interdigital 'rivers' (districts) within blocks already ceded continued - until 1902 (Merapok) in the case of North Borneo and until 1905

district of Sarawak into two separate strips of territory (see Map 1, above), with a combined area of 2,226 square miles. The larger, western wing contains three main riverine districts: from west to east, Belait (where an oilfield was discovered in 1929), Tutong and Brunei-Muara. The isolated eastern enclave extends along the Temburong Valley to the interior mountain range.

At the time of its forcible annexation by Sarawak (1890), Limbang district[2] - peopled by about one thousand families - had been the most valuable territory remaining to Brunei. Mr McArthur (the first Resident) regarded the district as an "integral part" of the Sultanate. The River Limbang (he pointed out) was the true river of Brunei Town itself:

"The waters of the so-called River Brunei are salt throughout their entire length. They are connected by a number of <u>terusans</u> or channels with the Limbang, and the main part of the town of Brunei is situated on an island thus formed. The direct mouth of the Limbang is spoilt by reefs and sand banks, and the channel is a long and devious one. In consequence of this, small boats...enter and leave the river on the Brunei side of <u>Pulau</u> Berembang (the island opposite Brunei Town)". 3

An earlier observer thought that "the valley of the Limbang is about as essential to the life of Brunei as the valley of the Nile is to that of Alexandria".[4] In short, Limbang was so closely entwined with the fortunes of the capital that no distinction was drawn between the one or the other: "Limbang is Brunei and Brunei Limbang", ran a local phrase. But

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(Lawas) in the case of Sarawak.

2. This theme is developed on pp 18, 19, 32-5, 38, 43-4, 49, 54, 76-82, 100-1, 104, 150, 164, 186, 325, 454 and 525 (below).

3. FO 572/39 MSH McArthur, "Report on Brunei in 1904" (dated Singapore, 5 December 1904), paragraph 18 - my addition in parentheses.

4. CO 144/64 (16254) Sir F Weld (1823-91) to CO, 20 June 1887, paragraph 6; also in FO 12/75 p 274ff. At this time Sir Frederick was about to retire as Governor of the Straits Settlements.

all efforts to regain control of Limbang have ended in failure; hence Brunei is not a neat, compact country.

In terms of physical relief, Brunei consists mainly of low, undulating hills, the only flat areas being along the coast and the major river valleys. The interior mountains vary from 1,000 to 3,000 feet in the north and east, rising even higher in the south and south-east. The vegetation is almost entirely tropical rain forest comprising trees, mostly dipterocarpaceae, up to 120 feet high. Peat swamp covers large areas along the lower reaches of the main rivers, and is separated from the coast by a thin belt of mangrove forest. As late as 1955 only 4% of the land area was used for agricultural or residential purposes.

The climate is equatorial. Seasons are not clearly-defined: it is always hot (80-90° Fahrenheit) and humid during the day, with heavy rainfall, much of which comes in thunderstorms, throughout the year. The country possesses, however,

"two great recommendations, in that there are steady winds throughout the day which help to temper the heat of the sun, and that the nights are cool, the temperature falling sometimes as low as 68° Fahrenheit". 5

Pre-Residential Brunei had no roads or railways,[6] only rough tracks used by the people in bringing their goods to markets held periodically at convenient pengkalans (landing places) near the centres of population. As a result all travel had to be by boat along the rivers or on foot. Communications between the capital (Brunei Town) and the outstations, therefore, was tedious and difficult, requiring a trek of

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5. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 4.
6. This theme is developed on pp 124, 185-7, 280-4, 299, 356-7, 439-42, 499, 537-8, 539 and 550 (below).

several days there and back, for reasons explained thus:

"The configuration of the country is such that Brunei may be likened to a hand, the outstretched fingers of which represent more or less parallel ranges of hills, the spaces between them forming the basins of the Rivers Belait, Tutong and Brunei. Travelling across country from one river to another necessitates the crossing of these hills and the traversing of swamps at their feet. In dry weather these present no great difficulties but in wet weather the swamps are almost impassable and recourse is had to...boat-shaped sledges drawn by buffaloes...Communication by sea, at least in small boats, from Brunei is equally unsatisfactory. The hundred or so miles of coast between Brunei and Lubok Pulai are most exposed. There is no shelter except the rivers, and, in a squall, their bars render them impassable. Were the Limbang, or even one bank of it, still under Brunei control, it would be easy, as in the past, to go by boat up that river, cross a very narrow range of hills and drop down at once upon the headwaters of the Tutong or the Belait. Failing this the most convenient way is by ship from Labuan (an island commanding the entrance to Brunei Bay)". 7

Contacts between the capital and the outlying areas, therefore, were rare; and the outstations tended to be oriented towards Labuan, then the natural trading centre for the whole State.

If there were considerable handicaps to internal travel, Brunei was equally isolated internationally. The sole link with the outside world in 1906 was a weekly steamship service from neighbouring Labuan (a British colony) to Singapore. Apart from a few hajis the people were untravelled: Sultan Hashim (r 1885-1906), for example, had never ventured beyond Labuan; and he had no diplomatic representatives overseas.

4. Brunei: Population[8]

The first census, taken in 1911,[9] revealed a mere 21,718

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7. Ibid., paragraph 137 (with my addition in parentheses).
8. This theme is developed on pp 251-3, 307-9, 525 and 537 (below). See also Appendix 6.1 (p 631).
9. CO 531/3 (34002).

inhabitants, of whom almost three-quarters lived in the capital and eponymous district (see Map 2, above). An unusual feature of Brunei's demography (for a country in SE Asia) was the high urban concentration. In 1911 Brunei Town contained 9,767 inhabitants, very nearly one in every two of the people then living in the country. This "malodorous, if picturesque" Kampong Ayer (River Village) lay "in the centre of an ampitheatre of hills" and was built "entirely over the water wherever mud-banks make it possible to erect a dwelling".[10]

A variety of ethnic groups (which present considerable difficulties of classification)[11] were represented in the country. In 1911 over half the people of Brunei were Malays, concentrated in Kampong Ayer, and a further quarter were Kedayans, found mainly in the surrounding area. Outlying districts were inhabited by various minority groups, sometimes confined to particular rivers, as suggested by their names: 'Tutongs', for instance. The ulu Temburong was inhabited by Muruts, whose numbers had been greatly reduced by disease and depredations.

The Malays formed the dominant political and cultural indigenous group. They appear largely to have been Borneans converted to Islam in the past half-millenium rather than Muslim Malay immigrants from elsewhere in the Archipelago.[12] Professor AR Maxwell comments that

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10. McArthur, "Report", paragraphs 4 and 23.
11. DE Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate (Brunei 1970), pp 3-10; and T Harrisson, "Origins and Attitudes etc" in SMJ 1958, pp 293-321.
12. AR Maxwell, Urang Darat: An Ethnographic Study of the Kadayan of Labu Valley, Brunei (Ann Arbor 1981) pp 158-9.

Table 1 Brunei: Population 1911-31

Census Category	1911	1921	1931
Malays	11,554	13,734	14,835
Kedayans	4,931	4,641	5,871
Tutongs	1,667	2,391	2,733
Dusuns	1,069	1,115	2,118
Belaits	1,097	449	446
Orang Bukits	-	580	-
Muruts	563	556	290
Dayaks	-	235	453
Javanese	-	150	165
Banjarese	-	38	40
Chinese	736	1,434	2,683
Indians	44	37	377
Europeans	20	35	70
Others	37	59	54
TOTAL	21,718	25,454	30,135

Note: Dusuns, Belaits and Orang Bukits were referred to collectively as "Bisayas" by Mr McArthur. Mr R Nicholl comments: "Orang Bukit is really an 'umbrella term' meaning simply 'Man of the Mountains', and could refer to quite a number of different groups. Bisayahs, Dusuns and Kadazans (the two latter really the same) all belong to the same family: they are the aboriginal inhabitants of north-west Borneo. They originally spread further inland, but were pressed towards the coast by the Kayans and Kenyahs, who came over from Indonesia..." (letter to the author, 8 July 1985, paragraph 4). Elsewhere Mr Nicholl adds: "The use of the word Malay can be deceptive. The Brunei Malays are most certainly not Borneans; all their legends and the available facts confirm their belief that they came from outside Borneo. Islamized Borneans, however, such as the Kedayans, refer to themselves as Malays, meaning Muslims. The Sarawak Malays trace their descent back to Sumatra, and are quite different again" (letter to the author, 27 May 1985, paragraph 5).

Sources: 1. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1911, p 11.
2. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1921, pp 7-8.
3. CA Vlieland, A Report on the 1931 Census and on Certain Problems of Vital Statistics (?London, ?1932), paragraphs 143 and 272; and CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1931, p 7.

*

"Over the last several centuries there has been a more or less steady flow of individuals out of the non-Islamic ethnic groups in areas surrounding Brunei Bay into the Malay ethnic category". 13

Kedayans, too, have expanded in numbers through intermarriage with non-Muslim Muruts. Today they have two foci of ethnicity: the more specific 'being Kedayan' and the more general 'being Malay'.[14] Their strong group identity as Kedayans was noted in 1904;[15] but today "any Kedayan will object to being excluded from the category 'Malay'".[16] Malays, however, are less likely to concede the point: in their view Kedayans are "not really Malays"; and even in 1969 PM Shariffuddin could comment that Kedayans were characterized by a disposition to

"keep to themselves and noticeably to (retain) their own vocabulary, customs and culture...(Their) habits and characters are quite distinct from those of the Brunei Malays". 17

To a certain extent, however, this passage may symbolize lingering Malay

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13. Ibid., p 170. Going back considerably further into the mists of time, Mr R Nicholl contends that Brunei Malays "are emphatically not Borneans", but originated as Funanese driven out of the Mekong Delta by Khmers in the late seventh century (letter to the author, 12 February 1985, paragraph 2). Presumably these people were converted to Islam much later on. In Mr Nicholl's opinion the Kedayans were the original inhabitants of Brunei: "I think there can be little doubt that the Kedayans are native Borneans, who have been acculturated by the Bruneis, who, being seamen and traders, needed somebody to grow their food. They were therefore associated with the Bruneis much more closely than any of the other native races. Their distinctive feature is that they do not use boats, but rafts, gaman, in which they resemble a race in the Philippines. Their agriculture is swidden cultivation (not wet padi) like all other Borneans, but there are more effective and produce a surplus...They always claim, and rightly, to be the original inhabitants of the country, as against the Bruneis, who are invaders" (letter to the author, 27 May 1985, paragraph 4).
14. Maxwell, op.cit., p 8.
15. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 33.
16. Maxwell, op.cit., p 186; see also pp 158-9.
17. PM Shariffuddin, "The Kedayans" in BMJ 1969, p 15.

disdain for a people formerly of subject status.[18]

Similarly, the Brunei Malay term 'Murut' is a (not entirely complimentary) label for the "pre-Malay population once widespread throughout Temburong district". Usually they refer to themselves as Lun Bawang, 'people of the country'.[19] Mr R Nicholl states, by contrast, that the Lun Bawangs "are recent arrivals: they appear to have come down the Trusan valley from the highlands only about the eighteenth century".[20]

These three groups - Malays, Kedayans and Muruts - are all linked symbolically in a common cultural heritage by Awang Semaun, one of the mythical founding fathers of Muslim Brunei as related in the epic poem, Sha'er Awang Semaun. It is agreed that he was a Murut, the youngest of fourteen brothers, who (the myth runs) conquered and rendered tributary to Brunei most of coastal Borneo. The brothers, originally pagan, were converted to Islam and their leader (Awang Alak Betatar) installed as the first Sultan.[21]

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18. CO 144/73 (34409) Mr AL Keyser (1856-1924) to Sir C Mitchell (d 1899), No 127, 21 October 1899, paragraphs 9-10; and DE Brown, op. cit., p 5. In an article currently in the press, however, Professor Maxwell argues that Kedayans should not be considered to have been of subject status in traditional Brunei society (typescript, 1984, courtesy of Professor Maxwell). By contrast, Mr McArthur commented in 1904 that "settlement outside the boundaries of Brunei means to Kedayans...freedom from the obligations of slavery" ("Report", paragraph 31).
19. Maxwell, Urang Darat, p 23; and information from Awang Eussoff Agaki.
20. Mr R Nicholl, letter to the author, 27 May 1985, paragraph 5.
21. Maxwell, op.cit., p 221-2; and Brown, op.cit., p 135. Dr C Hose suggested that the first Sultan had been a Bisaya (Natural Man - London 1926, p 22). Mr McArthur argued in 1917 that the small remnant of Brunei had remained intact because the pre-Residential Government had recognized the four districts as integral parts of the State which should not be alienated. Such considerations (he added) had not existed in the cases of Baram, Trusan and Lawas, which were inhabited by 'foreign'

Islam has been the established religion in Brunei since the foundation of the Muslim Sultanate in the early sixteenth century.[22] Malays and Kedayans were (and are) orthodox Sunni Muslims of the Shafi'i school.[23] Although nowadays Brunei is referred to as "strongly Muslim", historically-speaking the people had the reputation of being not very strict in the observance of their religion.[24] When the first British Resident assumed his duties in 1906, he found only one mosque, a wooden structure dating from 1902, which itself had been built with outside assistance.[25] In the case of Belaits and Tutongs, Islam was a "thin veneer" masking "essential paganism" as late as the 1930s.[26] Other indigenous groups were animists.

Pre-Residential Brunei diverged in some respects from the

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elements. (But Mr McArthur included the Trusan Muruts among these foreigners). CO 531/11 (10824) Sir A Young (1854-1938) to CO, 29 December 1917, paragraph 16. "The Sha'er Awang Semaun", Mr R Nicholl comments, "is a Brunei adaptation of the Legend of Fourteen Brothers, which is found over most of Borneo down to the Barito. Hence the characters vary with different races but the stories are always the same. Alak Betatar is almost certainly an adaptation of Alaka Batara (the seventh century founder of Brunei). In Malay silsilah it is normal to identify the founder of the State with the first Muslim ruler, hence Awang Alak Betatar (flourished c680) becomes Sultan Muhammad (flourished 1515)". Letter to the author, 27 May 1985, paragraph 6.

22. Aspects of this theme are discussed on pp 106-7, 128, 132, 136, 140-1, 145-6, 251, 325, 444, 474, 476, 500, 513, 514, 517, 519, and 542-5 (below).

23. Al Shafi'i (c767-820) was the founder of one of the four schools of orthodox Sunni Islam. By contrast, the distinguishing feature of the 'heretical' Shia Muslims - as in contemporary Iran - is attachment to an imam as the infallible leader of an Islamic community.

24. R Nicholl, "Relations between Brunei and Manila" in BMJ 1977, p 156; S Baring-Gould and CA Bampfylde, A History of Sarawak under its Two White Rajahs, 1839-1908 (London 1909), pp 443-5; P Blundell, The City of Many Waters (London 1923), pp 46, 102-3, 120 and 142. But cf. JS Carroll, "Berunai in the Boxer Codex" in JMBRAS 1982, Part 2, pp 4-11.

25. FO 572/37, p 32; and McArthur, "Report", paragraph 55.

26. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 4.

orthodox Muslim pattern. The rigid stratification system described by Professor DE Brown (including the subject status of the Kedayans), for example, appears to be at variance with the egalitarianism of ideal Islam. Similarly, the obligatory tax for Muslims, called zakat (purification) was not paid by Malays, whereas the poll tax, meant to be reserved to non-Muslims, was imposed on the Muhammadan Kedayans.[27]

As noted by Professor Brown, Malays and Kedayans performed complementary economic functions, viz. non-agriculturists and agriculturists respectively.[28] In 1906 many Malays of Kampong Ayer and along the coast were fishermen, their various techniques having been refined over the centuries. Fishing usually took place close to the shore of Brunei Bay, but sometimes Malays venture out to sea and it was a point of honour, despite the long pull against a strong current, to be the first to land for the market.[29]

The inhabitants of Kampong Ayer continued their multifarious activities much as if they were on land.[30] The capital was divided into several wards, each with its own headmen. Each group lived as a separate community, marriages (for example) being confined ideally to couples from the same ward. In 1906 there were at least eleven such kampongs, named usually after an eminent resident or by the trades of those occupying them. Most remarkable of all were the silversmiths and brassfounders. One side of the River Kedayan (a tributary of the River Brunei) was

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27. Fazl ur Rahman, "Islam" in Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol 12 (Chicago 1972) pp 663-71.
28. Brown, op.cit., p 5.
29. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 35.
30. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 1.

occupied by Malay money-lenders (the Koranic prohibition on usury notwithstanding),[31] the best-built and most flourishing quarter of the town. The women of Kampong Ayer ran a domestic weaving industry. The trade of the capital, which was mainly in Chinese hands, centred around a small island in the middle of the town, on which there were several "disreputable-looking plank, tin and atap shops".[32] Boat-building was ubiquitous because, on the one hand, rivers were the principal arteries of communication and fishing the main occupation, whilst, on the other, salt water reduced the useful life of craft: this necessitated a continual turnover. Malays generally disliked wage-labour, but such opportunities were available at the cutch works (1901-52) in the capital and at the Rajah of Sarawak's coal mines at Brooketon (1888-1924) and Buang Tawar (c1900-17).

The Malays of Brunei had no agricultural tradition and, at the beginning of the twentieth century had little knowledge of, and less interest in, the subject. The bulk of the farming population, therefore, was provided by the Kedayans and, to a lesser extent, the Bisayas and other pagans. They (the Kedayans) became "very influential in the capital because they supplied large amounts of rice and nearly all the fruit and vegetables consumed there".[33]

In 1911 736 Chinese were enumerated in Brunei.[34] Trading links

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31. NJ Dawood (translator), The Koran (Harmondsworth 1974), pp 194, 363-4, and 419; and R Roberts, The Social Laws of the Koran (London 1971), p 56.
32. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 23.
33. Maxwell, op.cit., p 107. For the Kedayans, see also, pp 30, 39 and 128-31 (below).
34. For the Brunei Chinese, see pp 40-2, 52, 159-62, 251-2, 307-9, 329-30, 336, 454, 463, 477-80, 541, 545-7 and 549 (below).

between the Celestial Empire and Borneo were of ancient origin;[35] and Chinese people had settled in Borneo since time immemorial.[36] They were noted pepper planters; but political instability in Brunei during the nineteenth century drove them away. Those Chinese who remained in Brunei on the eve of the Residential Era comprised many of the chief traders, shopkeepers, money-lenders and revenue-farmers in the Sultanate.

The three outlying districts - Belait, Tutong and Temburong, were sparsely-populated, largely unexplored and of little economic importance. The inhabitants bartered their jungle produce (sago and jelutong in particular) to Chinese traders who provided in return cloth, brassware, salt, tobacco and sundry goods. Tutong was unusual because it was a cattle-raising district. There were "extensive tracts" of padi land in both Belait and Tutong in 1904.[37]

With regard to character, Mr McArthur described the Bisayas as an "industrious and peaceable race" of proverbial honesty, pleasant to meet and

"free from that assumption of superiority which generally seems to accompany a mixture of Muhammadanism and ignorance and which makes it difficult to more than tolerate a Brunei Malay or a Kedayan". 38

It is true that the people lacked formal education: they were overwhelmingly illiterate (including Sultan Hashim).[39] They were also

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35. OW Wolters points out that indirect trade between NW Borneo and China via Indonesian ports had begun well before the seventh century AD (Early Indonesian Commerce - Ithaca, NY, 1967 - pp 175-6).
36. In about 1973 discovery was made in the capital of a Chinaman's tombstone dated 1264 AD.
37. FO 12/127 pp 148-9, MSH McArthur, "Notes on a Visit to the Rivers Belait and Tutong", 14 July 1904, paragraphs 8 and 10.
38. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 30.
39. The education theme is developed on pp 13, 197-8, 292-8, 325, 350-1, 357-60, 412-23, 484-5 and 548-9 (below).

susceptible to disease, such as the smallpox epidemic of 1904, which approximately decimated the population of the capital.[40] In cultural terms, they were particularly skilled in working gold, brass and silver and in weaving brocaded cloth.[41] Musically, Brunei was noted for its gongs,[42] pipers and nobat diraja (royal 'orchestra').[43] The country's cultural development had been impeded, however, by two main factors. First, Muslim religious sanctions ruled out representational art, novels, drama and instrumental music (although the use of drums was allowed on special festive occasions, such as weddings).[44] The main permissable forms of fine art were architecture and poetry.[45] But pre-Residential Brunei was too poor - and this is the second factor - to have any noteworthy architecture; nor were there any publishing houses. There were extant, however, several epic poems (sha'ers) - such as the Sha'er Awang Semaun, already mentioned, of which there are several versions - and royal genealogies (selesilahs). Another literary form in Brunei is the pantun, "a rhyming quatrain with inner assonance".

In Brunei there were discernable divisions between various sections of society: Muslims versus non-Muslims and rulers versus ruled. But there were also sub-divisions, such as Muslim Malays versus lower

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40. The development of the Brunei health service after 1906 is discussed on pp 192-6, 286-92, 331, 337, 344-5, 360-2, 432-35, 535 and 553 (below).
41. Brown, op.cit., p 27.
42. Blundell, The City of Many Waters, p 111.
43. PM Shariffuddin and Abdul Latiff bin Haji Ibrahim, "Nobat Di-Raja" in BMJ 1977, pp 7-21. For Bisaya music, see GC Davis, SMJ 1960, pp 496-8.
44. Fazl ur Rahman, loc.cit., p 669.
45. But cf. Dawood (translator), The Koran, p 208, where poetry appears to be outlawed.

status Muslim Kedayans; or Malay pengiran (noble) versus Malay rakyat (people). Another contrast lay in the structure of particular ethnic groups: the Kedayans, for instance, were more egalitarian than Malays, not showing a similar concern for rank and status.[46] There were also incongruous similarities: the pagan Bisayas, Muruts and Dusuns were all of subject status; but so, too, were the Muslim Kedayans.

5. Conclusion

In the foregoing discussion it has been seen that at the end of 1905 Brunei had been reduced to a small, bifurcated land of slender economic resources and few amenities, with a population uneducated and liable to be decimated by epidemic disease. The roots of a threefold division of labour which persisted throughout the Residential Era were already visible: Malays formed the dominant group culturally and socially; the Kedayans (and Bisayas) formed the bulk of the agricultural population; whilst the Chinese dominated non-European trade and business of the country. Having introduced the reader to the Sultanate, I shall now (Chapter 2) describe the political malaise in pre-Residential Brunei and account for the British decision to reprieve the moribund country; and, in subsequent chapters, I shall turn to the post-1906 regeneration of the State.

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46. Maxwell, op.cit., p 176.

CHAPTER TWO

A 'DYING KINGDOM' REPRIEVED

1. Brunei on the eve of the Residential Era

In January 1888 the third Marquess of Salisbury, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, observed that Sarawak and British North Borneo were "crushing out" the Sultan between them and that the process was continuing "with some rapidity". I think, he added, "we had better let them finish it" and not stand in the way of a "consummation which is inevitable and, on the whole, desirable".[1] This remained British policy until the eve of the Residential Era; but the United Kingdom was not prepared to impose this plan without the consent of the Sultan - and such consent, naturally, was never forthcoming.

Many observers agreed that the Sultanate's days were numbered if outside support could not be obtained. In February 1886 it was being "freely remarked" that, were it not for British influence, the Brunei throne "would not be worth a month's purchase".[2] Sir Charles Mitchell, a decade later, feared that "the existence as a State of this small remnant of the ancient...kingdom is drawing to its close".[3] Consul Treacher agreed that Brunei was "hopelessly decayed";[4] whilst his

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1. FO 12/78 p 151, minute by Lord Salisbury (1830-1903), 1 January 1888.
2. FO 12/69 p 38, Dr P Leys (1851-1922) to FO, No 6 (political), 6 February 1886, paragraph 16; also in CO 144/62 (9841).
3. FO 12/96 p 19ff, Sir C Mitchell (d 1899) to FO, No 4, 16 November 1896, paragraph 7; also in CO 144/71 (1338).
4. FO 12/97 p 160, NP Treacher (c1853-1901) to Mitchell, 29 November 1897.

successor added that if Brunei remained in its present condition "it is only a question of time before it dies out from internal decay and ceases, as a separate kingdom, to exist".[5] The actual phrase, 'a dying kingdom', however, is taken from the title of an article published in 1902 by Sir Hugh Clifford, who had just visited Brunei in what he supposed to be its "last disgraceful moments".[6]

There are four main reasons for suggesting that pre-Residential Brunei was moribund: all but a small remnant of its territory had been lost; the country was bankrupt; disaffection was general in the out-districts; and the powerful Rajah of Sarawak (Sir Charles Brooke GCMG) was restrained from delivering the final blow only because the Sultanate enjoyed the status of a British Protectorate. Certainly, the threat to Brunei's continued existence was obvious to its own rulers.

To discuss these points in greater detail, traditional Brunei had suffered massive losses of territory during the nineteenth century. The general impression was one of economic and political decline, although the extent to which Brunei had declined or simply been overtaken by a more dynamic western world is debatable. In 1839 Mr James Brooke arrived in Borneo. Two years later the Sultan of Brunei recognized him as Rajah of Sarawak, then the westernmost province of his realm. During the remainder of the century Sarawak asserted its independence and expanded its territory north-eastwards along the coast towards and

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5. FO 12/99 p 303, AL Keyser (1856-1924) to FO, No 4, 25 December 1898, paragraph 30; also in CO 144/73 (5120).
6. Macmillan's Magazine (May-Oct 1902), p 106.

beyond Brunei Town. In December 1846 the island of Labuan, which commanded the entrance to Brunei Bay, was ceded to the British Government. In 1878-81, North Borneo, a block of territory north-east of Brunei Town, was acquired by the forerunners of the British North Borneo (Chartered) Company, the latter being founded in 1881. Rivalry between the second Rajah of Sarawak and the Chartered Company (which administered North Borneo) led to a "scramble for Brunei"; this was the rapid "crushing out" of the Sultan which had attracted Lord Salisbury's attention in 1888. The most grievous blow to Brunei came in 1890, when the second Rajah forcibly annexed Limbang, the true river of Brunei Town; the loss of this district was "the final step towards the ruin of Brunei".[7] The Sultanate - increasingly poor, lacking armed forces of its own, and with a divided tribal population, some of whom welcomed the new European rulers - was unable to resist this process of partition.

Concomitant with Brunei's territorial decline was the country's approaching bankruptcy. When Mr McArthur first arrived there, the Sultanate appeared to be entering its final crisis. In return for ceding each particular district, the monarch and nobles accepted annual payments, called cession money. Being an easily negotiable form of property, the pengirans did not hesitate to dispose of their annuities for many years in advance and often sold them outright for a lump sum, which was quickly swallowed up by the chiefs' retainers. Income from trade monopolies and other sources having been mortgaged in the same way,

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7. FO 572/39 MSH McArthur, "Report on Brunei in 1904", paragraph 83.

Sultan and pengirans had come "practically face to face with beggary".[8] As they became less credit-worthy, moreover, money-lenders demanded increasingly extortionate rates of interest.[9] In the past starvation had been deferred by further cessions of territory; but by 1905 little remained to be alienated.

This loss of territory had two main consequences. First, Brunei lost its richest areas, such as Sarawak Proper (antimony), Muka (sago) and Limbang (whence the people of the capital derived their subsistence). Secondly, as territorial encroachments gathered momentum, taxation in Brunei's remaining districts necessarily became more concentrated, prompting popular disaffection, for example in Belait and Tutong, especially from 1899. Mr McArthur thought that approximately half the people of those districts had emigrated in the ten years before 1904, whilst the remainder of the inhabitants were kept peaceable only "by the idea which prevails among them that the country is soon to be merged in Sarawak".[10] (This issue is discussed in greater detail in the next section).

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8. CO 144/77 (20118) Mr G Hewett (1859-1932) to FO, No 9 (confidential), 10 April 1903, paragraph 4. (NB. No cession money was received for Limbang. The occupation of this district by Sarawak was never recognized by Sultan Hashim).
9. In March 1904, for example, the Jawatan Abu Bakar - a "non-noble" Malay official - in return for a loan to the Sultan of $800 - demanded and obtained a full surrender of the Trusan cession money of $4,500 annually. The Sultan's sons, to whom the annuity should have eventually come, objected to the transaction; and a separate document was signed by the Jawatan agreeing that, if in 24 months the Sultan repaid $1,705 (representing the loan plus interest), the deed of surrender would be null and void. (FO 12/126 p 163, McArthur to Sir John Anderson, 1858-1918, No 31, 11 August 1904, paragraph 4).
10. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 30.

Brunei was threatened, not only by its own internal decay, but also by a far stronger outside power (Sarawak) poised to annex the Sultanate. Sir Charles Brooke's occupation of Limbang, coupled with his *de facto* possession of various places along the River Brunei (Muara Damit, Berembang and Kota Batu), which he tended to treat as parts of Sarawak, already gave him a stranglehold on Brunei's capital itself; and the British Protectorate over Brunei alone prevented him from delivering the *coup de grâce*, for it was often admitted that he "would only have to send one ship to Brunei to enforce the acceptance of any terms he chose to offer, unless His Majesty's Government intervened to stop his action".[11] Even if the Sarawak threat had not existed, however, Brunei's internal decay would have been "sufficient to destroy it".[12]

This was painfully obvious to the Brunei rulers themselves. In February 1885 they had engaged to make no further cessions of territory "as long as the sun and moon exist".[13] Their poverty, as well as the persistence of their acquisitive neighbours and the lack of support from the United Kingdom, rendered it impossible for them to live up to their good intentions; but the acceptance of a British Protectorate in 1888 was a further indication that Sultan Hashim looked to the British Government to preserve his ancient Sultanate and dynasty. By 1904 it had become clear, even to the people of Brunei, that a country "cannot long retain its independence when the maximum of taxation has been

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11. *Ibid.*, paragraph 129.
12. *Ibid.*, paragraph 101.
13. CO 144/60 (6946) *Amanat* (Will) of Sultan Abdul Mumin, 20 February 1885.

reached without satisfying the wants of the ruling class".[14] The Brunei chiefs, for their part, feared that

"the Rajah will not be satisfied until he has absorbed the whole of Brunei, and they would be willing to make substantial concession to any suggestion of control by the British Government rather than that opportunity should be left to the Rajah to further extend his sphere of influence at their expense". 15

As late as the 1960s the role of the British Government in preserving the Sultanate, albeit at the eleventh hour, was not totally unappreciated in Brunei.[16] It should be remembered, however, that without support from HM Government, Sarawak and British North Borneo could neither have become established nor survived. If no British presence had been maintained in NW Borneo, on the other hand, Brunei might have fallen instead to the Dutch or another imperial power; it seems most unlikely that the Sultanate could have escaped entirely from colonialism.

If it is granted that pre-Residential Brunei had reached the final stage of degeneration and could not have survived as a separate State without outside assistance, the allegations of misrule may now be discussed; and, in the third section, I shall explain why the moribund country was granted a reprieve in 1905-6.

2. Misrule in the Dying Kingdom

The principal reason for the United Kingdom's decisive inter-

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14. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 135.
15. CO 273/310 (33426) HC Belfield MCS (1855-1923) to Anderson, 5 June 1905, paragraph 32; also in FO 12/128 p 449.
16. Information courtesy of Professor DE Brown.

vention in 1905–6 was a feeling that it had a duty to reform the unsatisfactory administration existing in the Sultanate in order to ameliorate the lot of its people; and that the solution least unacceptable to the inhabitants was a Residential System. It is impossible to assess the allegations of misrule without an understanding of the traditional political system; and it is to this that I shall now turn.

Brunei's political system in particular and other Malay political systems more generally have been treated respectively by DE Brown and JM Gullick.[17] Hence only a sketch is necessary here. The two most important features were (a) advice of the monarch by <u>pengirans</u>; and (b) district administration based on river systems.

The principal role of the Sultan, as Head of State, was to ensure that the rights of others were not infringed. More positively, he was the "'pillar of the State', who controls the Government founded on Muslim and customary law".[18] He exercised the limited functions, principally revenue-collection, of central government, conducted foreign relations, symbolized the unity of the State and provided legitimacy for a political system which gave power to others. The monarch was by no means a despot; although appointing most officials, he was obliged not to take decisions of State without first consulting the four <u>wazirs</u> (senior ministers), some of whose seals were necessary to validate important documents. The <u>wazirs</u> comprised, in descending order of rank,

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17. DE Brown, <u>Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate</u> (Brunei 1970); and JM Gullick, <u>Indigenous Political Systems of Western Malaya</u> (London 1965).
18. Brown, <u>op.cit.</u>, p 100.

the (Pengirans) Bendahara (responsible for internal administration), Di-Gadong (treasurer), Pemancha (mediator of the State Council, an advisory body to the Sultan) and Temenggong (chief judge and military leader). For some years before the Residential Era, these duties had been largely nominal. After 1900, moreover, only the posts of (Pengirans) Bendahara and Pemancha were filled; and their occupants were described as old men who took no interest in their duties,[19] a refrain common throughout the Residential Era. The other two posts were left vacant, partly because Sultan Hashim could not afford to forego the ministerial revenues; and partly because he wished to deny ministerial power to rivals.[20]

Traditional Brunei government was personal rather than bureaucratic. The country had none of those institutions associated usually with government: it had no regular armed forces, no police, no salaried officers, no public buildings (except the wooden mosque), no coinage and only the "semblance" of a judicature. Pre-Residential Brunei consisted instead of an "aggregation of small and semi-independent fiefs acknowledging one head". There was "no Government in the usual acceptance of the term - only ownership".[21]

District administration (chiefly revenue-collection) was based on the ownership of land and 'serfs'. There were three types of tenure: kerajaan (crown), kuripan (ministerial) and tulin (private) property. Apart from the Chinese and most Malays, the people were 'serfs' belonging

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19. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 12.
20. In fact Brunei had a complete hierarchy of traditional officials, described in detail by DE Brown, op.cit., pp 105-18.
21. McArthur, "Report", paragraphs 8, 54 and 55.

to the particular owner of the district in which they lived. Kerajaan and kuripan lands were appanages of office held respectively by the monarch and wazirs (kuripan property reverting to the crown during a ministerial vacancy). Tulin rights were held by nobles rather than by ordinary people; but the revenues had often been mortgaged to Chinese money-lenders.

The monarchy was extremely weak: Sultan Hashim possessed "no real power except over his own districts and people" because he was unable "by constitution and custom" to interfere with the internal administration of other domains. In 1904, indeed, he himself admitted that he possessed insufficient power to compel obedience to his orders even in his own capital.[22] The sole prerogative which he retained over kuripan and tulin owners was the right to veto any proposed cession of territory to a foreign power. His consent was rarely withheld, however, because such transactions entitled him to claim a fee (traditionally $2,000) for attaching his chop.

Further instability was created by the nature of the succession, which did not follow primogeniture, but was a matter in which many parties believed that they had some right to determine the outcome.[23] A reigning monarch, however, traditionally had the right both to nominate his own successor and to appoint the wazirs, although he might not remove them once they had been installed. The choice of successor also required the approval of the State Council. Before a Sultan could be installed in office as Yang Dipertuan (crowned Sultan) he had to prove his abilities

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22. CO 144/78 (33750) McArthur to Anderson, No 32, 14 August 1904, paragraph 2.
23. Brown, op.cit., p 102.

to the satisfaction of the wazirs and rakyat (people). During the nineteenth century not all Sultans were able to achieve such consensus; and even in the twentieth there were long delays, not explained entirely by the monarchs' minority, between succession and coronation.

Sultan Hashim was in a particularly weak position. His succession in 1885 was disputed by his two leading ministers, the Pengirans Bendahara and Di-Gadong, who blamed him for the murder, during the royal faction struggles of the 1840s, of their father, Pengiran Tajudin, and other members of the pro-Brooke faction of that day.[24] His position was weakened further because these rivals, as powerful as himself, had inherited the personal wealth of the late Sultan Abdul Mumin (r 1852-85). In addition, he was threatened by unrest in several rivers and by an unsympathetic British consul in Labuan, who, declaring him "practically helpless", devised a scheme, adopted (as a plan) by Whitehall, whereby Brunei would have been partitioned completely by its two neighbours.[25] Finally, there was some doubt whether Sultan Hashim was really the son of Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin II (r 1824-52).[26]

Friction between Sultan Hashim and the wazirs persisted throughout his reign; and he was unable to impose his authority. Hence in 1896

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24. CO 273/154 (21539) Sir Hugh Low, Journal entry for 15 September 1888; also in FO 12/78. See also CN Crisswell, "Pengiran Anak Hashim's Role in Brunei Affairs Prior to his Accession to the Throne in 1885" in SMJ 1977, p 43.
25. FO 12/69 p 38ff, Dr P Leys to FO, No 6 (political), 6 February 1886, paragraph 15; also in CO 144/62 (9841).
26. S Runciman, The White Rajahs (Cambridge 1960), p 187. This story (that Sultan Hashim was not really the son of Sultan Omar) is discounted by Dr Crisswell: loc.cit., p 42.

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the High Commissioner argued that had His Highness been served by ministers of better quality and been less poor, his reign might have been less unfortunate.[27] In the absence of support from his ministers Sultan Hashim - nominal ruler of a country he was "unable to govern" - had to look elsewhere for advice, which further outraged the _wazirs_, who owed their position to their birth. At first he turned to two Malay commoners, _Inche_ Mohsin and _Inche_ Buyong,[28] and subsequently to the manager of the cutch works, Mr Roberts, whom he appointed _Dato_ (Sir) with a seat on the State Council. In 1905 it was reported that since His Highness was "unwilling to trust any of his chiefs", he had latterly depended "almost exclusively" upon the help of Mr Roberts.[29] An interesting clause in the Island Trading Syndicate's (cutch) lease suggests that Sultan Hashim may have looked to the company itself to provide a counterweight to the _wazirs_.[30] In 1899, indeed, Consul AL Keyser had proposed to bolster Sultan Hashim's authority by deposing the three existing _wazirs_ on the theory that the Sultan, had he possessed sufficient power, would have been a just ruler, whereas his fear of offending his ministers prevented him from following the course which he knew to be right. The

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27. FO 12/96 p 19ff, Mitchell to FO, No 4, 16 November 1896, paragraph 4; also in CO 144/71 (1338).

28. _Inche_ Buyong (b ?1861), Sultan Hashim's secretary, was a Singapore Malay, "refined in manner and plausible of tongue", but he had spent some time (1883) in Labuan gaol for embezzlement (CO 144/57: 7395 and 7961). He was described as a good servant to the illiterate Sultan. _Inche_ Mohsin (?1875-?1900/1), possessed of "a certain shrewd cunning", was the son of _Inche_ Muhammad (d 1890), the former British consular agent in Brunei.

29. CO 273/310 (33426) Belfield to Anderson, 5 June 1905; also in FO 12/128, p 449. (Edmund Roberts, c1866-1948, manager of Brunei cutch works, 1900-5. Director of Public Works, Brunei and Labuan, 1906-21).

30. Clause 13: "...the ITS professes good friendship to the said Sultan ...and...shall render (him)...all lawful assistance when required".

wazirs, the consul argued, needed to be replaced by younger and more loyal chiefs.[31] Although the High Commissioner ruled this out as "quite unjustifiable" interference in Brunei's internal affairs, it foreshadowed the policy actually pursued by the Residents after 1906: first to establish an effective central authority; and, secondly, to bolster the prestige of the monarch at the expense of the wazirs.

Specific allegations of misrule, to which I shall now turn, may be divided into two categories, viz. cases affecting (i) indigenous inhabitants and (ii) outsiders living (or working) in Brunei.

(i) Brunei Taxation Methods and Indigenous Disaffection. The main grievances of the rakyat in the outdistricts included the rapacious actions of tax collectors; excessive taxation; abduction of women as concubines; confiscation without good cause of agricultural produce and plantations; and inability to obtain redress from the government. Of these charges, those concerning taxation methods are most susceptible to analysis; hence I shall confine my remarks here to that topic.[32]

Pre-Residential Brunei had no earmarked State revenue as such, the income from a particular district belonging to its owner. From a

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31. CO 144/73 (34409) Keyser to Mitchell, No 119, 10 October 1899.

32. The other complaints were not without foundation either. To give two examples: (1) in 1900 Sultan Hashim remarked that the loss of Limbang had impoverished his 'nobles' because they could no longer take slaves from the district and sell them (CO 273/257: 25624); (2) confiscation of produce stifled incentive to production; conversely, when Mr Keyser established himself in Brunei Town, his house became a magnet, people setting up market gardens in the immediate vicinity, knowing that the Brunei authorities would be more respectful of their property in such close proximity to a representative of HM Government. (See also, Brown, op.cit., p 19).

chief's viewpoint, the bulk of income was used for the maintenance of personal followers from whom he derived his political strength; the greater his retinue, the greater the deference which he might expect to his opinions. Conversely, if a chief was too poor to support his followers he would experience a decline in his influence.[33] In these circumstances a chief was limited in the amount of wealth which he might lavish on himself.[34] It was noted, for example, that although Sultan Hashim was accused frequently of extravagance, he was always short of cash, his palace was "a mere collection of ruinous hovels", his clothes were always "poor and threadbare" and his furniture "sordid and mean". The large sums of money which passed through his hands were "squandered by...followers" who traded on "the supineness caused by his great age".[35] Dr Gulliok points out that the most valuable resource of a Malay chief was the people he could tax; hence it was not in his interest to alienate them: and, since the inhabitants, as an ultimate sanction against over-harsh treatment, could migrate to another district where better conditions prevailed, a rough and ready balance existed between rulers and ruled.[36] In Brunei's case malcontents either fled across the border to Sarawak or appealed to the Rajah to annex their home districts.

In the outlying areas the basic levy was an annual poll tax, theoretically only two dollars for every adult male serf; but even

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33. An example is Pengiran Muda Muhammad Tajudin (d 1916), who was of royal descent on both sides and considered by many to be the rightful heir to Sultan Hashim; but his followers were "few and uninfluential" and his pretensions to the throne were unrealistic.
34. Brown, op.cit., p 66.
35. McArthur, "Report", paragraphs 64-5.
36. Gulliok, op.cit., pp 113 & 118-9.

a comparatively sympathetic witness described this as "merely the irreducible minimum, and a convenient basis for every other kind of exaction that the ingenuity of the owners can conceive".[37] These included pertolongan (benevolence on the occasion of a birth, marriage or death in the overlord's family) and dagang serah (forced trade tax). In the capital, by contrast, these impositions did not apply; revenue there was derived chiefly from monopolies, as discussed in due course.

Effects of taxation. Limbang district had a tradition of discontent and several instances are on record of tax gatherers being set upon. In mid-1884, for example, Pengiran Temenggong Hashim sent two of his agents upriver to collect taxes, which the people refused to pay, killing the messengers for good measure. Later the pengiran himself was fired upon. Following this there was a panic in Brunei Town, the people fearing that the capital was about to be sacked by head-hunting Muruts. Acting Consul Treacher, fearing that British trade (via Labuan and Singapore) would be interrupted, offered his services as a mediator; and by April 1885 he had arranged a truce and established a fairer procedure for tax collection.

The original object of the Limbang rebels was the elimination of abuses not the overthrow of Brunei sovereignty. Pengirans in the capital, moreover, were not entirely to be blamed for the excesses committed in their name. First, much of the difficulty had been that "lawless and rapacious" agents tended illegally to collect as much for

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37. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 93.

themselves as for their employers;[38] hence the Bisayas' insistence that taxes should be collected instead by local headmen who would forward the receipts to Brunei. (Headmen, being of the same race as the 'serfs', tended to be less cruel). Secondly, the Kedayans, who suffered little, had nevertheless joined the rebellious Bisayas, who bore the brunt of the taxation, in the hope of arranging even easier terms for themselves. Finally, in 1884, there was an extraordinary factor: the Pengiran Temenggong needed to raise extra cash to bolster his candidature to the throne. This explains why the Bisayas urged Mr Treacher to secure his immediate installation, thereby obviating the necessity for such additional taxation. (The acting consul established the principle of taxation by local headmen; but he declined to interfere with the succession).[39]

Similarly, a special exigency obtained in Belait and Tutong during the years 1899-1901. Unrest peaked at that time following increased exactions imposed to finance the long-lasting celebrations connected with a royal wedding. This was described as

"a baneful influence,...the direct cause of two rebellions (in 1899 and 1901), the pretext for robbery and extortion, the excuse for abduction and outrage, the source of conspiracy and murder, and the fons et origo of all the grossest results of tyranny and misrule". 40

The 1899 troubles broke out with the murder of the Pengiran

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38. Similarly, the case of Baram: see Map 2 (above) and Runciman, op. cit., p 177.
39. CO 144/58 (20895) and CO 144/60 (10318).
40. FO 12/114 p 98, Hewett to (High Commissioner) Sir Frank Swettenham (1850-1946), No 31 (confidential), 10 April 1901, paragraph 5; also in CO 144/75 (24405). NB: Another observer suggested that the marriage (between the Pengiran Bendahara's daughter and Sultan Hashim's grandson) was designed to heal the long-standing rift within the royal family, mentioned on p 25, above (McArthur, "Report", paragraph 64).

Bendahara's pertolongan tax-gatherers in Belait by the Bisayas, who were joined in an appeal for Sarawak rule by the Dato Di-Gadong (resident headman of Tutong), who was protesting against forced trade tax and demands for one hundred slaves and a boat of "almost impossible" dimensions. It was reported that both districts were "practically independent" and that any attempt by Brunei nobles to re-assert their authority would have been met by force.[41] After comparative calm during 1900, a recrudescence of violence occurred in Tutong early in 1901 following further attempts

"to exact contributions, in the shape of girls, buffaloes and anything that is of value towards the monstrous extravagance which has gone on unchecked for some two years now in connection with the marriage". 42

The "final strain" was the imposition of a tax on buffaloes of two dollars per head and the refusal of the people to pay.[43]

In the capital, by contrast, the inhabitants (predominantly Muslim-Malay) suffered from "no direct oppression". They were undoubtedly poor, their houses were often in disrepair and their surroundings squalid. The principal reason for their poverty was the system of trade and customs revenue monopolies, leased mainly to Chinese traders, which pushed up retail prices to such an extent that many goods sold in the capital (which depended on imports for almost all necessities) were "of an inferior quality" but cost "more than double what better kinds would

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41. CO 144/73 (24234) Keyser to Mitchell, No 88, 17 July 1899, paragraph 3; and CO 144/73 (34409) Keyser to Mitchell, No 127, 21 October 1899, paragraph 18.
42. FO 12/114 p 68, Hewett to Sir F Swettenham, 7 March 1901, paragraph 4; also in CO 144/75 (15738).
43. FO 12/114 p 98ff, Hewett to Sir F Swettenham, No 31 (confidential), 10 April 1901, paragraph 9; also in CO 144/75 (24405).

fetch in Singapore".[44] In 1900 Consul Keyser reported that the collection of these taxes was a source of "much persecution and injustice".[45] Poverty, and how to relieve it, indeed, was the keynote of all that was said and done in Brunei.

What was the extent of the disaffection? In the case of Limbang, Whitehall was under the impression that discontent was universal. This was based on the accounts of British consuls and of the Rajah of Sarawak. In 1890 the latter proclaimed that

"the principal chiefs of the Limbang River, after having for years suffered oppression from the Brunei Government and after having for the last five years maintained their independence against this oppression, have now decided to join the Sarawak Government and place themselves under its authority, in token of which they of their own free will and accord hoist the Sarawak flag in their river". 46

Elsewhere he declared that he based his annexation of the district

"principally on the will of the inhabitants...and their right to choose a protecting and ruling power, these people having maintained their independence against the Brunei Government since 1884 on account of the oppression and villany of various kinds of that Government". 47

During the years 1884-90 the Government of Brunei had been powerless in Limbang; their rights then "cease to exist and are null and forfeited".

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44. Other factors contributing to this poverty included large families, a preference for independence in earning a livelihood, and the loss of Limbang (which "pressed severely on those who depended on fishing and petty trading"). McArthur, "Report", paragraph 34.
45. He cited the case of Inche Mohsin, the tobacco farmer, who deliberately kept the article in short supply, so that he might fine the people who attempted to purchase it from a 'smuggler'. In this way, the tax farmer reaped a rich harvest from fines imposed for breaches of his monopoly; but many inhabitants were driven out of the capital. FO 12/111 p 58ff, Keyser to FO, No 23, 30 April 1900; also in CO 144/74 (17694).
46. FO 12/83 p 30, Rajah's Proclamation, 17 March 1890.
47. FO 12/87 p 354, Rajah to (High Commissioner) Sir C Smith (1848-1916), 30 January 1891; also in CO 144/68 (12133).

If so, why (in 1885) had Sir Charles described Dato Klassi, the leader of the Limbang rebels, as the "culprit"; and why had he complained that the latter's release from gaol, negotiated by Mr Treacher, had resulted in the loss of innocent Brunei lives?[48] Why had no reference been made in 1884-5 to the "oppression and villany" of the Brunei authorities in Limbang? And if, during the years 1884 to 1890 the Brunei Government had been "powerless" in Limbang, how could it have done anything to give the people there cause for complaint, necessitating the 1890 annexation by Sarawak?

It was argued in support of the Rajah's action that the Brunei Government had been unable to draw taxes from the district and that pengirans would benefit by receiving instead a fixed annuity from the Sarawak Government. In 1885, however, the first instalment of the rates, as revised by Mr Treacher, was sent to the capital, but was refused by Sultan Hashim until the rebels submitted. A Brunei source suggests that taxes were remitted in the three years before the 1890 annexation.[49] The majority of people, 75% according to Inche Muhammad (the British consular agent), had not joined the rebels and favoured a continuation of the Sultan's rule.[50] After the annexation Sir Charles himself

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48. CO 144/60 (8340) Sir Charles Brooke to FO, 26 March 1885.
49. CO 273/166 (9843) minutes of an interview between Acting High Commissioner JF Dickson and two Brunei envoys.
50. Ibid., Inche Muhammad to Dickson, 31 March 1890. NB. At the time Whitehall rejected Inche Muhammad's testimony, principally because it conflicted with reports from successive consuls and the Rajah; and partly because the word of a Malay was considered unreliable. In 1906 Mr McArthur agreed that the disturbances had been confined to "some isolated hamlets in the lower reaches of the river"; it would have been quite sufficient, therefore, had the Rajah been authorized to occupy the

conceded that

"some others, poor creatures, like to side with Brunei, perhaps to avoid paying revenue to Sarawak, others have of their own accord brought it in. I shall be very patient and allow small things to pass". 51

Even the Limbang headmen did not remain unanimously in favour of Sarawak for, in early 1888, it was reported that the pro-Brooke party had been reduced "by Brunei intrigues"; and, in 1892, two years after the annexation, over forty Limbang headmen and their followers pledged allegiance to Brunei. In 1887, indeed, the rebel headmen had requested a "queen's officer" (to which Sultan Hashim also agreed) and only "failing that" one from Sarawak; but at that stage the British Government was not prepared to intervene for financial reasons. Nor is there any evidence that the 'feudal' owners intended to sell their rights to Sarawak. Finally, the Sarawak flag was raised, not so much by the people of Limbang, as by the Rajah himself, who invaded the district on 17 March 1890, accompanied by a force of five steamers.

In 1884 the Rajah was in alliance with the Pengiran Temenggong in the hope that the latter would cede Limbang; but after his accession Sultan Hashim refused to do so. Hence he became a "monster".[52] By 1890 there had been two principal developments: first, Sultan Hashim was preparing to launch an expedition against the rebels; and, secondly, the rebel headmen were becoming increasingly isolated, hence their appeal to

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disturbed districts only and "not received as the prize of interference a very large tract of peaceful territory as well". (CO 144/80: 10206 McArthur to Anderson, 13 February 1906, paragraph 7).

51. FO 12/91 p 82, Rajah to Sir C Smith, 1 September 1892.

52. FO 12/79 p 149, Rajah to Sir J Paunoefote, 25 May 1888.

the Rajah to extricate them from their predicament. Dato Klassi, it was reported, "knows only too well that peace with Brunei means sooner or later his (own) execution".[53] In short, the Rajah had to act quickly or else forfeit his chance of taking the district; whilst the rebels faced a choice between bringing their revolt to a successful conclusion or paying for failure with their lives.

In the case of Belait and Tutong from 1899 the influence of Sarawak was added to the financial difficulties of the pengirans and the particular need for extra cash to finance the royal wedding. First, the Brooke State provided a point of reference by which the people of Belait and Tutong could examine their own situation. There were, moreover, in nearly every hamlet "men from Sarawak" who were continually contrasting Brunei and Sarawak methods (to the discredit of the former) and stirring up discontent. The real grievance was that each household had to pay up to $20 annually in various unpredictable exactions, whereas by custom (as still practised in neighbouring Sarawak) they should have paid only two dollars.[54] Since conditions in Sarawak were the yardstick against which those in Brunei were contrasted, it should be remembered that taxation was exceptionally low in the Brooke State and that the Rajahs, because of the smallness of their revenues, did equally little for their people in return.[55] There were accusations, also, that Brooke influence

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53. FO 12/74 p 145, Leys to FO, No 15 (political), 16 March 1887, paragraph 7; also in CO 144/64 (8070).
54. FO 12/126 pp 148 and 151-2, MSH McArthur, "Notes on a Visit to the Rivers Belait and Tutong (June 1904)", paragraphs 9 and 14.
55. Dr RM Pringle comments that the court of justice offered "the only

in Brunei rivers was not purely passive.

The impression of popular distress in Belait and Tutong, conveyed by Mr Hewett's reports in 1901, did not match the situation which greeted Mr McArthur three years later. Although the people complained bitterly of poverty and distress, and discontent was general, the actual conditions under which they lived did not appear to justify their statements. There were no signs of great poverty; on the contrary, every house was well-furnished, the people had ample food, and could even afford small luxuries. Either conditions had changed since 1901, or the victims of the reported misgovernment were blessed with short memories. The pro-Sarawak Dato Di-Gadong had been killed "by order of the Sultan"[56] in mid-1902, the buffalo tax had been allowed to lapse, and, after the wreck of his launch, the Enterprise, the Sultan had no easy means of communication with the two districts. The Orang Bukits had no special complaints (apart, presumably, from the extra poll tax). In Tutong, on the other hand, the Sultan (in 1904) collected head tax for three years in advance, enforced a fine of $2,000 in reparation for the 1901 revolt, and collected a further sum of $2.50 a head for the expenses of his son's funeral. His Highness had also ordered a tongkang to be built. Even so,

"It might certainly be urged, in answer to accusations of wanton cruelty so often made against the Sultan in respect of these people, that the River Tutong was admittedly in revolt four years ago; that the revolt was quelled - or, rather, died a natural death - after disorganizing the

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social service which the Brooke State consistently provided" (Rajahs and Rebels, London 1970, p 171).

56. Sarawak Gazette, 1 October 1902, p 203.

whole district for a year; and that the fine imposed by the Government on the re-establishment of authority is only now being paid. A wantonly cruel and rapacious ruler would surely have been less complaisant". 57

In other words, although there was justice in the Rajah's contention that the people of Belait and Tutong wished to be merged in Sarawak, they had, perhaps, less real grounds for complaint than suggested by Mr Hewett. In the event, the Rajah failed to acquire the two districts; and, by a further irony, Belait was discovered later to contain the bulk of the Miri-Seria oilfield.

Consul Hewett and the Rajah declared that the remedy for disorder in Brunei was the transfer of the troubled districts to the Brooke State. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the credentials of these witnesses, in order to assess the credibility of the proposed alternative. Before becoming consul in 1900, Mr Hewett had been a Chartered Company officer in North Borneo. In this capacity he had been partially responsible for the Kinabatangan massacre (130 dead) in 1890[58] and the firing and looting of the Inanam valley in 1897. In these circumstances allegations about "wanton murder...robbery...and outrage" levelled against the Brunei authorities by Mr Hewett ring somewhat hollow. When dealing with troublesome tribesmen in Sarawak, moreover, the Rajah adopted tactics similar to those which he alleged were being employed by Sultan Hashim, viz., the launching of expeditions and the looting and burning of houses of rebels. Indeed, far more bloodshed occurred in

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57. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 29.
58. ID Black, A Gambling Style of Government (Kuala Lumpur 1983), p 105; and AN Keith, Land Below The Wind (3rd Ed., London 1949), pp 201-9.

Sarawak (where such expeditions persisted annually even in the 1930s) than in Sultan Hashim's Brunei. The Rajah's claim that it was necessary for him to intervene in order "to prevent bloodshed", therefore, is equally inadmissible. Successive British consuls, however, applied a double standard: rebellion in Sarawak was an internal matter for the Rajah and none of their concern, whereas any disturbance in Brunei was followed by immediate demands that the Sultan should be relieved of control of the districts concerned. Sultan Hashim, for his part, asked "with inconvenient insistence why, if rebellions are a proof of misrule, the rivers in Sarawak on which they occur are not forcibly taken from ...(the Rajah's) control". 59

In the cases both of Limbang in 1884 and Belait-Tutong in 1899-1901, it was claimed that the Brunei rulers were unable to exercise authority; yet when the Sultan proposed to launch expeditions to subdue the rebels, he was restrained from so doing either by the United Kingdom or by the Rajah in order to prevent loss of life. In short, Sultan Hashim could not win, as Sir Frank Swettenham justly observed:

"If the Sultan does nothing when some petty chief makes trouble, His Highness is referred to as an effete and powerless <u>raja</u> who has no authority and should be removed to make way for a more vigorous ruler. When, on the other hand, the Sultan tries to please his neighbours by an exhibition of energy (no doubt very ill-directed) he is charged with being the cause of deplorable outrages". 60

Sultan Hashim possessed no police; hence the only way he could subdue a recalcitrant tribe was by playing off another tribe against it. Sir Frank suggested that the Foreign Office would have heard little about

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59. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 80.
60. FO 12/114 p 164, Sir F Swettenham to FO, No 16 (confidential), 14 October 1901, paragraph 3; also in CO 144/75 (41469).

Brunei "if it were not that Sarawak is on one side, the BNBC on the other and the British consul, having little to do, is inclined to dabble in matters which really do not concern him".[61] Similarly, another observer commented

"(It is argued that) Brunei to be improved must have the Sultan deposed and be entirely remodelled, and it is my opinion that this is neither necessary nor desirable, as, although his Government does little to improve matters, he at the same time does but little harm and some things attributed to him are not true, or are at any rate doubtful". 62

The observer? Sir Charles Brooke, who, on this occasion, having heard rumours that the British Government intended to appoint a Resident, was concerned to minimize the extent of misrule in Brunei in order to discourage this option: hence he tailored his arguments accordingly.

To summarise, discontent with Brunei government coincided with times of peak taxation, but most people (certainly in Limbang) remained quiescent and not all rebels (e.g. Limbang Kedayans) had good reason for discontent. The original aim of malcontents in Limbang was the elimination of excesses rather than (as in Belait and Tutong) the overthrow of Brunei sovereignty. Ironically, whereas Limbang was annexed by Sarawak, Belait and Tutong were retained by Brunei. The contrast with conditions in Sarawak aroused discontent; and Brooke influence may have been active rather than purely passive. As a 'control' consider those provinces of North Borneo visited by Mr McArthur in 1904 where there was

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61. FO 12/122 p 56ff, Sir F Swettenham to FO, No 15 (secret), 6 August 1903, paragraph 8.
62. CO 144/72 (3777) Rajah to FO, 24 October 1897. (Compare FO 12/105 p 40, Rajah to FO, 14 March 1899: "I trust that something may shortly be done to depose and pension off the Sultan...").

"far greater poverty and distress than in Brunei" and where the people were

"full of regrets for the 'happy-go-lucky' times of Brunei rule, when... though they might in some years have heavy calls made upon them, in others they were hardly molested at all". 63

Finally, it was suggested that the Sarawak takeover was equally unacceptable and that the Rajah was an unreliable witness.

Having assessed Brunei misrule as it affected the indigenous population, I shall now turn to the complaints of outsiders living or trading in the country.

(ii) The complaints of outsiders. One of the main duties of the British consul was the protection of British traders' interests in Brunei. By Article II of the 1847 UK-Brunei Treaty the Sultan had undertaken that British traders should enjoy "full and complete protection and security" for themselves and their property. The consuls, however, often received complaints about debts unpaid, goods seized, or shops looted; but the Sultan ignored their representations, unless backed by the presence of a gunboat.

In some instances, however, Sultan Hashim was treated unfairly by consuls, who failed to appreciate the limitations of his constitutional position. In 1885, for example, Sultan Abdul Mumin had died owing $1,200 to a Malacca baba,[64] Soh Eng Gin. Successive consuls attempted to obtain the debt from the new Sultan but without success. He refused to pay because he was not the late Sultan's heir and had no hand in the disposal

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63. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 105.
64. Baba: "Chinese born in Malaya".

of the cession money on the security of which the loan had been given. Mr Hewett took advantage of the presence of a gunboat to deduct the amount from cession money due to Sultan Hashim, even though those properly liable were willing to pay the debt by degrees. Governor Birch of North Borneo described the consul's proceedings as "quite unjust".[65] In a similar case, the Sultan was made to pay a debt because he was unable to compel the Pengiran Pemancha to do so. Mr McArthur commented:

"The curious constitution of the country makes the Sultan only supreme in name, and his position is so much a matter of accommodation with ministers as strong as himself that it seems unfair to expect him to risk an open breach with them". 66

Although the treatment of Chinese traders, especially during the 1901 troubles in Tutong, became the subject of much adverse comment, little substantial evidence was adduced to show that they had suffered "to any appreciable extent".[67] The Brunei attitude in these matters seemed to be that Chinese traders were wealthy enough and that this was sufficient reason why no attention should be paid to their complaints.[68]

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65. FO 12/120 p 160ff, EW Birch (1857-1929; KCMG 1911) to Sir F Swettenham, confidential, 11 September 1901.
66. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 42.
67. CO 144/75 (24405) Sir F Swettenham to Hewett, No 6 (confidential, Borneo), 3 May 1901, paragraph 5. In one instance $233.40 had been realized from the illegal auction of goods seized from two traders. This sum was recovered subsequently. Mr Hewett mentioned, also, that goods had been stolen from two other shops; and that one man had been summarily executed for no apparent reason by Pengiran Tajudin. Further, because of the loss of goods and buffaloes, and the impoverishment of the people trade would be a considerable time recovering when the disturbances ceased. (In one of these cases Mr Hewett conceded subsequently that the shop did not belong to a British subject). Previous consuls had also complained that Sultan Hashim was dilatory in securing restitution of lost Chinese property. Finally, there were occasional murders of Chinese traders.
68. CO 273/257 (25624) Sir Alexander Swettenham (1846-1933), Journal entry for Sunday, 17 June 1900.

Some British observers, such as Sir Frank Swettenham, took a similar view: if British subjects, he ruled

"choose to settle or trade in places which are notoriously unsafe, or where the administration is conducted as it is in Brunei, they do so at their own risk". 69

Another example of misrule, again arising out of poverty and decentralization, was a tendency to grant the same concession to several different people, leaving them to settle it among themselves. In most cases Brunei's rulers could do this with impunity, but <u>not</u> when they thus tricked Sir Charles Brooke, the most powerful commercial speculator in Brunei. In 1888, Mr WC Cowie,[70] then a minor British merchant, sold his monopoly of coal mining throughout Brunei east of the River Tutong to the second Rajah. Despite the existence of these rights, Sultan Hashim issued coal concessions covering parts of the area already granted, first in 1896, and again in 1899. This created international tension. On the second occasion, for example, the Rajah was determined to defend his rights and "failing to do so by fair means", he declared, "I shall be obliged to resort to arms".[71] A British warship had to be despatched to the scene to preserve peace. Eventually Sultan Hashim backed down and the Rajah opened a coal works on the island in dispute (Berembang), which remained in operation until 1917. Meanwhile the incident had been

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69. CO 144/75 (33046) Sir Frank Swettenham to Hewett, No 79, 30 April 1901, paragraph 2.
70. William Clarke Cowie (c1847-1910). 1870s: petty trader operating out of Labuan. 1882-8: owner of Muara Damit coal mine. Director (1894-), Managing Director (1897-) and Chairman (1909-10) of the BNBC.
71. FO 12/102 p 60ff, Rajah to Keyser, 26 September 1899, encl. in Mitchell to FO, No 43 (political), 5 October 1899; also in CO 144/73 (31524).

registered in Whitehall as "another flagrant example of Brunei misrule".[72]

Another problem arising out of the constitutional set-up in Brunei was the Sultan's inability or unwillingness to punish serious offences. Two points need to be made. First, the Sultan had no police who could investigate crime. Secondly, offenders were often sheltered by powerful chiefs whom the Sultan could not afford to alienate. In September 1896, for example, a Sikh was murdered and his shop pillaged. The subsequent trial, held only after repeated British representations had been made, was "a farce" and the Sultan released the murderer partly "through fear of the consequences of punishing a man whose relations were sufficiently influential to retaliate".[73] Similar considerations prevented the bringing to justice of the attempted murderers of a Dane, Mr Waterstradt, in 1899. Conversely, miscreants sometimes returned to Brunei under the shelter of the Sarawak flag, so that Sultan Hashim dared not touch them for fear of provoking Brooke aggression.[74]

Sultan Hashim's refusal to acknowledge the Rajah's occupation of Limbang created further complications which added to the impression of misrule in the Sultanate. In 1899, for example, he was forced to pay an indemnity to Sarawak for the murder in Brunei of two Brunei subjects, who had, however, settled in Limbang. Sultan Hashim protested, in vain,

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72. CO 144/73 (31524) minute by Mr TC McNaghten (1872-1944), 15 November 1899.
73. FO 12/97 p 94, Mitchell to FO, No 9 (Borneo), 21 May 1897, paragraph 14; also in CO 144/71 (14740). For a contemporary American verdict on the Brunei 'judiciary', see P Bigelow, "The Last of a Great Sultan" in Harper's Monthly Magazine (1906), pp 721-2.
74. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 57; and CO 144/80 (29740) McArthur to Anderson, No 148, 27 June 1906, paragraph 8.

that this was "very unfair" and that it was "not at all right...to deal with us in this manner".[75]

The two murdered 'serfs' had been engaged in cross-border buffalo raids when they met their deaths; and such raids, often sponsored by needy Brunei 'nobles' (particularly the Pengiran Bendahara) provoked continual complaints from the Sarawak authorities. The latter undoubtedly had justice on their side: when Brunei district was sealed off during the 1904 smallpox epidemic, for example, the raids ceased; but when the quarantine was lifted, they resumed.[76] Sometimes, however, the victims were people who had fled to Limbang in order to avoid payment of their debts, their cattle being seized in redress by the injured party.[77] Cases were not always investigated impartially and not all were satisfactorily proved. Once again the Sultan's efforts to investigate complaints were nullified "by the disloyalty of his leading chiefs where their own followers are concerned" and although the Sarawak authorities were very insistent in their complaints, they made

"no allowances for the difficulties of the Sultan's position, while they allow the Limbang to be made an asylum by those whom he desires to punish for offences committed under his jurisdiction". 78

To sum up, the complaints of foreigners connected with Brunei arose from two principal causes: first, the chronic poverty of the rulers;

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75. FO 12/101 p 220ff, Sultan to Keyser, 20 Muharram 1317 AH (28 May 1899); also in CO 144/73 (20104).
76. CO 604/1 Sarawak Gazette, 1 December 1904, p 236.
77. FO 12/108 p 65, Keyser to Sir Alexander Swettenham, No 13 (political), 24 February 1900, paragraph 3.
78. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 39; Keyser, place cited in note 77, paragraph 3 (e); and Bigelow, loc.cit.

and, secondly, the Sultan's inability to stamp his authority on his senior ministers. A few Chinese traders were murdered; but there was little evidence to suggest that the majority had suffered financially to any great extent. Radical measures had become necessary, nevertheless, if the decadent Sultanate were to be regenerated. In the next section I shall explain why HM Government decided to accept responsibility for this "daunting" task.

3. A Dying Kingdom Reprieved

Official UK-Brunei ties commenced in 1846-7, long before the Residential Era. Earlier still, the East India Company had taken an interest in Borneo for trading purposes. Before examining the immediate considerations which led to the appointment of a Resident, therefore, I shall place British relations with Brunei in a longer-term context.[79]

The United Kingdom had never been much interested in Borneo *per se*, still less did it have any desire to acquire territorial possessions there. In general, colonies were undesirable because they were expensive to maintain and led to entanglement in indigenous affairs. The principal interest of the United Kingdom (and of England before 1707) was not territory, but trade. Even in this case, Borneo's principal importance was its strategic position. During the seventeenth century, for example, the East India Company made intermittent but unsuccessful attempts to establish footholds in Borneo from which to compete with the

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79. The definitive account is N Tarling, *Britain, The Brookes and Brunei* (Kuala Lumpur, 1971).

Netherlands in the Indonesian pepper trade. Having been exoluded from this commerce by the Dutch, the East India Company concentrated instead on India. After 1700, however, Borneo acquired "a new value for them as a possible site for a commercial entrepot on the way to China".[80] Early attempts to establish settlements at Balambangan, Banjermasin and Labuan failed or were relinquished. The original problem was to find goods acceptable to the Chinese in order to reduce the Honourable Company's deficit at Canton caused by heavy purohases, particularly of tea.[81] By the end of the Napoleonic War this difficulty had been resolved by the growing Chinese demand for Indian opium.

During the later nineteenth century strategic considerations dominated British thinking because the north-west coast of Borneo lay on the flank of the increasingly-important trade route between India and China and, to a lesser extent, between Sydney and Hong Kong. It was feared that if a rival European power became established on this coast it would be able to threaten these routes.[82] The major British objectives were incorporated in the 1846-7 UK-Brunei Treaties. After gunboat diplomacy, the Sultan was obliged to cede Labuan (an island just outside Brunei Bay) in an agreement dated 24 December 1846. A few months later a Treaty of Friendship, signed on 27 May 1847, confirmed this cession.

Provision was made, also, for collaboration to increase trade and

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80. DGE Hall, A History of South-East Asia (London 1968), p 522.
81. Dr DK Bassett, "The Historical Background 1500-1815" in Wang Gungwu (ed.), Malaysia: A Survey (Singapore 1964), pp 123-4.
82. LR Wright, The Origins of British Borneo (Hong Kong 1970), p 29; and G Irwin, Nineteenth Century Borneo (The Hague 1955), p 11.

suppress piracy (two sides of the same coin). Finally, Article X of the Treaty (in which the Brunei monarch undertook to make no territorial cession without the consent of HM Government) provided the keystone of British policy up to 1888.[83] The essential British objective was to prevent any other power from becoming established in north-west Borneo, not to become involved in this area itself.[84]

In fact neither Labuan nor the 1847 Treaty were successful from a British viewpoint. Sultans could not be relied upon not to cede territory without British consent. This, coupled with internal political instability connected with rivalry for the succession and periodic popular unrest, meant that Brunei remained susceptible to foreign incursions. Labuan, for its part, was a dismal failure: the coal companies failed; it played no part in the suppression of piracy; and its Government ran at a loss. Hence on 1 January 1890 the colony was transferred to the BNBC, in whose hands it remained until the end of 1905.

From the 1840s HM Government preferred indirectly to safeguard British interests in this region by giving support to unofficial enterprises: the Rajahs Brooke in Sarawak (from 1841)[85] and the BNBC in North Borneo (from 1881). This entailed, for Whitehall, a minimum of cost and direct involvement. Rivalry between the Brookes and the Chartered Company left the United Kingdom in the position of referee as the 'scramble for

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83. Wright, op.cit., pp 123-5 and 203.
84. CD Cowan, Nineteenth Century Malaya (London 1961), p 269.
85. The Rajahs were: 1841-1868: Sir James Brooke KCB DCL (b 1803)
1868-1917: Sir Charles Brooke GCMG (b 1829)
1917-1946: Sir Vyner Brooke GCMG (1874-1963).

Brunei' gathered pace. In circumstances of heightened European imperial rivalry in the 1880s, however, it became necessary for a more definite British control to be exercised over north-west Borneo. In 1888, therefore, Brunei, Sarawak and North Borneo became British Protectorates.

In Brunei's case, control of foreign policy was taken over by the United Kingdom, whose interests were supervised by the Governor of the Straits Settlements, now appointed ex-officio 'High Commissioner' for Brunei. Sultan Hashim sought in this agreement a means to prevent further territorial encroachments, particularly by Sarawak. HM Government's preferred solution to the 'Brunei problem', on the other hand, was the Sultanate's partition between Sarawak and North Borneo, the boundary to be the Trusan-Lawas watershed. In short, all the territory now (1985) controlled by Brunei had been earmarked for Sarawak; whilst, apart from interdigital rivers within its own block of territory, the Chartered Company stood to gain only Lawas district. Hence 'partition' meant really 'absorption by Sarawak'.

The UK-Brunei Treaty, indeed, was worded specifically so as not to

"stand in the way of such a consummation as the absorption, when the time arrives, of Brunei by Sarawak and the BNBC. It would, in fact, enable HM Government to advise the Sultan to accept the inevitable on the best terms procurable". 86

In other words, the ultimate fate of the Sultanate was a matter of indifference to London, so long as its territory remained within the British sphere of influence. Sultan Hashim, naturally, was not informed of these intentions; and his request for two alterations in the Treaty

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86. FO 12/78 p 165, minute by Sir R Herbert, 31 January 1888.

was simply ignored.[87] It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1904 His Highness should have complained that "the Treaty has never fulfilled his hopes, that no consul has ever helped him since it was made".[88]

The whole of Sultan Hashim's reign was overshadowed by the Limbang issue. After the loss of this district he feared that he would be reduced to a Sultan in name only, and, taking British protection at its face value, he expected the Rajah to be evicted; he was unwilling, therefore, to consider any other business until the district had been restored.[89] British consuls interpreted this 'monomania' as a sign of senility; but it reflected, rather, a sound appreciation of Limbang's crucial importance to Brunei at that time.

During the 1890s Whitehall's policy was to find a way to ameliorate misrule in the Sultanate whilst at the same time causing as little distress as possible to the aged Sultan, after whose death Brunei would be taken over by Sarawak. Following the Belait-Tutong revolt of 1899, however, the lieutenant High Commissioner was sent to Brunei (in mid-1900) to obtain the monarch's acceptance of 'partition' (effectively absorption by Sarawak); but, much to Whitehall's consternation, Sir

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87. Sultan Hashim's requests were (i) that the succession should be guaranteed; and (ii) that the British Government should assist "with complete efficiency" should the Sultan be threatened by internal disorder. But, Sultan Hashim having signed the Treaty as it was presented to him, Whitehall assumed that no action was needed. (CO 273/154: 21539 Low to Smith, 22 September 1888, paragraph 6; also in FO 12/78 p 382ff).

88. FO 12/126 p 68ff, McArthur to Anderson, 27 May 1904, paragraph 8 - encl. in Anderson to FO, No 6 (political), 15 June 1904.

89. Cf McArthur, "Report", paragraph 72: "such policy as exists among them (Sultan and pengirans) hinges on this subject". See also FO 12/104 p 18, Keyser to FO, No 11, 2 April 1899, paragraphs 3-4; also in CO 144/73 (13933).

Alexander Swettenham flouted his instructions, failing even to raise the matter. The recrudescence of violence in Tutong early in 1901 convinced the Foreign Office that the time had come for the adoption of a definite policy with regard to the future of Brunei. It was eventually agreed that the new High Commissioner, Sir Frank Swettenham, should visit the Sultanate in the following April (1902) to prepare a report. In July 1901, however, news of a worsening situation in Belait and Tutong rendered necessary more immediate action. It was agreed "for reasons of humanity"[90] that Consul Hewett should open negotiations on behalf of the Rajah with Sultan Hashim for the transfer of Belait and Tutong (later the whole Sultanate) to Sarawak. These negotiations, however, ended in failure.

Mr Hewett's strategy having collapsed, the United Kingdom reverted to its original plan of sending an officer to Brunei to establish the facts and make recommendations for the future administration of the country. Sir Frank Swettenham, realizing that he would not be able to visit the Sultanate before his impending retirement (as Governor/High Commissioner in Singapore), gathered the opinions of his senior colleagues and, in August 1903, his considered counsel to HM Government was <u>not</u> in favour of a Residential System:

"I am more inclined...to advise you to leave Brunei alone, but to instruct the consul to live at Brunei (instead of Labuan) and to endeavour to secure the sympathies of the Sultan and his people and give them good advice, being strictly impartial in all his dealings whether those where British subjects are concerned or otherwise". 91

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90. CO 144/75 (33046) minute by CP Lucas (1853-1931), 21 September 1901.
91. FO 12/122 p 56, Sir Frank Swettenham to FO, No 15 (secret), 6 August 1903, paragraph 8.

Consul Hewett being recalled in April 1904, Mr McArthur was despatched to Brunei to prepare the report which Sir Frank Swettenham originally had intended to prodnce. Thus appeared on the scene the key figure in the history of modern Brunei. First, following his "Report on Brunei in 1904" the British Government abandoned its preferred option (Brunei's incorporation in Sarawak). It was decided, instead, to appoint a Resident, thereby preserving the existence of the moribund Sultanate. Secondly, during his term as Resident (1906-8) the former system of administration was swept aside and the foundations of modern Brunei laid.

MSH McArthur and the Creation of the British Residential System in Brunei, 1904-5. The son of a general, MSH 'Stewart' McArthur joined the Straits' Civil Service in 1895. His curriculum vitae included a succession of increasingly important posts, mainly in Penang and Singapore, until, in April 1904, he was appointed Acting Consul in Brunei. Mr McArthur's seniors in the Colonial Service certainly expressed great confidence in him,[92] a confidence which he justified by restoring (without any sacrifice of firmness) good diplomatic relations with the Brunei monarch after the disastrous tenure (1900-4) of his predecessor, Mr Hewett. When Mr McArthur was recalled from Brunei in November 1904 His Highness appealed for him to be sent back to Brunei "because I have great liking for him on account of his discretion, courtesy and gentle disposition",[93] a remarkable reversal of Sultan Hashim's usual attitude

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92. For example, Sir F Swettenham (CO 273/300: 645); Sir J Anderson (CO 273/309: 27211) and Sir WH Treacher (FO 12/127 p 167).
93. FO 12/126 p 224, Sultan to High Commissioner, 9 November 1904.

towards British consuls.

In his "Report" Mr McArthur had two main targets. First, the British Chinese traders who, generally, were making large profits "out of the incompetency and extravagance of the present titular rulers" and as money-lenders, granting cash advances on the security of cession money paid annually. Their "cupidity" was "one of the main causes of the distress and poverty prevalent in Brunei". They controlled virtually all the trade and most of the revenues of the country; and in the past too much stress had been placed on their "occasional losses".[94] Secondly, the Malay pengirans, who were "incorrigibly idle and constitutionally dishonest", "too lazy or too incompetent to do an honest stroke of work" and "eking out an unjustifiable existence by what they can extort from Kedayans or Bisayas subject to them". In short they were "largely responsible for the present hopeless condition of the country and for most of the cruelty and rapine usually attributed to the Sultan".[95] The worst of the nobles was the Pengiran Bendahara[96] - "greedy, cunning, unscrupulous and cruel" - once the largest owner of property in Brunei, but by 1904 reduced to living on "what he can extort as 'presents' from his Kedayan serfs".[97] Allegedly "Sarawak's hireling",[98] he was to cause considerable trouble to the first British Residents in Brunei.

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94. McArthur, "Report", paragraphs 41-3 and 66.
95. Ibid., paragraph 37.
96. Pengiran Anak Besar (?1829-1917), Pengiran Bendahara 1883-1917; Joint Regent 1906-17; illiterate. Died on 3 July 1917. See below, pp 67ff.
97. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 95.
98. CO 531/1 (46522) minute by RE Stubbs, 22 December 1908.

What were the acting consul's recommendations?[99] First, he warned that the Sultanate was decaying through internal causes (bankruptcy, disaffection, territorial losses) and that if nothing was done by the United Kingdom to rescue the country, this would be

"only to postpone for a short time the final loss of Brunei independence and in the meantime to increase the sufferings of the inhabitants of the State, while encouraging the squandering of all its resources".

Yet the United Kingdom, Mr McArthur argued, had a clear obligation to act decisively, one way or another:

"When it is remembered that these evils flourish under nominal British protection and that it is that protection alone which keeps Brunei in existence as a separate State, it seems obligatory on HM Government to take some steps to ameliorate them, either by insisting on internal reform or by withdrawing all semblance of suzerainty, when Brunei would rapidly be absorbed, piecemeal, by its neighbours".

One alternative was to trust to the personal influence of the consul on the spot, but this was "impracticable" because he would have no means of enforcing his advice and would, therefore, quickly lose prestige. To transfer Brunei to North Borneo was equally unacceptable because the Chartered Company was administratively-inefficient, commercially-motivated and even worse than Brunei in taxation methods. The Company's financial soundness was also in doubt.

The British Government had long expected Brunei to fall to Sarawak and had framed its policies accordingly; but this was "the only solution of the problem of which it may be said with certainty that it would not meet with the approval of the rulers of Brunei". Mr McArthur,

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99. The following section is based upon McArthur, "Report", paragraphs 98-146.

indeed, was shocked by the antagonism towards Sarawak in Brunei (Town). Sir Charles Brooke was "generally disliked", even among the Malays. The rulers opposed him because of his encroachments upon Brunei territory; the people feared him because his administration appeared to depend on Iban military levies, of whom they had "a great terror". Mr McArthur invited attention to the fact that Sarawak was a personal despotism and that, although hitherto exercised in such a way as to win "universal admiration", there was "no guarantee" of its permanency. The Acting Consul agreed that if the Rajah chose to impose his terms, the Brunei rulers had no means to resist: but the existence of the 1888 Treaty justified them "in claiming sympathetic consideration of their views as to the future of their country".

It will be recalled that the people of Belait and Tutong favoured the Sarawak settlement. But they formed only a minority of the total population; and Mr McArthur suggested that they looked to Sarawak for relief only through ignorance of other Governments and that their interests could be protected equally by official British control.

The Sultan and nobles - to whose opinions the British attached most weight - were not motivated solely by money, as had been supposed. Their principal objective was the preservation of their ancient kingdom and dynasty. A British Residency, therefore, would be "less obnoxious" to them than the disappearance of Brunei and a loss of their identity as a mere part of Sarawak or North Borneo. The efficiency of a Residency would be enhanced (Mr McArthur continued) if it was associated with the recovery either of Limbang or Labuan. Finally a loan would be necessary

to set the administration on its feet (at least $50,000 plus interest would be required to buy out monopolists alone); but, anticipating good receipts from customs duties and poll tax, Mr McArthur concluded that

"with a large and on the whole peaceably inclined population, a substantial volume of trade, a fertile soil and natural and mineral resources hitherto hardly tapped, its future would ultimately be one of prosperity were present abuses abolished". 100

Mr McArthur's "Report" was decisive in at least three ways. First, by revealing the depth of opposition to Sarawak in Brunei, it convinced the British Government that it had become morally indefensible to transfer the Sultanate to the Rajah. Those in the Colonial Office who had argued thus for some time[101] were strengthened in their arguments; whilst the Foreign Office (formerly disposed strongly to the Rajah and most reluctant to install a Resident) finally conceded the point.

Secondly, the "Report" disclosed that Brunei was far more valuable than HM Government had supposed;[102] and by suggesting that, after an initial loan, the country might become self-supporting, it removed the principal

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100. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 146.

101. Particularly Mr CP Lucas, who had long regarded an extension of Sarawak territory as undesirable. In 1895 he described the Rajah's offer to take over the whole of Brunei as "unjust and oppressive" (CO 144/70: 19976). The Rajah, Mr Lucas minuted the following year, had "quite enough (territory) already" (CO 144/70: 10680). Sir Charles was "certainly a good ruler" of Borneans but Sarawak was "disappointing and unprogressive" (CO 144/73: 24234). Mr Lucas hoped for a larger British colony in British Borneo "for the benefit of the human beings concerned" (CO 144/81: 45446); but there is no evidence that this idea carried any weight in the Foreign Office when agreeing to appoint a Resident.

102. CO 144/79 (1795) Sir F Swettenham to CP Lucas, 17 January 1905. There is no doubt that Brunei's actual and potential value had been understated both by the Rajah (CO 144/70: 19976) and by Consul NP Trevenen (FO 12/97 p 160ff).

objection to a Residential System.[103] Finally, by highlighting the alleged mal-administration of Labuan by the BNBC, Mr McArthur furnished Whitehall with a pretext for resuming control of the island and amalgamating its administration with that of Brunei. (When this proposal had been first mooted, in 1903, it was abandoned because of opposition from the BNBC. After the company's mismanagement of Labuan had been revealed, such resistance could be disregarded by HM Government).[104]

It may seem unsurprising that a Straits' officer like Mr McArthur should have advised the extension of the Malayan model to Brunei. But this overlooks the fact that two previous consuls - Messrs Trevenen (1890-8) and Keyser (1898-1900) - also had Malayan backgrounds, yet neither of them had recommended a Residential System. Before receiving his "Report", moreover, Mr McArthur's immediate superiors - viz. Sir John Anderson (the High Commissioner) and the Foreign Office - had tended to prefer the Sarawak settlement.

If the crucial immediate concern behind the appointment of a Resident was a desire to inaugurate a more enlightened form of administration and to ameliorate the lot of the Brunei people, there is no evidence to suggest that pressure from local business interests had the slightest effect on the decision. (The most important capitalist in

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103. Hence Sir Frank Swettenham - acting as an adviser to the British Government in 1905 - now enthusiastically endorsed a Residential System whereas formerly he had drawn back because he could not see how the country could be made self-supporting. (As events turned out, Mr McArthur was vastly over-optimistic: Brunei remained heavily indebted until the 1930s. Cf. below, pp 166-7 and 179).

104. FO 12/128 p 408ff, minute by Mr FH Villiers, 3 June 1905.

Brunei, indeed, was Sir Charles Brooke himself. The other main European concern, the Island Trading Syndicate, also made representations to the Foreign Office on behalf of the Rajah.[105] In 1902, and again in 1906, Sir Charles received backing even from the BNBC).[106] Judging from subsequent events the contrary was the case, if anything: there was the spectacle of the incoming administration attempting, with scant success, to encourage outside investors to risk capital in the State so that Government revenue might be increased and a better standard of administration provided.

During 1905 negotiations proceeded with the BNBC for the recovery of Labuan, which reverted to Crown Colony status. In December 1905 Sultan Hashim agreed (in a "Supplementary Agreement" of the 1888 Treaty) to accept a British Resident to run the administration of Brunei.[107] Arrangements were made for the FMS to loan $200,000 to Brunei to redeem the mortgaged revenues; but "thereafter the administration, which would be of a very simple character, should be self-supporting".[108]

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105. FO 12/127 pp 99-100; and cf. P Blundell, The City of Many Waters (London 1923) pp 203-4.
106. FO 12/120 p 466 Martin to Birch, 18 April 1902; and CO 144/81 (27543) Sir C Jessel to FO, 20 July 1906.
107. For further details, see below, Chapter 4, section 2.
108. CO 144/79 (10323) Anderson to FO, No 3 (confidential), 18 February 1905, paragraph 10.

PART II: CONSOLIDATION 1906-1932

CHAPTER THREE

THE RECOVERY OF INTERNAL SOVEREIGNTY: BRUNEI AND SARAWAK 1906-1932

1. Introduction

In this chapter I shall examine how Brooke influence within Brunei was contained, and then eliminated, by the Residents. The incoming administration's first priority was to regain for the Brunei Government full sovereignty within its own house. This led to conflict with Sarawak on political, territorial, financial, administrative and economic grounds.[1] With one exception, the various disputes had been settled by 1932. Brunei had failed, however, to recover Limbang, which remains in Sarawak's possession to this day, although claimed as an integral part of Brunei as late as 1970. Before examining these issues in greater detail it is necessary to explain why Sir Charles Brooke was so antagonistic towards the new administration in Brunei.

2. Rajah Sir Charles Brooke GCMG (b 1829; r 1868-1917)

The second Rajah was born in 1829 as Charles Johnson: his

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1. Brunei enjoyed far more cordial relations with the BNBC. Whereas Brunei was almost surrounded by Sarawak, it had no common frontier with North Borneo; whereas the Rajah sought to subvert the Residential System, the company did not; whereas the Rajah had various rights within the remnant of Brunei, the company had none; and whereas the Rajah tended to adopt a lofty moralistic tone towards Brunei, the company was less piously self-satisfied. Finally, Brunei appears not to have derived tribute from areas north of Brunei Bay (Brown, Structure and History, p 77); hence the loss of this territory may have been less keenly felt by Brunei than those areas taken over by the Brookes.

father was a clergyman, his mother the sister of Sir James Brooke. After a grammar school education and ten years in the Royal Navy ("particularly useful as a preparatory school for adventurers seeking their fortunes in the world"),[2] Mr Johnson joined his uncle in Sarawak (1852) and rapidly emerged as the real authority in the country, at least insofar as the Ibans were concerned; it was fortunate, indeed, for the infant State that he did so, because Iban levies played a decisive role in the suppression of the Chinese Rising in 1857.

Assuming the surname Brooke on his accession (1868), Sir Charles GCMG (as he became in 1888) remained an Iban military leader, who enjoyed war, leading upriver campaigns even in his 70s.[3] Although not quite so disinterested[4] and humanitarian as some have claimed, he was certainly an instinctive leader, a perspicacious thinker, a conscientious administrator, a disciplinarian, and unsolicitous of official favour. In his declining years (our principal concern here) he became increasingly intolerant of the slightest opposition to his wishes,[5] and his own officers tended to be 'yes'-men.[6]

Sir Charles would not have dissented from the view that Brunei

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2. C Brooke, Ten Years in Sarawak, Vol I (London 1866) p 2 (my italics).
3. R Nicholl, BMJ 1983, pp 236-7; and R Pringle, Rajahs and Rebels, p 178.
4. Mention might be made, for example, of Chesterton House (Cirencester), a villa in Italy, a separate establishment for the Ranee, a palace in Kuching, a public school/Oxbridge education for his heir (plus marriage into the aristocracy), all this paid for by the people of Sarawak. How many other mere sons of vicars could boast likewise?
5. CN Crisswell, Rajah Charles Brooke (Kuala Lumpur 1978), p 220.
6. Ranee M Brooke, Good Morning and Good Night (London 1934), p 41. Her verdict is confirmed by a reading of S Baring-Gould and CA Bampfylde, A History of Sarawak under its two White Rajahs 1839-1908 (London 1909) and AB Ward, Rajah's Servant (Cornell 1966), a title revealing in itself.

was "a blot on civilization and a canker in the heart of Sarawak".[7] The Sultanate, indeed, was "an abiding nuisance, an anachronism to be eliminated if possible".[8] Brunei monarchs occupied a prominent position in Brooke demonology. In pre-Residential Brunei the Rajah saw nothing but unrest and friction; Sarawak traders there were unsafe; and oppressed Brunei subjects continually appealed to him for protection. In opposition to the chaos existing in Brunei's (happily shrinking) dominions, he contrasted the peace, stability, exceptionally low taxation and moderate prosperity in his own Raj.[9] The second Rajah (Dr Crisswell comments) "did not share any lingering hopes that James Brooke may still have had of regenerating Brunei; to him it seemed logical and desirable that Brunei's remaining territory should ultimately pass under Brooke rule".[10] He was most bitter about the British Government's decision to install a Resident, therefore, because it blocked his Manifest Destiny[11] and thwarted the cherished hope of his lifetime.[12] For many years before 1906 he had understood that, when the plum was ripe, it would fall into his lap; and he regarded the new departure, not only as unfortunate for the people of Brunei, but also as a British breach of faith towards himself.

Sir Charles disapproved of official British imperialism on

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7. Ward, op.cit., p 20.
8. Pringle, op.cit., p 126.
9. Whilst it is true that 'unreformed' elements staged an obstinate rearguard action, peace reigned in most of Sarawak; and even Iban rebels were patronized as troublesome children rather than feared as dangerous threats to the State.
10. Crisswell, op.cit., p 80.
11. LR Wright, The Origins of British Borneo (Hong Kong 1970), p 180. See, also, Baring-Gould and Bampfylde, op.cit., p 363.
12. Ward, op.cit., p 102 ("His dream...was shattered").

ideological grounds, regarding his own methods of rule as infinitely superior; and he thought it would have been advantageous to the people of NW Borneo to be under one administration (his own, naturally). Even after the establishment of the new order in Brunei (1906), Sir Charles clung obstinately to his gains within that country. The explanation is that, if he regarded Brunei Malays as unregenerate and unable to show "one foot of contentment", he had scarcely more respect for British officials sent from Malaya to administer the Sultanate: they were inexperienced, ignorant of Borneans, would introduce a complicated system instead of one which was simple and just, and fail to rule in the people's interests: the result could be only bloodshed and disaster. British colonialism, moreover, would involve the imposition of alien legal and educational systems; and, worse still, it would be accompanied by large-scale capitalist enterprise which was sure to lead to the indigenous population being swindled out of their land and other possessions. The Rajah's own philosophy - "respect for local custom and a gradual, selective approach to change" or, in his own words, "letting system and legislation wait upon occasion"[13] - was far better adapted to the needs of Borneo. The "honester part" of the Brunei people continued to look to Sarawak for protection, and Sir Charles felt obliged to support them. Furthermore, he and his predecessor had, for over fifty years, been the "sole workers towards civilization"[14] in north-west Borneo; and it was only just and proper that the British Government should enable him to

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13. Pringle, op.cit., p 137.
14. CO 144/81 (3460) Rajah to FO, 23 February 1906.

round off his life's work by permitting him to absorb the rump of Brunei and devote his final years to the establishment of peace, order and justice there.[15] The Rajah resented the imputation, implicit in the decision to appoint a Resident, that his own rule was unsuitable for Brunei. Sir Charles, moreover, was an absolute ruler unaccoustomed to contradiction; and as his actions became increasingly questioned, he found the experience distasteful. Formerly the spotlight had been concentrated on misrule in Brunei; after 1900 it shifted towards Sarawak, forcing the Rajah from an offensive into a defensive role. Finally, a speculation: given that the Rajah's favourite pastime was hunting, it may not be fanciful to suggest that, in the case of Brunei, he had been thwarted of a potential 'kill'. The prey having escaped, "life in Limbang became rather a tame existence" (Mr Ward commented).[16]

From 1906 the British Government, for its part, had to face the consequences of its earlier failure adequately to protect Brunei from encroachments by its neighbours, particularly after the signing of the 1888 Treaty. Policy had been based on the assumption that Brunei would be absorbed by Sarawak. Whitehall had been guilty of critical geographical misapprehensions: it was not realized, for example, that the cession of Trusan district, instead of merely advancing the Sarawak frontier towards Brunei would in fact establish the Brooke State on the far side of the Sultanate (thereby placing Brunei "practically in the grip of Sarawak") nor that the annexation of Limbang had caused a "severance" of

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15. For example, FO 12/105 p 40, Rajah to FO, 14 March 1899.
16. Ward, op.cit., p 103.

Brunei territory.[17] It was agreed that the Rajah's annexation of Limbang was high-handed; but since all Brunei (except Lawas) was earmarked for Sarawak, it did not seem to matter that the Rajah had anticipated the policy of HM Government. When Whitehall changed course in 1905, deciding to install a Resident, these earlier decisions came to be regretted, because they had reduced the viability of Brunei.

Although the Rajah's renewed requests for a transfer of Brunei to Sarawak were dismissed by London in 1906 and 1907, he was reluctant to abandon hope that his wish might be granted; and if the Imperial Government would not allow him to have Brunei, he was in a strong position to inconvenience its administration by anyone else. The general aura attaching to him as the most powerful local potentate, added to his possession of various points along the River Brunei, made him almost a State within the State. In order to heighten pressure on the British Government to grant his wish, the Rajah campaigned to demonstrate that the Residential System was unpopular.

3. The Political Challenge 1906-7

The Rajah's campaign involved making complaints to the Colonial Office, attacking British policy in the Sarawak Gazette, getting questions asked in the House of Commons, stirring up trouble in Brunei, and attempting to obtain signatures to petitions. But he won only desultory support within the Sultanate.

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17. CO 144/60 (19461) FO to CO, 4 November 1885, paragraph 2; and minute by Sir R Herbert, 12 November 1885.

Sir Charles was staying at his Cirencester mansion when word arrived that a new UK-Brunei Treaty had been signed. He complained to the Foreign Office that this development was unjust to him, adding that a Resident "could not really advance the place and people, except perhaps in the mere fact of keeping the Sultan from committing any untoward or oppressive acts".[18] One Whitehall clerk riposted that the decision of HM Government did not require the approval of Sir Charles Brooke. It was "essential", moreover, that the Rajah should not be given any grounds for supposing that the new order was likely to be reversed; he might try stirring up trouble in an attempt to show that the Resident was unpopular.[19] The Rajah's plea, therefore, was rejected and London looked "with confidence" to the co-operation of the Sarawak Government in making the new system beneficial alike for Brunei and for the adjoining British Protectorates.[20] This was a forlorn hope: the Rajah's disappointment was too bitter for him easily to acquiesce in the new situation. He blamed Mr McArthur personally for his failure to incorporate Brunei within Sarawak; and the High Commissioner feared that Sir Charles was a "vindictive old man" who desired to see the first Resident come to grief in Brunei:

"He (the Rajah) never has been a scrupulous person, and, surrounded as Brunei is by Sarawak territory (sic), there can be no doubt if he gives the wink, we shall have trouble". 21

Sir Charles, for his part, was "well aware that the Resident of Labuan

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18. CO 144/81 (3460) Rajah to FO, 23 January 1906.
19. Ibid., minute by RE Stubbs (1876-1947), 31 January 1906.
20. CO 144/81 (3460 and 4722) FO to Rajah, 9 February 1906.
21. CO 144/81 (16405) Anderson to Mr GV Fiddes (1858-1936), private, 7 May 1906.

is unfriendly to Sarawak and will not fail to find as much fault as he can".[22]

One way of increase pressure on the British Government was via Parliament. Sir Edward Sassoon,[23] the Rajah's spokesman in the House of Commons - who thought that Brunei was a State in the Malay Peninsula - tabled several sets of questions in the period 1906-8, often on the most frivolous grounds. In April 1906, for example, a notice had appeared in The Times under the headline "Incident in Brunei". Sir Edward having demanded further information, it transpired that the episode had been trivial and, if anything, "proved the goodwill of the pengirans", a number of whom had come to the Resident's assistance. Sultan Hashim, moreover, caused it to be notified publicly that he was ashamed that his subjects should have shown such disrespect to a representative of HM Government.[24]

The death of the aged Sultan Hashim on 10 May 1906 - before the new order had been consolidated - offered the Rajah a more substantial opportunity. About one month before his demise, Sultan Hashim nominated

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22. CO 531/1 (1446) Rajah to CP Lucas, (c10) January 1907.
23. Sir Edward Sassoon (1856-1912), Bart. (cr. 1890, to which he succeeded in 1896). Liberal Unionist MP for Hythe, 1899-1912. (Courtesy of Gillian Howarth, House of Commons: letter to the author, 15 March 1984).
24. CO 144/80 (29740) McArthur to Anderson, No 148, 27 June 1906. Mr McArthur complained of "certain persons outside Brunei disappointed at the recent course of events there, and only too anxious to misrepresent all that occurs". A Malay had been summoned to answer charges of attempting to evade customs duties. The headman of his ward, whose mortgages on State revenues had been compulsorily redeemed by the new administration, instigated other inhabitants to intimidate the Government. A crowd which had gathered outside the Residency quickly dispersed after Mr McArthur threatened to order the one policeman to open fire. The headman, for his part, was subsequently fined $500 by the State Council, which had taken up the matter of its own accord.

his eldest legitimate son (Pengiran Muda Muhammad Jemalul Alam) to be his successor, the two surviving wazirs to act as Regents during his minority; and willed that the succession "shall descend in future in his line",[25] thereby definitely establishing the principle of primogeniture if it had not been achieved already by the 1905-6 Treaty.[26] His Highness seemed "very relieved" by assurances that the United Kingdom intended to uphold his dynasty after his death; but the astonishment of the Pengiran Bendahara[27] on finding that he was not to be sole Regent may have had "the effect of making him more willing to intrigue with others", particularly since, as an adopted son of Sultan Abdul Mumin (r1852-85), he had pretensions to the throne itself.[28] This disgruntlement dovetailed neatly with the plans of the Rajah.

Shortly after returning to Borneo, Sir Charles visited Brooketon, where he was greeted by a large flotilla of boats. Among his visitors were the Pengiran Bendahara and the Jawatan Abu Bakar. Although Sir Charles well knew that properly Brooketon (Muara Damit) belonged to Brunei,[29] he informed another pengiran that it was to be regarded as part of Sarawak. Mr Deshon, the Rajah's aide, informed the Resident that Sir Charles considered that the Pengiran Bendahara should have been designated

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25. CO 144/80 (26871) 'Will' of Sultan Hashim, 20 Safar 1324 AH (14 April 1906).
26. See below, Chapter 4 (section 2) and Appendix 1.1 (pp 558-60).
27. See above, p 52.
28. CO 144/80 (26871) McArthur to Secretary to High Commissioner, No 133, 18 June 1906, paragraph 5. See also McArthur, "Report", paragraph 69.
29. (Rhodes House, Oxford) Mss Pac s103: Rev Fr AF Owen CJ, DA Owen 1880-1952: A Memoir (1982), p 125.

as successor to the throne. Mr McArthur replied that the Pengiran Muda had been nominated by Sultan Hashim and the choice had won unanimous approval from the State Council, at whose decision the headmen evinced "great pleasure". But on what basis did Mr Deshon suppose that a foreign potentate (the Rajah) was entitled to interfere with whom a Sultan of Brunei might or might not appoint to be his own successor?

The Colonial Office, aware that an intrigue was in progress, was anxious to see Sir Charles leave Brunei, but refrained from actually ordering him to do so. Whilst there, he obtained a series of documents which he intended to use in an attempt to demonstrate that the Residential System was unpopular. The Rajah's visit had an unsettling effect within the Sultanate, because rumours of his intentions reached the Kedayans who, in consequence, withheld payment of poll tax until the outcome should have become clear.

The leading wazir, the Pengiran Bendahara, had several complaints to make against the Resident. After Sultan Hashim's death, for example, he and other nobles visited the Rajah, apparently in great distress, claiming that no money was available for the funeral. The Rajah made a gift of $500 to the wazir; and then used the incident in an attempt to discredit the Resident. In fact, Mr McArthur, who was incapacitated himself at the time, had instructed Dato Roberts to pay $500 immediately, with a further $500 to be held in reserve for any additional expenses. Hence there had been no need to seek monetary assistance from the Rajah. The wazir attempted to conceal the Rajah's gift from the young Sultan;

but one of his own letters confirms that he was indeed the recipient.[30]

Sir Charles Brooke's proceedings, therefore, were suspicious and unhelpful to the Resident. First, did he seriously believe that no provision had been made for the obsequies? Secondly, even if he did, why did he make no attempt to check the truth of the story with the Resident?; and why, having made the gift, did he and his officers refuse to disclose to whom the money had been paid? Given the Rajah's opinion that Brunei nobles were "an accomplished set of flatterers and liars",[31] his apparent gullibility on this occasion is remarkable.

The Pengiran Bendahara's complaints were forwarded to HM Government by the Rajah through the agency of Sir Edward Sassoon. For some grievances he had himself alone to blame (for example, "from the first we had kept this matter - the Rajah's payment - secret from the Sultan. We were shamed to have to acknowledge receipt of this money...(and) it has given occasion to Mr McArthur to find fault again"); whilst others were untruths (that no provision had been made for the obsequies). Mr McArthur admitted, however, that one charge - that the Resident never consulted the wazir - was partly true, but only because of the latter's "extraordinarily selfish views".[32]

A covering commentary by Mr Bampfylde[33] mostly repeated the

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30. CO 144/80 (40678) McArthur to Secretary to High Commissioner, Brunei No 228 (confidential), 25 August 1906, paragraph 2 (vi); and CO 144/81 (27240) Pengiran Bendahara to Mr OF Ricketts, 22 May 1906.
31. FO 12/127 pp 153-4, Rajah to FO, 20 May 1904.
32. CO 144/80 (35280) McArthur to Secretary to High Commissioner, confidential, 14 June 1904, paragraph 7.
33. CO 144/81 (27240) memorandum by CA Bampfylde, 22 July 1906. (CA Bampfylde, 1856-1918. SCS 1875-1903 (BNBC 1882-4). 1888-96: Resident, Third Division. 1896-1903: Resident, First Division. 1903-12: Rajah's 'Political Agent' in England. 1912-18: Member SSAC).

libels of the Pengiran Bendahara. He added that the actions of the Resident after the Rajah's gift had been made constituted "an unprecedented piece of bullying" and a "studied and wholly gratuitous insult to the Rajah emphasized by the uncalled-for despatch of a man-of-war". Mr Bampfylde concluded that Mr McArthur, jealous of the Rajah, had seized upon the incident "to impress upon the Bruneis his superior authority and to endeavour to weaken the Rajah's influence", a remarkable allegation given that the Sultan was treaty-bound to accept the Resident's advice whereas the Rajah was a foreign potentate. If the principle espoused by Mr Bampfylde (that the Rajah was entitled to exercise an influence rival to that of the Resident) had been conceded, the latter's position would have been rendered utterly untenable. Furthermore, Mr Bampfylde had let slip the real reason for the Rajah's gift, viz., an attempt to maintain an influence with Brunei nobles at the expense of the Resident.[34] Concerning the "uncalled-for despatch of a man-of-war", Mr McArthur related[35] that after Sultan Hashim's death, with himself indisposed, he had telegraphed to Singapore that someone should take his place in Brunei during such a critical time. Mr McClelland of the FMS Service (newly-appointed Assistant Resident) was sent in HMS Thistle because there was no other ship available to take him from Singapore. The Resident thought it

"an excellent opportunity to counterbalance the impression caused in Brunei by the visit of the Zahora (the Rajah's yacht), and therefore asked the commander of the Thistle to take Mr McClelland across to Brunei". (35)

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34. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 25 July 1906.
35. CO 144/80 (40678) McArthur to 'Secretary to High Commissioner', No 228 (Brunei), 24 September 1906, paragraph 2 (v).

The Zahora, he reminded Singapore, was armed and was run on regular man-of-war lines; and it was advisable that the people of Brunei "should see that other Governments have such ships". Furthermore a visit to Brunei was a "graceful act" towards the young Sultan on the occasion of his accession. In short, HMS Thistle had not been despatched to bully the State Council into revealing to whom the Rajah's gift had been made, as alleged by Mr Bampfylde and the wazir.

Sir Edward Sassoon presented two further documents to the Foreign Office. The first document - the minutes of a meeting held in the Pengiran Bendahara's lapau - contained an allegation that the 1905-6 treaty had been imposed by force (see below, pp 111-2). The dozen pengirans who were present added that their only wish was "to ask the Rajah of Sarawak's help so that we may obtain tranquility".[36]

The second document was a petition dated 11 May 1906, presented to the Rajah by certain inhabitants of Brunei who did "not at all approve of being governed by the Resident" under whose rule nothing but trouble was experienced. In Sarawak, by contrast, people were prosperous and contented, commodities were cheap, and trouble was not brought down upon the rakyat. In view of this "the people of Brunei" wished to be placed under Brooke administration.[37] It is clear that this petition, to which only 30 people gave their name, hardly represented the views of the 10,000 inhabitants of Kampong Ayer; and, apart from four headmen in the

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36. CO 144/81 (27240) Translation of a memorandum by Haji Muhammad Ali, the Datu Hakim (Chief Malay Judge) of Sarawak.
37. Ibid., petition dated 16 Rabiulawal 1324AH (11 May 1906). With regard to the price of commodities, see above (pp 32-3 and 52) and below (pp 160-4).

capital, it was not signed by any of the known leaders of Brunei society. Further, as Sir Frederick Weld commented in 1887, it is hardly in human nature "willingly" to accept the extinction of one's country.[38] The people of Brunei, moreover, were "intensely patriotic and...very proud of their city";[39] and, according to Mr Chevallier, writing in 1911, had "a greater pride of race and country than any Malay I have come across so far".[40] If so, they can hardly have wished to see their country disappear within another. Confirmation of this is provided even by a Sarawak source: when the Rajah visited Brooketon in 1913

"Very few visits or messages were received from the Brunei capital, where all at one time before the occupation of the British Government used to be so friendly whenever a Sarawak flag or man appeared in their river". 41

Far from discrediting the Resident, as Sir Charles had hoped, the Colonial Office complimented Mr McArthur on his handling of a most delicate situation; and Sir Edward Sassoon was advised that Whitehall had "no reason to suppose" that an administration "under the direct control of the Imperial Government as exercised through the High Commissioner is likely to contrast unfavourably with the administration of the adjoining States".[42] If Brunei had been transferred to Sarawak, moreover, it is most unlikely that the Pengiran Bendahara would have enjoyed "tranquility". For, when Mr McArthur came home on leave in 1907, the

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38. CO 144/64 (16254) Weld to CO, 20 June 1887, paragraph 8; also in FO 12/75 p 274ff.
39. P Blundell (pen-name), The City of Many Waters, p 68. Mr Butterworth's testimony is the more significant because he was known to favour the Rajah (op.cit., p 218).
40. CO 824/1 H Chevallier, Brunei Annual Report 1911, p 11.
41. CO 604/4 Sarawak Gazette, 1 July 1913, p 140.
42. CO 144/81 (27240) CO to FO, 27 July 1906.

Rajah took the opportunity to renew his request for permission to annex the remainder of Brunei: his "only conditions" were that a "thorough transfer" should be made in consideration of monthly allowances (paid by the Rajah) to the Sultan and his chiefs and that the latter should have "no power or authority over the people other than I should deem fit and proper to invest them with".[43] This suggests that the wazir would have retained very few prerogatives or financial sources under a Brooke regime. Sir Charles was rebuffed by HM Government, which declared that it could not "reconsider the matter or hold out hope that the policy will be revised and the State of Brunei incorporated with Sarawak".[44]

If the Rajah had scant respect for the British Resident in Brunei, he adopted a similarly cavalier attitude towards the law of the country and appeared to believe that there was no requirement on his part to comply with its provisions. This may be illustrated by two examples: (i) the Kota Batu lands; and (ii) mining concessions.

In the first case, the Rajah failed to register his title to a 3,500 acres estate at Kota Batu (itself acquired in an extremely dubious fashion in 1903) as required by the Brunei land legislation of 1907 and 1909. In view of this failure, later British Residents were unaware that he claimed this land; and, by 1912, 143 acres had been alienated by the Brunei Government to indigenous smallholders. When the Rajah protested about the alienation of this small part of his estate, the Colonial Office retorted that had he registered his title as required

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43. CO 531/1 (34640) Rajah to CO, n.d. (c29) September 1907.
44. Ibid., CO to Rajah, 7 October 1907.

by the law "there could have been no misapprehension and, in default of it, the whole of the lands were liable to forfeiture". In the circumstances, the Brunei Government had done

"all that could be expected in offering to compensate him for the small amount of land which has now been alienated to others, and in being prepared to register his title to the rest of the land without using the power of resumption under the law". 45

This sharp reply "quite staggered" Sir Charles, who demanded to know against whom he could take "law measures" and obtain "heavy damages" if the land was not "wholly restored".[46] Two observations might be made. First, note how the Rajah totally disregarded his own neglect to comply with the law of Brunei; and, secondly, how the Colonial Office failed to uphold the same law. The Rajah, having failed to register his 3,500 acres' estate within the time limits specified by the Land Codes, should have forfeited it; yet the Colonial Office permitted him to retain the entire estate, apart from the small area which had been inadvertently alienated to smallholders.[47]

Another illustration of the Rajah's contempt for the law of Brunei was provided when he claimed exclusive rights to all minerals (other than coal, the monopoly of which he held separately) in Brunei. The Brunei Mining Enactment of 1908 required that a lessee should not fail, for a period of twelve consecutive months, to carry out prospecting or mining operations. Yet in 1914 Sir Charles - who had done no

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45. CO 531/7 (6241) CO to Sarawak State Advisory Council (SSAC), 25 February 1914.
46. (RHO) Mss Pac.s83 (5), Rajah to Secretary, SSAC, 8 March 1913 (sic, 1914) and 10 March 1914 (Rajah's emphasis).
47. In late 1917 Rajah Vyner Brooke, the third Rajah, abandoned the Kota Batu estate, accepting instead 600 acres on Berembang Island.

such work whatsoever - advanced a wholly spurious claim to exclusive mineral rights in Brunei (see below, pp 94-6 and 255).

After September 1907 Sir Charles made no further attempt to persuade the British Government to abandon the Residential System and to permit him to incorporate Brunei within Sarawak. He was unacquainted with the new men in the Colonial Office who were, in any case, unfavourably disposed towards him.[48] Mr Bampfylde's History (published in 1909) contains a lengthy attack on the British Government's policy in Brunei;[49] but the Rajah made no attempt to exploit the UK-Brunei tension in 1909-10, arising out of the new land legislation (see chapter 4). Just as, however, the Colonial Office had deferred to the advanced age of Sultan Hashim in the 1890s, so now they were equally unwilling to upset the aged Rajah. CP Lucas set the tone of the conciliatory policy thus:

"I...think that it is both right and expedient to deal as gently as we can with this old ruler who is bitterly disappointed at not having been allowed to absorb the rest of Brunei, who has been given a recognized position by the King and the Government, and who, dating back to more or less barbaric times, has, on the whole, done good work as a despot... Sir Charles Brooke should be treated with all courtesy and indulgence, hoping and believing that, after his time...Sarawak will become a possession of the Crown". 50

The British Government, therefore, was unwilling to tackle the

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48. The Rajah himself commented: "I regret much the course taken by the British Government in and around Brunei; however, it is little use making complaints" (CO 144/81: 16405 - Rajah to Anderson, 12 April 1906).
49. Baring-Gould and Bampfylde, op.cit., pp 362-72. Conversely, both the Rajah and Mr Bampfylde were not reluctant to quote the approval of the Colonial Office when the decision went in Sarawak's favour, e.g. after the annexation of Limbang in 1890 (CO 531/4: 20919 - Rajah to Sir A Young, 25 May 1912).
50. CO 531/1 (20552) minute by Lucas, 12 June 1907.

Sultanate: the claim for the recovery of Limbang was shelved; the Rajah lived longer than expected (until 1917); and, contrary to expectations, his successor proved no more amenable to the Colonial Office. The main issues were territorial (Limbang), financial-administrative (Muara Damit) and economic. At root, however, these disputes were also political: the reformed administration in Brunei feared the political use to which the Rajah would put his alleged and actual rights. Once the point had been established that Muara Damit, Kota Batu and Berembang were not to be treated as Sarawak territory, their possession by the Rajah became irritants rather than threats to the new order in Brunei.

4. Limbang

The Limbang remained the most important issue between Brunei and Sarawak after 1906. The district's importance was summarized thus:

"The territory is so geographically interwoven with Brunei Proper that its loss has not only crippled the resources of the Government, but also the trade and even the movements of the people, so that the actual area lost to the State is by no means the only factor by which the extent of the damage is to be assessed". 51

The nominal River Brunei had no ulu and was shut in almost throughout its length by low but steep hills, the soils of which were poor. In these circumstances, the people of the capital had relied on Limbang to obtain their subsistence. Food, as well as materials for clothing, housing and fishing were all derived therefrom. The imposition by Sarawak after 1890 of export duties on these items created great hardship for the people

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51. CO 273/310 (33426) Belfield to Anderson, 5 June 1905, paragraph 28.

of Brunei Town. In addition, the sago factories in the capital had all been forced out of business. Sultan Hashim's pride had been sorely hurt "by the manner of (Limbang's) seizure and the disregard shown (by London) to his protests".[52] Limbang should be returned, His Highness pleaded, because he was disgraced in the eyes of his own people because of its loss and so that "the city of Brunei may not be oppressed by Rajah Brooke and the country of Brunei and our Government not be destroyed by... Sarawak".[53] Mr McArthur claimed that the strength of the Brunei monarch's feelings on the subject were shown "by his refusal to accept a cent of the money for the district". But this ignores the fact that Sultan Hashim had enjoyed few rights in Limbang district and stood to gain comparatively little from compensation for its cession; and the offer of indemnification had long since (1895) been withdrawn in any case.

In January 1905 Sir Frank Swettenham suggested that it would be

> "a great advantage to Brunei and greatly facilitate negotiations with the Sultan, if Limbang could be restored to Brunei, paying the Rajah of Sarawak whatever (if anything) he can fairly claim". 54

The Secretary of State directed that the restoration of the district ought to be borne in mind during negotiations for the 1905-6 Treaty;[55] but the envoys specifically refused to discuss the issue when it was raised by Sultan Hashim. It may have been considered that the point was

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52. FO 12/126 p 158, McArthur to Anderson, No 22/04, 15 July 1904, paragraph 4.
53. Composite taken from FO 12/83 p 103, Sultan Hashim to Queen Victoria, tel., 18 December 1890; and CO 144/69 (4396) likewise, early 1893.
54. CO 144/79 (1795) Sir F Swettenham to CP Lucas, 17 January 1905.
55. CO 144/79 (10323) minute by Mr A Lyttelton (1857-1913), 28 April 1905.

met sufficiently by taking back Labuan from the Chartered Company, thereby affording the necessary means of communication with the outdistricts. (This might have been sufficient from a British point of view; but it did not meet Brunei's case, because Labuan was not part of the Sultanate).[56]

During Mr OF Ricketts' term (1890-1909) as the Sarawak Government's Resident in Limbang, the district progressed steadily. A Government station

"was established some fifteen miles from the river's mouth, and settlers, both Malay and Chinese, soon arrived and took up their quarters there; indeed, a good many quitted Brunei and applied for sites upon which to build shops and houses directly the (Sarawak) flag was raised". 57

By 1909 Pengkalan Tarap (Limbang Village) had become "a flourishing little place..., the prettiest outstation in Sarawak" and "being another refuge for the oppressed, the Malay population is continually increasing".(57)

Mr McArthur was also impressed by the village, which gave "an impression of neatness, cleanliness and prosperity all the more striking by the comparison with the squalor and filth of the town of Brunei".[58] District revenue from Limbang amounted to $11,665 in 1905 and $13,342 in 1915 (exoluding customs duties); and the value of trade rose from $86,687 to $282,277 during the years 1901 to 1906 alone. This gives an indication of the potential importance of the loss of the district: compare the figures for Limbang with Brunei's total revenue of $51,777 in 1907, estimated total trade of $612,000 in 1904, and actual trade of $777,711 in 1915 (the first year for which national figures are available).

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56. Labuan reverted to Crown Colony status - see above, p 57.
57. Baring-Gould and Bampfylde, op.cit., pp 355-6.
58. FO 12/126 p 78, McArthur to Anderson, No 15, 2 June 1904, para' 11.

In a despatch dated 13 February 1906,[59] Mr McArthur reviewed the Limbang problem and argued that some arrangement would be necessary if anything was to be made of Brunei in the future. Realizing that the resumption of the entire district was out of the question ("this reversal of roles, with the Rajah instead of the powerless Sultan of Brunei as victim, would no doubt rouse too great an outcry"), Mr McArthur urged that a border re-organization was a matter of vital importance for Brunei. It had been assumed that 'The Limbang' was a district with well-defined boundaries. This was not so. The Sultan, refusing to recognize Brooke administration in Limbang, had not entered into any discussion concerning borders, whilst the Sarawak authorities had gradually absorbed all they could on each side of the river, including the hill which dominated Brunei Town. It had become essential, therefore, to define the boundaries as quickly as possible in order to settle ownership of "all the land in the neighbourhood of Brunei Town, including the large and important island of Berembang and the oil-bearing district of Kelemasih to say nothing of the at present less important ulu". Secondly, Limbang had already proved "a fruitful source of disagreement" with the Rajah. A settlement of the upper part of the river was less urgent, but Brunei control of ulu Limbang would afford a means of communication with Belait and Tutong. It would also ensure a "more effectual control" over the export of jungle produce from Brunei territory which was being sent from ulu Tutong and exported via Limbang without duty being paid to the Brunei Government. The Sarawak authorities declined to take any action;

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59. CO 144/80 (10206) McArthur to Anderson, 13 February 1906.

and the establishment of a system of customs within existing Brunei lands would have been very difficult, so Mr McArthur proposed that Brunei's interests would best be served by obtaining control of one bank of the river (viz. Limbang) down which the goods were carried.

The Sarawak authorities claimed the right to occupy the entire Limbang watershed. But since Brunei Town itself fell within this area, the Rajah had taken as much as he could with impunity. Mr McArthur urged that the watershed argument was an impossible basis for settling the boundary. Since what had been meant by 'The Limbang' had never been defined, he suggested that the river itself should be made the boundary between (West) Brunei and Sarawak administration from its mouth to the Madalam confluence. Since Pengkalan Tarap, where the Brooke district office was situated, was on the right bank, the Sarawak buildings would not be disturbed, and the padi planters on the left bank would simply be required to pay their taxes to Brunei instead of to Sarawak. The River Limbang might also serve as the frontier above the Madalam confluence, but this was of lesser importance. Some action, however, was essential since Limbang was indeed the "Life of Brunei" (at that time).

Mr Stubbs had sympathy with Mr McArthur's case, believing the seizure of Limbang by Sarawak to have been "an outrage, in which HM Government would never have acquiesced if their representatives had kept them properly informed". The fact remained that HM Government had acquiesced and "to take back the territory now without compensation would be an injustice to Sarawak".[60] Mr Lucas, the Under-

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60. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 30 March 1906.

Secretary, thought that the matter could be discussed with Sir John Anderson when he came home on leave

"but I would not do anything at present. There must be some such adjustment as is proposed but I think that it would be impolitic to attempt it directly we have taken over Brunei and while the Rajah of Sarawak is specially sore". 61

It was agreed later to wait "until some definite occasion is given for re-opening the question", i.e. until the death of Sir Charles Brooke.[62]

In August 1906, however, Sir John Anderson suggested[63] that in the altered circumstances of a reformed administration in Brunei, the Rajah, who based his interference on the "alleged interest" of the population of Limbang, might be invited to withdraw from there, as his occupation was no longer necessary for their protection. If the Rajah would not agree to do so, he should at least be called upon to pay the $6,000 annual cession money (although Mr McArthur had already rejected this option as "in every way unsuitable" because it would have put "the new administration of Brunei on a less dignified footing than the previous one").[64] The Sultan's refusal to accept the money had been purely "personal"; hence the Rajah should now pay up. The British Government found it impossible to adopt either of the courses proposed by Sir John: the first because HM Government had already acquiesced in the annexation; the second because, if it was conceded that the Sultan's decision had been "personal", HM Government might appear to be claiming a right to upset everything done

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61. Ibid., minute by CP Lucas, 2 April 1906.
62. Ibid., CO to McArthur, 28 April 1906; and CO 531/3 (9856) memorandum by Stubbs, "The Recent History of Brunei", 25 March 1911.
63. CO 144/80 (35282) Anderson to CO (Brunei, confidential), 30 August 1906, paragraphs 3-4.
64. CO 144/80 (10206) McArthur to Anderson, 13 February 1906, paragraph 25.

by the late Sultan. The only possible option was to wait until some time in the future when a territorial exchange might be effected.[65]

Other Brunei-Sarawak boundaries were less contentious, for example the borders with Baram and Trusan. These districts, despite the unmarked frontier, had been ceded voluntarily and consisted of little more than unexplored jungle. In the absence of a settled population, few questions arose as to conflicting jurisdictions. Even so, negotiations to define the exact borders could be prolonged.[66]

There were two subsidiary issues connected with the main Limbang dispute, viz. (i) Pandaruan and (ii) Berembang Island.

The Pandaruan was a sparsely-populated district between Limbang and Temburong. Its main products were jungle produce (including bark for the cutch factory in Brunei Town) and sago. In mid-1885 the Rajah had secured the right to collect tulin revenues in Pandaruan; but to all intents and purposes he treated the district as part of Sarawak. In 1912 Mr Chevallier (British Resident in Brunei) reminded the Sarawak Government that the Rajah's lease required "the people of Pandaruan"[67] to obtain

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65. CO 144/80 (35282) minute by Stubbs, 29 September 1906 and CO to FO, 5 October 1906; and CO 144/81 (38449) FO to CO, 17 October 1906.
66. The Trusan-Temburong boundary, for example, was settled in 1920, though a dispute broke out in 1923; an earlier attempt to settle this border had been made in 1911. (CO 604/8 Sarawak Gazette, 2 October 1923, p 322; and CO 604/3 Sarawak Gazette, 7 February 1911, p 61).
67. A reading of this lease appears to suggest that the obligation to purchase the stipulated articles (such as opium, salt and tobacco) from Brunei rested, not with the people of Pandaruan, but with the Pandaruan revenue farmers (who were to purchase "the aforesaid articles from the persons holding the same farms in Brunei"). No such local farms had been established in Pandaruan; and, apart from the farms in Muara Damit, the opium farm was the only important farm still surviving in Brunei in 1912.

certain commodities in Brunei and that a failure to do so would constitute a breach of the lease; and that the Brunei Government claimed poll tax in the district as a sovereign right. Mr Chevallier gave notice, therefore, that he intended to station a customs clerk at Rangau (a village at the mouth of the Pandaruan) to issue boat passes and to see that the stipulated commodities were obtained from Brunei.[68] The Rajah protested that the Resident's plans were likely to "drive the present population out of the river".[69] Enthusiastic supporters of Brunei in the Colonial Office, such as Mr Lee-Warner, were keen to exploit the opening provided by the Pandaruan dispute to attempt to recover Limbang for Brunei:

"I feel sure", Mr Lee-Warner minuted, "that while Sir Charles Brooke is still alive he will sooner lose his right hand than give up the Limbang for a fair price, unless some fulcrum is obtained - which now appears possible from the present Pandaruan case". 70

Sir John Anderson, then Permanent Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, wished to avoid such a confrontation. Indeed, an amicable settlement had already been achieved locally. It was agreed that the Brunei Government would collect the import and half the export duties in Pandaruan district. The issue was settled finally on 4 February 1920 when the River Pandaruan itself became the international frontier between Limbang (Sarawak) and Temburong (Brunei). Given that the Brooke State had no claim whatsoever to sovereign rights in the district,, this arrangement, which gave Sarawak

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68. CO 531/4 (20919) Chevallier to OAG Sarawak, 13 March 1912, paras' 1-2.
69. Ibid., Rajah to Sir AH Young, 25 May 1912. The original population of Kedayans had been swamped since 1885 by Sarawak Ibans brought in by the Rajah. Sir Charles adopted a similar policy in all the rivers north of the Rejang because he was uncertain of the loyalty of the existing population (Crisswell, op.cit., pp 148-9).
70. CO 531/4 (20919) minute by Lee-Warner, 2 July 1912.

one bank of the river, represented a most favourable outcome from Kuching's point of view.

If one half of Pandaruan district was surrendered, the incoming Brunei administration managed to retain control of the "large and important" Pulau Berembang. In 1904 the Sarawak Resident of Limbang visited the island regularly and it was being opened up on his instructions. A considerable number of public works had been built or were in the process of construction. Mr McArthur feared

"that with their usual supineness the (pre-Residential) Brunei Government will allow His Highness (the Rajah) to establish a station there and eventually exercise jurisdiction as if it were a part of Sarawak territory". 71

The Rajah intended, indeed, to make Buang Tawar (the site of his coal mine and oil works on the island) his capital when, as he anticipated, Brunei fell to him.[72] But in July 1904, after Mr McArthur had made three visits to the island, Sir Charles abandoned his building programme. In 1906 certain statements made by the Rajah, coupled with the fact that he was grazing cattle and making roads there, suggested to Mr McArthur that Sir Charles appeared to be "under a misapprehension" that the island was his own property.[73] Vigilance against Brooke encroachments could never be relaxed by Brunei. Sir Charles quietly conceded, however, that sovereignty over the island rested with Brunei. Similarly, in the case of the Kota Batu lands, it was made "perfectly clear" to the Rajah in 1905 that HM

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71. FO 12/126 p 78, McArthur to Anderson, No 15, 2 June 1904, para. 12.
72. CO 604/4 Sarawak Gazette, 1 July 1913, p 140.
73. CO 144/80 (35280) McArthur to 'Secretary to High Commissioner', No 150/06, 28 June 1906, paragraph 6. (The island was about eight miles by five in extent).

Government

"consider that the land has only been transferred to him in his personal capacity and still forms part of Brunei (...Unless we do this Rajah Brooke is sure to try to treat it as part of Sarawak, as he appears to be doing in the Muara Damit - Brooketon - case)". 74

5. Muara Damit

'The Muaras' comprise Muara Besar, an island 3¼ miles long at the mouth of the River Brunei; and Muara Damit, that part of the mainland opposite and the scene of the Rajah's mining operations. The harbour at Muara was one of the best along the NW coast of Borneo. The inhabitants of the "substantial, well cared-for and thriving"[75] settlement at Brooke-ton comprised almost entirely those who sought a livelihood by taking wages at the mine. There were also tens of Chinese shops. The Rajah claimed a population of 4,000 to 5,000 in Muara Damit (but only 1,447 were enumerated in the 1911 census);[76] "there have been no complaints", he added, "and everything has worked well during these many years".[77]

A distinction must be drawn between those rights held legally by the Rajah (the land and revenue farm rights in a concession 28 miles in circumference; and the coal monopoly) and those which had been usurped or were claimed to have been usurped (such as the exercise of jurisdiction

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74. CO 144/79 (16183) minute by Stubbs, 19 May 1905.
75. CO 144/80 (5578) Anderson to CO, No 1 (Labuan), 25 January 1906, paragraph 20.
76. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1911, p 4. Muara Besar was "uninhabited" at this time (CO 604/3 Sarawak Gazette, 1 June 1911, p 98), but the Rajah had the right to take up land on the island if it was required for the purpose of making coal sheds or houses for labourers (CO 531/3: 14523).
77. CO 144/81 (16405) memorandum by Sir C Brooke, 12 April 1906; and CO 144/81 (13408) Rajah to CO, 27 March 1906.

and the style 'Administrator of Brooketon' used by Mr Ricketts, the Sarawak Resident in Limbang). The Brunei Government wished to recover all these rights (except the coal lease), whether held legally or otherwise:

"It is clear", Mr Stubbs minuted in 1905, "that one of the first things for the Resident to do will be to harry Rajah Brooke out of the position he has usurped at Brooketon". 78

The first step taken by the British Government was to require the Rajah to withdraw his 'Administrator' - it was "ludicrous"[79] that he should appoint such an officer in territory which he admitted did not belong to him - and his magistrate. Sir Charles agreed to do so, but protested that some people undoubtedly wished to damage his reputation. He lamented that

"after so many years of unquestioned administration in Borneo, he should now, for the first time, be met with an accusation of irregularity and that doubt should be thrown upon the justness of his actions". 80

It is an indication of the extreme deference shown to the Rajah that Mr McArthur, even after becoming Resident in Brunei, did not feel free to visit the Muaras without Sarawak consent:

"I have carefully refrained" - thus Mr McArthur to Mr Ricketts - "from landing there or doing anything which might look like an act of discourtesy to the Sarawak Government and I think that it would probably look much better if, in the first instance, I visited the place by arrangement and in company with you...There are numerous questions of jurisdiction, police etc...to be settled". 81

Sir Charles asked the Colonial Office whether the Resident had authority

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78. CO 273/310 (33426) minute by Stubbs, 29 September 1905.
79. CO 144/81 (23939) minute by Stubbs, 3 July 1906.
80. Ibid., CA Bampfylde to FO, 25 June 1906, paragraph 4. (HM Government refuted the allegation that Sir John Anderson and Mr McArthur sought to damage the Rajah's reputation. Ibid.; and CO 144/81: 26593).
81. CO 144/81 (13408) McArthur to Ricketts, 14 February 1906.

thus to proceed. He declared that the site of Brooketon led to nowhere that could be of any use to the British Government, the colliery settlement was peaceful and change could not be beneficial to anyone concerned: why therefore should the present state of the place be disturbed?[82] The answer given was that it was not possible, now that a reformed administration had been introduced in Brunei, to allow Muara district to be left outside the jurisdiction of the State to which it belonged, or to permit the magistracy there to be retained by the Rajah.[83]

In another letter, this time to Sir John Anderson, the Rajah declared that either the British Government should leave him to work the coal as heretofore, or else they should purchase from him the coal rights and deed of land concession, but not one without the other: "in this event I would at once hand over and clear out".[84] Sir Charles cannot have been unaware that Brunei was bankrupt; consequently there was little danger that the British Government would adopt the second option of buying him out. It seems, therefore, that this was a bid by the Rajah to obtain a free hand in Muara Damit.

Sir John Anderson was anxious to recover full control in the district because the situation there was "extremely anomalous and difficult"; whereas the Rajah held virtually all the sources of revenue, he was under no obligation to contribute one cent towards the administration by Brunei of this territory.[85] Not only were the actual revenues of the

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82. Ibid., Rajah to CO, 27 March 1906.
83. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 23 April 1906; and CO 144/81 (18467), CO to Rajah, 30 May 1906.
84. CO 144/81 (16405) Rajah to Anderson, 12 April 1906.
85. CO 144/80 (35281) Anderson to CO, Brunei (confidential), 30 August

district lost to Brunei, Mr McArthur added, but attempts to collect taxes in the Brunei watershed were rendered hopeless by the existence of a foreign power at the mouth of the river. Goods landed at Brooketon were being distributed over the countryside without paying any dues to a Government which was dependent upon customs revenue for much of its income. Similarly, the Brunei Government usually charged an export duty on buffaloes of one dollar a head. When such animals were taken from the neighbourhood of the capital, it was not difficult to collect this tax, but, by the last trip of the Sarawak steamer from Brooketon,

"forty buffaloes went down to Kuching on which nothing has been paid. They came from the country-side round Muara. The monopoly of shipping them by Sarawak steamers (equivalent to the monopoly of export) is leased out by the Sarawak administration". 86

Furthermore, monopolies held in other parts of Brunei were being compulsorily expropriated by the Residential regime: it was most awkward, therefore, that special treatment was being accorded to the Rajah in this connection. Hence the Resident pressed strongly for the cancellation of Sir Charles Brooke's fiscal rights in Muara Damit:

"The question is, for the Brunei Government, not merely one of monetary profit or loss, but of effective administration of the State". 87

The High Commissioner, contending that the Rajah's lease did not preclude the Brunei Government from imposing export duties in Muara

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1906, paragraph 3. Earlier, in February 1906, Sir John Anderson asked the Colonial Office whether HM Government had ever accorded recognition to the 1887 lease under which the fiscal and land rights in Muara Damit were held by the Rajah. At length it was decided that whilst HM Government had never officially recognized the concession they had tacitly acknowledged its validity (CO 144/80: 9306; and CO 144/81: 18467).

86. CO 144/80 (35281) McArthur to Secretary to High Commissioner, No 151 (confidential), 28 June 1906, paragraph 6.

87. Ibid., paragraph 7.

Damit, proposed that (beginning on 1 January 1907) a duty of twenty-five cents should be charged on every ton of coal exported from Muara Damit and that the same export duties on other produce as were levied in the rest of Brunei should be imposed on similar exports from Muara Damit. In addition Sir Charles should be required to withdraw the Sarawak police stationed in the district. Another reason for resuming control of Muara Damit was that efforts to abolish slavery in Brunei would be undermined if the prohibition could not be enforced throughout the country: the Rajah continued to permit domestic slavery.[88] (Following the establishment of a postal system in Brunei in October 1906, notice was given that the Sarawak post office in Brooketon would have to be closed and the use of Sarawak stamps discontinued as from 1 January 1907. No dispute arose out of this new departure).[89]

Sir Charles Brooke agreed to withdraw his police from Muara district but described the proposal to levy a coal export duty as "quite contrary" to the spirit of his concession. In view of the heavy losses he was sustaining at Brooketon, he threatened to close down the mine.[90] The Colonial Office had still not received a copy of the 1887 lease (under which the fiscal and land rights in Muara Damit were held by the Rajah); hence civil servants there were in the dark concerning its provisions.

The Rajah was informed, therefore, that the issue would be referred back

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88. Ibid., Anderson to CO, 30 August 1906, paragraph 11.
89. CO 531/1 (7039) Anderson to CO, 25 January 1907, plus enclosures.
90. CO 144/81 (41004) Rajah to CO, 6 November 1906, paragraph 5. Once more the Rajah lamented "these and other serious complications, as they appear to be to me, that are now taking place around Brunei".

to the High Commissioner in Singapore.[91]

Meanwhile, the latter was prepared to compromise to the extent that, if the Rajah would repay the actual cost of the proposed Brunei policing of Muara Damit, the export duty on coal would be waived. If additional administrative expenses were sustained by Brunei, however, the coal duty would have to be levied unless the Rajah agreed to cover any such extra costs. Alternatively, if Sir Charles would surrender all his fiscal rights in Brooketon, the Brunei Government would assume the entire cost of administration there[92] (presumably without imposing the coal tax).

Mr Stubbs complained that the High Commissioner had not quite grasped the situation: if an export duty on coal was imposed by Brunei and the Rajah closed down the mines in consequence

"Sir Charles Brooke will make capital out of the incident by using it in support of the intrigues in which he is now engaged with a view to swallowing up Brunei and we shall gain nothing - since if the mines are shut there will be no duties collected. Moreover, (because the Rajah had protested against the proposal) it is not clear that we have any right to levy the duty". 93

Sir John Anderson's proposal that the Rajah should be required to pay for the policing (from 1907) by Brunei of Muara Damit was considered inexpedient both by Mr Stubbs and by Mr Fiddes. The latter warned that HM Government

"must be prepared to pay a very large sum even if the Rajah is willing

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91. Ibid., CO to Rajah, 13 November 1906. It is not obvious why the Colonial Office could not have searched its own archives for the relevant documents or consulted the Print of FO Correspondence (FO 572). Translations were also available in CO 144/80 (35281).
92. CO 144/80 (45588) Anderson to CO, tel., 11 December 1906.
93. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 11 December 1906.

to sell on any terms...Until we get rid of his concessions he has us in a cleft stick, and if we expropriate him and the matter goes to arbitration we should have to pay an altogether impossible price". 94

Mr Fiddes suggested that the Rajah might find a territorial exchange more attractive.

In February 1907 a despatch was received from the High Commissioner refuting the Rajah's claim that the proposal to levy an export duty was "quite contrary" to the spirit of his concession.[95] Mr Stubbs, although now convinced that the Brunei Government had the right to levy the export duty, was satisfied that this could not be justified "while the mines are worked at a loss". The alternative of asking the Rajah for a contribution to cover the cost of administration was "quite out of the question" because it could only be demanded "in lieu of not imposing an export duty and it is not seemly for a Government to levy blackmail". Mr Stubbs considered, however, that it would be possible to buy out the Rajah (except the coal rights). He took up the suggestion of an exchange involving the wild Temburong district, believing this

> "would be the less of two evils and if, as seems likely enough, Sir Charles Brooke's sons hand over Sarawak to us when he is dead, the mischief will be only temporary". 96

Mr McArthur, by contrast, vehemently opposed any exchange of Brooke rights in Muara Damit for the cession by Brunei of Temburong district.[97] Sir

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94. Ibid., minute by Fiddes, 11 December 1906.
95. CO 531/1 (5130) Anderson to CO, confidential, 12 January 1907.
96. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 23 February 1907.
97. CO 531/1 (20553) McArthur to Anderson, No 85, 26 April 1907. Mr McArthur's reasons included the opposition from the Sultan and chiefs to any such transfer and the fear that their apparently growing confidence in the British would be destroyed if such an exchange went ahead. Temburong also seemed to have good economic prospects; and it was comparatively accessible from the capital.

John Anderson conceded reluctantly (in May 1907) that nothing further could be done for the time being: the "main difficulty" with such a do-nothing approach lay in the character of the Rajah who had "not yet abandoned hope of obtaining control of Brunei" and was still intriguing there and using his agents to gather signatures to petitions.[98] Mr Stubbs agreed that a scheme for settling all outstanding questions at once would now (June 1907) have to be abandoned.[99] Thus Mr Lucas informed the Rajah that, while HM Government adhered to the view that Brunei was entitled to impose an export duty on coal, that right would not be exercised for the present.[100] The Rajah, for his part, did not concede even the nominal right of the Brunei Government to introduce such a tax.[101]

One of the "outstanding questions" was the Brooketon gambling farm, the existence of which came to Mr McArthur's attention only at the beginning of 1907. The Resident had no doubt that the Brunei Government was entitled to claim the revenue from this source: and, "seeing how few rights we have left there, I do not think any should be allowed to lapse".[102] The Colonial Office was inclined to agree, but the matter was shelved pending a comprehensive settlement. When this fell through, advice was sought from a Malay expert, and it was conceded that the Rajah had been within his rights in instituting such a farm. First, Sultan Hashim had raised no objection to it before 1906; and, secondly, the

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98. Ibid., Anderson to CO, Brunei (confidential), 16 May 1907.
99. CO 531/1 (20552) minute by Stubbs, 11 June 1907.
100. Ibid., Lucas to Rajah, 19 June 1907.
101. CO 531/1 (33215) Rajah to CO, 16 September 1907.
102. CO 531/1 (5866) McArthur to Anderson, 12 January 1907.

"really strong argument" was that, if he had believed himself to have retained a right to lease this farm, undoubtedly he would have sold it.[103]

The licence to gamble had deleterious social consequences in Brooketon, where (it was reported in 1910) the Brunei Government's officer

"has to spend most of his time in court, there being more litigation in the Court of Requests (sic) at Brooketon than there is in Brunei (Town). This is probably due to indebtedness among Malays owing to the existence of a farm in which Malays are allowed to gamble". 104

The Colonial Office, however, was less interested in stamping out this evil than in deriving the revenue therefrom for the Brunei Government. Eventually, in 1919, gambling was outlawed in Brunei, and, by threatening to extend the provisions of the enactment to Muara Damit (thereby rendering the gambling farm valueless), terms for the surrender of the gambling farm were arranged with the Sarawak authorities (see below, Appendix 1.2, pp 561-79).

Mr Stubbs believed (correctly) that the Muara concessions were causing the Rajah a very heavy financial loss

"and it is only his pride and his hope that he may yet be allowed to absorb Brunei that prevents his abandoning them. I have great hopes that his sons will be more reasonable, and Sir C Brooke is over eighty". 105

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103. CO 531/1 (35898) minute by Stubbs, 10 October 1907. The coal tax and 'gambling and arack' farm would have contributed significantly, albeit in a diminishing ratio, to Brunei's meagre revenue. I estimate that they would have added $6,728 to the actual income of $51,777 in 1907 and $8,136 to the actual revenue of $165,082 in 1913. The coal tax was eventually imposed in 1921 (see below, p 102).

104. CO 531/2 (11169) memorandum by Mr Chevallier, 9 February 1910. Gambling was usually confined to adult male Chinese in British Malaya.

105. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 21 April 1910. Mr Stubbs hoped to use the Rajah's desire to lay an oil pipeline across Brunei as a lever to oblige him to abandon the gambling farm; but nothing came of this (CO 531/3: 4855, minute, 14 February 1911).

6. Economic

In 1906 Sir Charles Brooke, apart from exercising considerable political influence within Brunei, was also the most powerful economic speculator there. In 1888 he purchased from Mr WC Cowie the exclusive right to work coal in all Brunei east of the River Tutong; he ran mines at Brooketon (from 1888) and at Buang Tawar (from c1900). In March 1903 Consul Hewett reported the discovery of oil at the latter mine; and by the following month the Rajah had secured a concession from Sultan Hashim, covering Berembang Island only, to work the mineral. Unfortunately this oil proved, if anything, to be a handicap because it had little commercial value and interfered with coal-mining operations.

In 1914 Sir Charles created a considerable stir by advancing, in the name of his youngest son, a claim to exclusive mineral rights in Brunei (except coal, the monopoly of which he held separately), adding that all oil-mining leases granted by the Brunei Government since 1906 were invalid. This claim was based on two concessions, one granted previously to a Mr Everett in 1883 and transferred to the Central Borneo Company (CBC) in 1887, and the other granted directly to the CBC in 1890. Although these concessions had been cancelled finally by Sultan Hashim in 1897 (because of failure by the lessees to comply with their terms), they had been sold afterwards to Mr Cowie (1901) and resold to the Rajah's son (November 1904). The Rajah "appears to have been had",[106] Mr Bampfylde noted later.

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106. (Rhodes House Oxford) Mss Pac s83/6 CA Bampfylde to Mr C Willes-Johnson (Secretary, SSAC), 2 July 1915.

The Everett lease of 1883 was valid, at most, for thirty years. Even if it had not been cancelled by Sultan Hashim, therefore, it would have expired in 1913. At the time the second lease, dated 1890, had been obtained by the CBC, the Rajah declared that it was "illegal by the law of Brunei" and he refused to recognize the company's rights in Limbang, which he annexed later the same year.[107] Yet, in 1914, Sir Charles did not scruple, on the basis of this very document, to advance a claim to exclusive mineral rights in Brunei.

The 1890 lease had excluded oil; and the CBC had failed to comply with certain other conditions. Yet even supposing it had been valid at the time of the Brunei Mining Enactment (1908), it had since lapsed through failure (by the Rajah) to comply with the clause requiring that a lessee should not fail for a period of twelve months to carry out mining operations. (The Brookes had done none at all in the territory covered by the two leases).[108] Note once again the Rajah's contempt for the law of Brunei. The Mining Enactment would have rendered both

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107. FO 12/84 p 223, Rajah to Sir P Currie (1836-1906), 4 July 1890; and Crisswell, op.cit., p 182.

108. One official suggested that in demanding and obtaining a mining lease for Berembang oil in 1903 Sir Charles must have assumed that there was no valid rival monopoly of Brunei oil in existence at this time. But this may not be so, because both the 1883 and the 1890 leases excluded Brunei district, where Berembang Island is situated; alternatively, the Rajah tended to treat Berembang Island as part of Limbang, which <u>was</u> included in the two leases. (The 1883 lease covered Belait, Tutong, Limbang and Temburong, plus certain other <u>rivers</u> later ceded to either Sarawak or North Borneo. The 1890 lease dropped seven <u>rivers</u> which had been thus ceded, but retained a few others which were ceded between 1890 and 1905). HM Government argued that, in any case, petroleum had been specifically excluded from the two leases.

leases null and void, even if they had not been cancelled by Sultan Hashim. The correspondence dragged on until 1916, when the Rajah finally conceded that the CBC's lease was invalid. The last word on this case, however, must surely rest with Mr AE Collins, Head of the Eastern Department at the Colonial Office, who described the claim as "monstrous" and added that

"no (prospecting or mining) work has been done, and the Brooke family must have been perfectly aware for years that the Government of Brunei were granting leases...for oil mining...To bring forward a claim in this manner...is really indecent". 109

Turning to coal, the Rajah's colliery at Brooketon incurred heavy losses from the outset and it was not until 1917 that even a tiny surplus was achieved on a year's trading. Interim losses since 1888 amounted to $1,500,000. These deficits were borne, not by the Rajah personally, but by the Sarawak treasury. The Rajah's readiness to accept such losses is remarkable, given that he had the reputation of being an "austere" ruler who "abhored extravagance" and whose "only thought was the prosperity of Sarawak".[110] Mr Bampfylde explained that Brooketon without its coal mine "would be but a small fishing hamlet", that the mine provided employment for a great many people and that it was "entirely on this account" that the Rajah kept open the industry.[111] The real reason was given by Sir Charles Brooke himself in 1886:

"The position of Muara Damit, to my mind, is of great importance as being

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109. CO 531/6 (4620) minute by Mr AE Collins (1871-1926), 10 February 1914.
110. S Runciman, op.cit., pp 166, 168 and 216; and Ranee M Brooke, Good Morning and Good Night (London 1934), p 34.
111. CO 144/81 (11990) Bampfylde to FO, 6 April 1906. See also, Baring-Gould and Bampfylde, op.cit., p 358.

the key to the capital of Brunei...I do not think that Muara Damit will be of any particular pecuniary importance...(but) the Limbang trade will go direct out of that river when it is clear of Brunei rule, either to Labuan, or by shipping vessels coming to the town which would naturally form itself inside the Limbang river. Brunei and its river would then sink considerably". 112

In short, possession of Muara Damit, in conjunction with that of Limbang,

would give him a stranglehold on Brunei and bring closer to fulfilment his ultimate ambition, viz. the incorporation of Brunei within Sarawak.

Mr Bampfylde declared that before their transfer to the Rajah

the Brooketon mines had been worked

"in a hand to mouth fashion by a few coolies under a manager with but little experience, the output being confined to meeting the very limited local demand in Labuan. There was practically no plant, and only a small ricketty wharf, to which the surface coal was conveyed in buffalo-drawn waggons over a roughly-constructed line". 113

Sir Charles, on the other hand, "bought up to date equipment and installed experienced managers".[114] In fact, Mr Cowie had employed more labourers ("nearly 300") in 1887[115] than the Rajah was doing in 1908 (about 250).[116] Secondly, the Rajah found it necessary to dismiss his "experienced manager" in 1912.[117] Thirdly, Mr Cowie increased annual production from scratch to perhaps 12,000 tons in the space of only five years (1882-6), whereas after a further twenty years under the Rajah's ownership, annual output had reached only 18,000 tons. The "appearance of prosperity" at Brooketon, finally, was "deceptive" since the plant was run at a loss. The Sarawak

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112. FO 12/71 p 51, Rajah to Consul P Leys, 22 January 1886 (my emphasis); also in CO 144/62 (9759).
113. Baring-Gould and Bampfylde, op.cit., p 358.
114. Runciman, op.cit., pp 193-4.
115. CO 144/64 (20250) WC Cowie (c1847-1910) to Leys, 30 April 1887. Perhaps Mr Cowie's claim needs to be treated with caution, however.
116. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1908, p 6.
117. (RHO) Mss Pac s103, p 143. (Sir Charles Brooke declared that it "certainly was a good thing getting rid of May", i.e. the manager).

Gazette itself commented:

"...The unfortunate part of this industry is that a ready market is not always to be found at Labuan, so that when a quantity is turned out there is an insufficient sale, while, at other times, when there is none, or only very little coal, there always seems an eager demand for it". 118

Mr McArthur claimed that the Rajah's coal monopoly was unfortunate because he was able to prevent anyone else from working coal. In 1907, for example, a Chinese merchant based in Labuan proposed to exploit a seam at Subok, near Brunei Town. The Resident believed that the Chinaman's application was a bona fide one and that it would be a "matter for regret" if it was decided to turn it down because of a coal monopoly claimed by the Rajah. Sir John Anderson ruled that there were "no sufficient grounds" for questioning the Rajah's monopoly. This was "unfortunate", in Mr Stubbs' opinion, because "Rajah Brooke, by controlling the coal supply, can prevent the establishment of any considerable industry in Brunei".[119] In this instance, the Rajah's critics were being somewhat harsh. First, the Chinaman's proposal to exploit Subok coal had arisen because of the Rajah's threat to close his Brooketon mine should an export duty on coal be imposed. Since this right was not exercised for the time being, the mine remained open. Secondly, even Mr Stubbs had admitted that, if the colliery was closed, it would be difficult to find anyone else to work it. Finally, as Mr Chevallier himself recognized, the mine provided employment for Brunei people and was being run at a loss by the Rajah.

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118. CO 604/1 Sarawak Gazette, 2 July 1907, p 159.
119. CO 531/1 (23334) minute by Stubbs, 23 July 1907.

7. Rajah Vyner Brooke and Brunei (1917-32)

At the time of the death of Sir Charles Brooke (1917) the situation was as follows. First, Brooke political influence had been effectively neutralized in Brunei and Sarawak no longer posed a threat to the success of the Residential System there. The era of Brunei's territorial decline had come to an end, although there were some unfavourable boundary adjustments as in the case of Pandaruan. Secondly, Limbang had not been recovered, but the incoming administration had managed to reassert Brunei's sovereignty over Berembang Island and half of Pandaruan district. Thirdly, it had been made clear to the Rajah by the British Government that the rights he held in Berembang, Kota Batu and Muara Damit were held in his personal capacity and these lands were not to be treated as belonging to Sarawak. In Muara Damit, the new regime in Brunei insisted that the Rajah should withdraw his 'administrator', Malay magistrate and police, cease exercising jurisdiction, and close his post office. On the other hand, Sir Charles retained his fiscal and land rights in Muara Damit; in this respect, indeed, he was treated most favourably since other monopolists had been compulsorily expropriated. He had established, further, his right to institute a gambling 'farm' there and to thwart the imposition of an export duty on his coal. The British Government, for its part, deferred to the Rajah because of his advanced age, his status as an independent sovereign, and his recognized achievements as the ruler of Sarawak since 1868.

The image of Sir Charles Brooke which emerges from his dealings with Brunei is not an attractive one. Time and again he showed himself

to be mendacious, unscrupulous, arrogant and grasping. Yet in his final years he presented a somewhat sad aspect: unable to obtain "justice" from the British Government; wishing to retire but unable conscientiously to do so; imagining plots by grasping outsiders (such as the "city men" of the BNBC); and distrustful of his own son and heir. He feared, also, the designs of the Colonial Office: when Mr Lee-Warner returned to Brunei at the beginning of 1913, Sir Charles warned his representative in Limbang that he (Mr Lee-Warner) "comes or is sent for a purpose, to shut up our Government as much as possible. So be guarded of him - he is a gentleman and very plausible".[120] It was "next to impossible to get a fair deal from the British authorities" but "might makes right and that I must submit to".[121] When the British authorities inadvertently alienated some of the Rajah's estate at Kota Batu, Sir Charles alleged that they had "overstepped the mark in their energy and hatred against Sarawak".[122] He could be surprisingly petty on occasion. At the beginning of 1907, for example, he alleged that the Resident was suppressing the name Brooke-ton (merely another of the Rajah's "malicious attempts" to disoredit the Resident, accoording to Mr Stubbs);[123] or when he gave the order (rescinded later) for Brooketon lighthouse to be demolished.[124]

After the death of Sir Charles in 1917, the High Commissioner (Sir Arthur Young) was invited to suggest solutions to any outstanding issues between Brunei and Sarawak. After consulting Messrs McArthur and

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120. (RHO) Mss Pac s103, p 162 (Rajah to DA Owen, 11 February 1913).
121. (RHO) Mss Pac s83 (6), Rajah to SSAC, 25 February 1915.
122. (RHO) Mss Pac s103, p 157 (Rajah to Owen, 2 August 1913).
123. CO 531/1 (18527) minute by Stubbs, 23 May 1907.
124. CO 531/1 (1027 and 1446; see also 10629).

Cator (past and present Residents), Sir Arthur concluded[125] that the loss of Limbang had done "more than anything else to retard the progress of Brunei". Although consideration for the advanced age and personality of the late Rajah had forbidden the re-opening of the issue, Sir Arthur had "no hesitation" in recommending that the opportunity afforded by his death should be taken to make a more decided effort to secure the restitution of Limbang to Brunei. The new Rajah, Vyner Brooke, could not find "any adequate reason", however, why the Sarawak Government should have been asked, still less expected, to return Limbang, which would damage Sarawak prestige; further the equivalent of what would have been paid in cession money had been devoted entirely to the development of the district, a loss of $120,000 having been incurred since 1890.[126] Sir Arthur, therefore, could not recommend

"that any further steps should be taken in the matter; and in my opinion pressure should not be brought on the Rajah to force him to give up Limbang for a pecuniary consideration. Nor can I advise that he should be offered any Brunei territory in exchange". 127

Mr Collins at the Colonial Office appreciated the new Rajah's reluctance to restore Limbang to Brunei, but hoped that the position might be "easier for him in a few years hence":

"I would not abandon hope of getting Limbang back...(A) more convenient opportunity for arranging a settlement may occur in a few years' time". 128

In fact, such an opportunity did not arise.[129]

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125. CO 531/11 (10824) Young to CO, Borneo (secret), 29 December 1917.
126. CO 537/839 (18354) Rajah Vyner to Young, 26 December 1918.
127. Ibid., Young to CO, Borneo (secret), 19 February 1919, paragraph 3.
128. Ibid., minute by Collins, 14 April 1919.
129. In 1941, to coincide with the centenary of Brooke rule in Sarawak Rajah Vyner undertook to 'compensate' the descendants of those who had owned 'feudal' rights in Limbang. In 1947 the new Colonial regime in Sarawak resolved to continue such annuities.

With regard to Muara Damit, Sir Arthur Young reported in 1917 that

"the private rights of the family of (the late) Sir Charles Brooke inside Brunei are not matters of urgency now that the State has a settled Government capable of preventing their being used for political purposes". 130

These rights were "an annoyance", certainly, because they hindered the full development of the country, but they were not, in themselves, "of such importance as to demand that any special effort should be made to arrive at a general settlement of them en bloc".(130)

It will be recalled that in 1907 the Colonial Office, although reserving the right to impose a duty on coal exported from Brunei, had refrained from imposing the tax because the Rajah's mine was running at a loss. In 1918 and 1919, however, the Brooketon mine had made substantial profits, whilst the cost of administration of the district by the Brunei authorities had also risen sharply. Hence notice was given that the coal export duty would be imposed from the beginning of 1921.[131] Rajah Vyner, moreover, was about to sell the Brooketon colliery to a Mr Hatton Hall, described as an "inveterate picker-up of bargains in Borneo", who would probably have caused the Brunei Government a lot of trouble if he got hold of the farms.[132] (In the past, possession of the farms and the coal mine

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130. CO 531/11 (10824) Young to CO, Borneo (secret), 29 December 1917, paragraph 4.
131. CO 531/14 (26853) Sir LN Guillemard to CO, confidential, 20 April 1920. The Brooketon mine had made a profit of $118,369.06 in 1918 and $122,651.14 in 1919. The Buang Tawar colliery had been closed in 1917.
132. CO 531/15 (21524) minute by Mr H Beckett, 10 May 1921. Mr Hall, for his part, preferred to describe himself as a "pioneer" in Brunei and British North Borneo (see Appendices 1.2 and 1.4).

had been in the same hands). Hence in August 1920 negotiations were opened with the Rajah's representatives for the resumption, by the Brunei Government, of the Muara rights. At length (March 1924) agreement was reached whereby Rajah Vyner agreed to exchange all his tax farm rights (including the gambling farm) for a reduction of certain annual payments made by Sarawak to Brunei. In September 1931, on the occasion of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin's coming of age, Sir Vyner Brooke GCMG announced his intention to surrender his land rights in Muara as well, retaining only a bungalow for his own use. The formal deed was signed by him on 25 January 1932 and by the Brunei Sultan on 10 March the same year.[133]

After the First World War the price of coal fell drastically and, because of increased costs of labour and materials, as well as the new tax on coal exports in 1921, the Brooketon mine fell into a deficit again in 1922. Other problems included flooding of seams and fires resulting from spontaneous combustion. Despite small profits in 1923 and 1924, the colliery was eventually closed in November 1924, and Sir Vyner Brooke's mining concession lapsed at the end of 1925. The proposed sale of the colliery to Mr Hall had been cancelled in July 1921, though he made another, equally unsuccessful, attempt in 1937 to acquire the rights.[134] After the closure of the Brooketon mine in 1924 many of the inhabitants removed to Miri and Sadong in Sarawak, abandoning their houses and gardens. Brooketon village was gradually overrun by jungle;

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133. CO 717/91 (File 92359) Sir C Clementi to CO, UMS (Brunei), confidential, 3 May 1932, paragraphs 3.4. Cf. Appendix 1.2 (below).
134. CO 786/11 (File 51987).

and, by the late 1950s, there was little to show where it had once stood.

8. Conclusion

In the foregoing chapter it has been shown that at length the new administration managed to eliminate Brooke influence within Brunei. The only major setback concerned Limbang, which remains in Sarawak's possession to this day. But, as years passed, the loss of this district became of decreasing significance. In the first half of the Residential Era, the recovery of Limbang had been seen as a matter of vital economic importance for Brunei; but, after the discovery of the Seria oilfield in 1929, the grievance became rather one of sentiment (injury to national pride) and irritation (because Limbang split Brunei up into two detached wings). The issue resurfaced occasionally;[135] but during the terms of most Residents the matter was not raised.[136] By the 1950s the existence of the Limbang corridor appeared "to hamper administration only to a small extent".[137]

Concomitantly with their dealings with the Brookes, the early British Residents in Brunei had been introducing important administrative and financial reforms, which are treated in chapters four and five respectively.

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135. For example, in 1941, 1947 and 1950.
136. Mr JG Black (BR 1937-40): "I was under no pressure to obtain the retrocession of the Limbang district. The question was never raised". (Letter to the author, 11 June 1983, paragraph 4). Four other former Residents of Brunei have commented similarly.
137. RH Hickling, Memorandum upon Brunei Constitutional History and Practice (January 1955), confidential and unpublished manuscript, paragraph 7. Copy courtesy of Awang Bussoff Agaki.

CHAPTER FOUR

TOWARDS 'A DECENT ADMINISTRATION'[1] 1906-1932

1. Introdnotion

This chapter will examine the administrative reorganization of Brunei after 1906. The former system of administration, taxation and land tenure based on kerajaan, kuripan and tulin rights was replaced by a new method of central government and district administration controlled by the Resident. The British laid the foundations for a new bureaucracy and modernized the dispensation of justice. There was also an element of continuity because British policy aimed for the minimum of interference with the rights of the rulers coupled with the maximum of justice for the subject. Brunei was a hierarchically-structured society and no attempt was made radically to alter this structure. Administration was conducted in the name of the Sultan. It is important to remember that Brunei was never a British colony as such. Hence there were serious complications in 1909-10 when the young Sultan objected to certain land legislation; and at one point he was threatened with deposition by the High Commissioner. But first let us examine the nature of the 1905-6 settlement.

2. The 1905-6 Settlement

The blueprint for the initial years of the British Residency

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1. CO 144/77 (16635) minute by Mr RE Stubbs (1876-1947), 8 May 1903.

is a document dated 9 November 1905,[2] addressed by the High Commissioner to Messrs Campbell and McArthur,[3] the envoys sent to Brunei to renegotiate the 1888 Treaty. In view of the "lawlessness" in Brunei (the directive ran) Sultan Hashim was to be warned that if he refused to accept the terms offered, the British Government would leave him to his fate. Assuming that he desired assistance in averting the dissolution of his country and dynasty, it was to be made clear to him that "the whole of the administration and the whole powers of legislation and taxation were to be considered on the advice of the British Resident". Instead of the irregular revenues which they had received hitherto, the Sultan and wazirs were to accept fixed annuities. Tulin rights, monopolies and cession monies were to be investigated carefully by the envoys and bought up to provide a revenue for the new regime. Negotiations proceeded smoothly. The Sultan and wazirs attached their seals to the new treaty on 3 December 1905; and on 2 January 1906 Sir John Anderson arrived in Brunei to complete the agreement on behalf of HM Government.

In the first article of the 1905-6 'Supplementary Agreement' (to the 1888 UK-Brunei Treaty) Sultan Hashim agreed to accept a British officer, to be styled Resident, whose

"advice must be taken and acted upon on all questions in Brunei other than those affecting the Muhammadan religion, in order that a similar system may be established to that existing in other Malay States now under British Protection". 4

The United Kingdom, for its part, undertook to ensure the

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2. FO 12/128 p 246, Anderson to Campbell and McArthur, 9 November 1905.
3. DG Campbell (1867-1918) CMG 1912. 1883-1904: served in Selangor. 1904: Resident, Negri Sembilan. 1910-18: General Adviser, Johore.
4. The full text of the 1905-6 Treaty appears in Appendix 1.1.

"due succession" to the Brunei throne, thereby preserving the Brunei monarchy if not definitely establishing the principle of primogeniture.

After considering the claims of Mr H Chevallier ("about the best of the district officers now left in the FMS" but "too good and too senior" to be sent to Borneo),[5] Sir John appointed Mr McArthur to be the first Resident of Labuan and Brunei, with his headquarters in the former.

On 2 January 1906, after signing the Treaty, the High Commissioner reminded the assembled Malays that they knew Mr McArthur

"and knew that he understood and was a good friend of Malays and would work for their good. That he had my full confidence and they must remember that his words were my words, that the Sultan and his pengirans must listen to him and must help him in working for the good of the country. That above all they must remember that under the Treaty which they had signed, it was their duty to consider the advice Mr McArthur would give them, not trying each man what he could get out of it for himself, but honestly trying to help forward what was best for the country. If they did this, I was sure of a prosperous future for it, and hoped to come again and see how they were progressing". 6

Sultan Hashim constantly signified his approval of these remarks and gave Sir John Anderson the impression that he was very glad to be relieved of the burden of attempting to govern Brunei. His Highness then turned to the assembled pengirans, telling them that if they had anything to say this was the moment to do so. The only matter raised concerned the position of their religion; and, on being reassured on this point, they had nothing further to bring forward. Finally, the Sultan shook the High Commissioner "warmly by the hand" as the latter took his departure.

A permanent officer on the spot in Brunei was declared (by Sir

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5. CO 273/309 (27211) Sir F Swettenham to AI Harding, 5 August 1905. Mr Chevallier became Acting Resident in 1907 and 1909-13.
6. CO 144/80 (5578) Sir J Anderson to CO, No 1 (Labuan), 25 January 1906, paragraph 15.

John) to be necessary.[7] The first such 'Assistant Resident' was Mr FAS McClelland, who arrived in May 1906. In view of his influence in Brunei, as well as his knowledge of engineering, Dato Roberts was appointed Director of Public Works in September 1906, a post he held until 1921.[8]

In documents subsidiary to the main 1905-6 Treaty it was agreed that Sultan Hashim and the two surviving wazirs would continue to receive any private cession money payments from Sarawak and North Borneo but all other revenues would go to the Government. In view of the strife which was to follow over land legislation one clause assumed particular importance:

"5. A sufficient tract of land shall be reserved round the sites of the residences of our friend (i.e. the Sultan), Pengiran Bendahara and Pengiran Pemancha free of all rates, charges or rents". 9

The corollary of this was that all other land was taken into State ownership and that the Government was entitled to charge rent for its occupation.

In compensation for the surrender of kerajaan and kuripan rights, the monarch received an annuity of $12,000 and the wazirs $6,000 each, with a promise that, should the revenue allow, these sums might "properly be raised in future". In order to "facilitate" the signing of the treaty, Sultan Hashim was given a loan of $3,000 repayable in instalments as his allowance fell due monthly.[10]

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7. CO 273/309 (43669) Anderson to CO, (SS) confidential, 16 November 1905; and CO 273/317 (5647) Anderson to CO, (SS) confidential, 25 January 1906, paragraph 2.
8. CO 144/80 (40678) Anderson to CO, 5 October 1906, paragraph 3; CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1921, pp 5 and 8; and CO 273/517 (47019).
9. CO 273/312 (691) Campbell and McArthur to Sultan (enclosure B, clause 5), no date (03 December 1905). See p 559 (below).
10. Ibid., clause 3; and Campbell and McArthur to Anderson, 6 December 1905, paragraph 8. The "expenses" incurred during this mission ($5,984.23)

The resolution of *tulin* claims was delayed because many alleged titles had been forged (with the assistance of the *wazirs*) during the final illness (March to May 1906) of Sultan Hashim and thereafter. Many *tulin* rights, moreover, were mortgaged to Chinese traders who set enormous values on their land even when they were completely ignorant of where such land was to be found. In some cases the same rights had been sold several times over. A further difficulty was that several well-substantiated claims lay in areas provisionally granted (by the new administration) to Europeans, who were indignant that the Government intended to uphold existing indigenous rights. The only district relatively free from *tulin* property was Temburong (the isolated eastern wing of the country). It was not until 1910 that a thorough investigation into land holdings was launched by the Assistant Resident, Mr WH Lee-

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were charged to the Brunei revenue for 1906. (CO 824/1 *Brunei Annual Report 1906*, p 6). What had all this money been used for? (cf. 1904 when Mr McArthur, as consul, had an allowance of ten shillings or $4.3 a day).

Sir Charles Brooke was particularly incensed on the subject of the annuities: "I see that they are paying the Sultan the exact amount that I offered", he complained. This is true only superficially. Mr McArthur devoted a section of his "Report" to a consideration of the offer made by Sarawak for a takeover of Brunei and concluded that the Sultan, even in his reduced circumstances, was already receiving a sum equivalent to the amount offered by Sarawak (admittedly only by mortgaging future revenues) and, therefore, had no incentive even on financial grounds to accept the Rajah's terms; that Sir Charles had made no provision for *tulin* claims; and that the present needs of the rulers rather than the true value of the country appeared to have been his (the Rajah's) criterion. The proposed Sarawak annuities, instead of increasing as the revenues of Brunei might allow, were to be halved at the death of the first recipients. By accepting the British Government's terms, by contrast, the Sultan and *wazirs* did not personally have to meet subsidiary *tulin* claims; they had the prospect of increased (rather than reduced) annuities; and, not least, they still had a country and a dynasty. The simple fact remains, moreover, that whereas Sultan Hashim rejected the Brooke offer, he accepted the one made by the United Kingdom.

Warner, "a man of exceptional ability".[11] The complexity of his task is indicated by the fact that 105 tulin 'claims in chief' and 500 sub-claims remained outstanding; but thanks to his energy the tulin issue was finally settled. The procedure, after transcription, was

"to call in the claimants; to fix a date for visiting the land, there to verify boundaries, or recollection of boundaries, on the spot; to verify the claim itself; to note whether conflicting or overlapping claims exist; and finally to issue a title or redeem the claim if genuine; or reject it if (it is) clearly insupportable". 12

The "greatest difficulty" was experienced in persuading tulin owners to accept the compensation offered: "most of them hoped to carry on with advances and to leave final settlement to a later date in the hope that some future Resident might assess their claims at an enhanced value".[13]

The Pengiran Bendahara alleged, in mid-1906, that the recent treaty was signed by the Sultan only under duress. This claim was made at a time when the wazir was disgruntled because he had been passed over for the succession by Sultan Hashim and when he was encouraged by the second Rajah, who was bitterly disappointed because HM Government had blocked his attempted takeover of Brunei. The word of the wazir was not entirely reliable,[14] and even a Sarawak officer like Mr AB Ward believed that there was no evidence to support the contention of duress.[15] Further-

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11. CO 273/502 (59654) Sir L Guillemard as referee on Mr Lee-Warner's application for a transfer (November 1920).
12. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 12.
13. CO 531/2 (11169) memorandum by Mr H Chevallier, 9 February 1910.
14. FO 572/39 MSH McArthur, "Report on Brunei in 1904", paragraph 68; FO 12/126 p 201, McArthur to Anderson, No 53, 9 October 1904, paragraph 2; CO 144/81 (27240) minute by Stubbs, 25 July 1906; and CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 12.
15. AB Ward, Rajah's Servant (Cornell, 1966), p 103.

more when Mr Hewett had used an (unauthorized) threat of force in an attempt to induce Sultan Hashim to accept Sarawak control, the Brunei monarch had not been overawed and did not give way. It is not possible, therefore, to substantiate the wazir's allegation.

3. The British Resident

Throughout the Residential Era twenty-two officers held this post, giving an average tenure per Resident of approximately 26 months. This masks wide discrepancies, however: whereas four Residents were merely stop-gaps, serving for only a few months each, four others (viz. Messrs H Chevallier, GE Cator, EEF Pretty and JO Gilbert) collectively held the post for approaching half the entire Residential Era.

The background of the Residents, as suggested by the timechart overleaf, was very much as expected. Attendance at public school was de rigueur (but not, generally, at the most prestigious establishments, such as Eton, Harrow etc). At least twelve proceeded to University (10 Oxbridge), but quite a high number (six) did not.[16] Paternal occupations included solicitor, vicar, professor and general, whilst other Residents followed their fathers into the Malayan Civil Service (MCS).

From 1906 to 1936 Residents were junior officers seconded from Class III (1906-15) or Class IV (1915-36) of the MCS. As a type, they were young (early 30s) and single, and the Residency in Brunei - which was not, at that time, a particularly important post - was nothing like

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16. The statistics overleaf are not quite complete. Nineteen Residents attended public school (3 n.a.); whilst, with regard to higher education, one attended the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich (3 n.a.).

Table 2: Timechart of the British Residents in Brunei (1906-1959)

No.	Term as Resident	Name	Lifespan	Age[1]	School	University	Career Overseas	Final Post	Honours	Titles
1.	Jan 1906 - 1908	M S H McArthur	1872-1934	33	Tavistock	Oxford	1895-1922	B.A. Kedah	—	—
2.	i May 1907 - Dec 1907 ii Nov 1909 - Nov 1911	H Chevallier	c1860-1923	c47	n.a.	n.a.	1890-1915	? Class II (MCS)	—	—
3.	Apr 1908 - Sep 1909	J F Owen	1868-1942	40	Blundells	none	1889-1921	Comnr of Lands, FMS	—	—
4.	Sep 1909 - Nov 1909	B O Stoney	c1882-1910	27	n.a.	n.a.	1903-1910	D.O. (Cls V)	—	—
5.	Nov 1913 - Jan 1915	F W Douglas	1874-1953	39	Fettes	n.a.	1895-1929	B.R. Perak	*Datuk*	*Datuk*
6.	Feb 1915 - May 1916	E B Maundrell	1880-1916	34	Repton	Cambridge	1903-1916	B.R. Brunei	—	—
7.	Jun 1916 - Mar 1921	G E Cator	1884-1973	32	Bruton	Cambridge	1907-1936	B.R. Perak	KBE, CMG	Sir
8.	Mar 1921 - Jan 1923	L A Allen	1888-1971	33	Merchant Taylor's	Oxford	1912-?c1940	n.a.	OBE	—
9.	i Jan 1923 - May 1928 ii Aug 1948 - Jun 1951	E E F Pretty	1891-1967	31 & 57	Harrow	Oxford	1914-1951	B.R. Brunei	SPMB, CMG	*Dato*
(10.	Mar 1926 - May 1927	O E Venables	1891-1960	35	C.C. Belfast	Tri. Dublin	1914-1948	B.R. Kedah	—	—
11.	May 1928 - Sep 1931	P A B McKerron	1896-1964	32	Fettes	none	1920-1950	Col. Sec., S'pore	KBE, CMG	Sir
(12.	Dec 1928 - Aug 1929	R J F Curtis	b1897-	31	Blundells	(RMA Woolwich)	1920-1951	B.R. Perlis	PJK	*Datuk*
13.	Sep 1931 - Oct 1934	T F Carey	1903-1966	28	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
14.	Nov 1934 - Jan 1937	R E Turnbull	1905-1960	28	King's, London	Oxford	1929-1960	Gov., N. Borneo	KCMG	Sir
15.	Jan 1937 - Dec 1939	J G Black	b1896-	40	RHS Edinburgh	Edinburgh	1920-1951	B.R. Perak	—	—
16.	Jan 1940 - Dec 1941	E E Pengilley	1897-1984	42	Christ's Hospital	Oxford	1921-1956	Resettlement Off'r	ED	—
17.	Jul 1946 - Jan 1948	W J Peel	b1912-	33	Wellington	Cambridge	1933-1951	B.R. Gilberts	Kt, DSLJ, DSN	*Dato* Sir
18.	Jan 1948 - Aug 1948	L H N Davis	b1909-	39	Marlborough	Cambridge	1932-1957	Def. Sec. S'pore	CMG	—
19.	Jul 1951 - Jun 1953	J C H Barcroft*	1908-1958	43	Weymouth College	none	1930-1958	Fin. Sec. Sarawak	CMG, OSS	—
20.	Jun 1953 - Jul 1958	J O Gilbert*	b1907-	45	Felsted	Oxford	1929-1958	B.R. Brunei	CMG	—
(21.	Jul 1954 - Oct 1954	D H Trumble	b1902-	52	St. Dunstan's	none	1928-1954	B.R. Brunei	DPMB, OBE	*Dato*
22.	i Jun 1956 - Dec 1956 ii Jul 1958 - Sep 1959	D C White*	1910-1983	46	Bradfield	none	1932-1963	Br. H.C. Brunei	KBE, CMG, OSS DK, DPMB	*Dato,* Sir

Notes: 1. Age on appointment as British Resident, Brunei.
* denotes Sarawak Civil Service Officer (remainder MCS, except D H Trumble, formerly of the Straits Settlements Customs service).
Datuk. denotes honour from a Malaysian State.
Dato: denotes equivalent Brunei honour.

the peak of their careers. Many subsequently achieved considerable distinction, most notably Sir RE Turnbull (1905-60), who was Governor of North Borneo by the time of his retirement. When the Brunei Residency was regraded in 1937, a more senior officer of Class II was appointed. The careers of the two such pre-war officers were interrupted by internment during the Japanese occupation.

During the Residential Era Brunei was not a Police State, nor was any garrison necessary, nor did Residents tremble for their lives. On the contrary, they were unarmed, did not require tight security and remained accessible to those with a grievance. One Resident did meet an unfortunate end, however: in May 1916 Mr EB Maundrell was shot dead when about to arrest a drunken Sikh policeman for the attempted murder of a fellow constable.[17] The motive for the killing does not appear to have been political; and, if anything, the tragedy confirmed the stability of the Residential System, because, at the time, there had been no other British official in the country. The Sultan himself was obliged to intervene to forestall panic.[18]

Assistant Residents (see Appendix 2.5) were products of a background similar to that of the Residents. Before the Great War, the Assistant Resident was usually the only officer stationed permanently in Brunei, the Resident having his base in neighbouring Labuan. At least one pre-War Assistant Resident found the post both attractive and

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17. See Appendix 1.3.
18. CO 273/441 (31085) report signed by Dato Roberts, from draft by GE Cator, 22 May 1916, paragraphs 6-7.

challenging;[19] but, following Mr Lee-Warner's departure in mid-1914, it was abolished as a wartime economy measure and was not revived until 1931.

In 1887 Sir Frederick Weld suggested that a Resident would

"(require) a love of the work, he must understand natives and their languages, he must have tact, temper, firmness and some command of money to start with. As he wins their...confidence and they see their true interest, they will come to him for guidance in everything...I do not believe that Brunei would be in the least difficult to govern". 20

Let us assess how far the officers serving in Brunei conformed to this model.

As one of the Eastern Cadetships (1895-1932), to which entrance was by competitive examination, the MCS attracted Oxbridge candidates of a calibre not greatly inferior to those entering the Home and Indian Services. Morale, too, was higher than in India during the inter-war years because there was no serious nationalist challenge in Malaya until after the Japanese occupation. In 1932 the Eastern Cadetships were abolished in an attempt to produce more uniformity in the selection of candidates to the Colonial Service. From 1933, therefore, MCS officers

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19. "The post of Assistant Resident" - thus Mr Lee-Warner in 1910 - "will always prove a post of attraction to any of the junior members of the FMS Civil Service. The unusual sphere and the greater scope afforded to an enthusiastic officer will always draw the ambitious worker; and the liberal remuneration will always compensate for the somewhat lonely situation in which the Assistant Resident may find himself. The loneliness, however, decreases every year; European residents are being attracted to Brunei and European plantations are being opened. The future is bright..." (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 21). Mr Lee-Warner was most unusual among MCS officers if he found his salary level "liberal" (cf. below, pp 117-8).

20. CO 144/64 (16254) Weld to CO, 20 June 1887, paragraph 21. Sir Frederick Weld (1823-91) was Governor of the Straits Settlements from 1881-7 and an early advocate of a British Residential System in Brunei. He visited the Sultanate in 1887.

were chosen by rigorous interview (without written examination); but only one individual selected by this method (Mr WJ Peel, Resident 1946-8) served in Brunei. All other Residents up to 1951 had joined the MCS in 1932 or earlier (see above, p 112).

When Mr McArthur arrived in Malaya (1895) cadets received an annual salary of $1,500 (£144) plus free quarters.[21] They then had to pass examinations in Malay and to master the colonial regulations and the Indian Penal Code before they could become Passed Cadets ($1,800: £172). Although officers were required to pass examinations in two of the Malayan languages (Malay, Chinese and Tamil), they tended to neglect to keep up a knowledge of those in which they had passed. Sir Frank Swettenham suggested that the requirement to learn two languages imposed too great a strain upon cadets.[22] It was decided, therefore, to restrict second languages to those who proved they would easily cope; in this way, those unlikely to attain more than a superficial knowledge of them were exempted from one. This practice does not appear to have been entirely successful, because, in 1905, Sir Frank commented that Mr McArthur was one of the few officers who had deepened his knowledge of Malay for its own sake.[23] The problem - apparently even among comparatively senior officers - of linguistic inadequacy, which reduced administrative efficiency and created tension with Malay Rulers, did not vanish; and, in the late 1920s, the High Commissioner insisted that cadets should

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21. CO 273/247 (16447) Eastern No 67 (1899).
22. CO 273/269 (25320) Swettenham to CO, No 284 (Straits), 21 June 1901.
23. CO 273/300 (645 04/05) Swettenham to Mr CP Lucas (1853-1931), 11 January 1905.

receive a course of instruction in Malay at London University.[24]

The isolation, hot climate, difficult terrain, drawbacks of life in an undeveloped country and a constant susceptibility to illness imposed extra strains (but permitted greater independence, which appealed to an enthusiast such as Mr Lee-Warner) upon British officers serving in Brunei. In those days

"work had to be done whether sick or not and we all did it. Doctors were few - nurses non-existent...(It) was a man's work then - now (1923) it is more a clerk's". 25

Modern conveniences, such as gas and electricity, did not become available until the late 1920s or 1930s. Brunei Town acquired a purified water supply only in 1956.[26] Officers were often insufficiently remunerated and, consequently, had to defer marriage until a comparatively late age. They had little contact with compatriots; and even then congeniality was not guaranteed.[27] Opportunities for recreation were limited and cinema, introduced in May 1923, was probably the closest approach Brunei

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24. CO 273/545 (File 52044) Sir Hugh Clifford (1866-1941) to CO, No 167 (FMS/SS), 23 March 1928. (Sir Hugh was Governor/High Commissioner, 1927-29). For further details about the MCS, see R Heussler, British Rule in Malaya: The Malayan Civil Service and its Predecessors, 1867-1942 (Oxford 1981) and JG Butcher, The British in Malaya 1880-1941: The Social History of a European Community in Colonial South-East Asia (Kuala Lumpur 1979).
25. CO 717/30 (19334) EA Dickson (1876-1956) to Sir CP Lucas, 7 May 1923 and 28 April 1923. Mr Dickson (Assistant Resident 1911-13) suffered from malaria, septic sores, and dysentery in Brunei. The 'septic sores' resulted from "walking through swamps and not being able to lay up long enough for them to heal as I was the sole European official...". If this was true in the 1910s, conditions had improved markedly by the following decade. According to the annual reports of the Medical Department in the 1920s, European Government officers were rarely, if ever, ill (CO 824/1).
26. See below, Chapter 9 (section 4).
27. Datuk RN Turner SPDK CMG, letters to the author, 16 February 1983 and 24 February 1983.

made to the arts and culture.[28] In 1911 a visitor to Malaya noted the emptiness of MCS officers' lives outside their work;[29] and, in view of the difficulty for an administrator to get away from the atmosphere of 'shop', the principal advantage of the colonial service had to remain "the interest of the work itself".[30] After the discovery of the Seria oilfield (1929) living conditions in Brunei improved further.[31]

MCS officers had become dissatisfied with their salaries, especially by the time of the Bucknill review of 1919.[32] In Brunei, as elsewhere, conditions worsened during the Great War: all leave was cancelled and a severe staff shortage was created by officers volunteering for military service.[33] High inflation drove prices in 1918 to a level double that of 1913, creating further discontent. In 1919, therefore, a new scheme of salaries, "which represented a considerable advance on

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28. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1923, p 7. See also Brunei Annual Report 1917, p 5; and GE Cator, "I Remember" in British Malaya (February 1941), p 160.
29. CO 273/380 (4233) minute by Stubbs, 10 February 1911.
30. Sir C Jeffries, The Colonial Empire and its Civil Service (Cambridge 1938), p 125.
31. Datuk Turner, who arrived in Brunei as Assistant Resident in 1940, remembered that his official residence in Kuala Belait was less than five years old and was far more comfortable than the conditions to which he had become accustomed in Malaya. There was electric light, for example, "a relief after the pressure lamps of Kuala Pilah which had attracted the kelekatu (flying ants) in their thousands". (Letter to the author, 16 February 1983, enclosing chapter of autobiography).
32. Other grudges at the end of the nineteenth century included the 'slowness' of promotion and the claim that many of the highest posts were occupied by outsiders. It was noticed that a large number of officers seemed to die immediately after retirement, which was fixed at the age of 55.
33. In Brunei the post of Assistant Resident was abolished. Mr, later Captain, TS King (East Surrey Regiment), formerly Superintendent of Chandu Monopoly in Brunei was killed in action in 1917; whilst Mr C Hummel, a naturalized British citizen of Bavarian origin who had prepared the first report on Brunei forestry in 1914, was drummed out of the FMS service because of the attitude of his colleagues.

any previous conception of remuneration in the colonial service", was introduced, providing a 22-year timescale, ranging from £490 to £1,400 (with efficiency bars).[34] In 1906 the Imperial treasury paid the Resident's salary of £600 ($5,143). This fixed subsidy was maintained until 1927, although the Resident's salary increased meanwhile. To put the matter into perspective, an unskilled labourer employed by the Brunei PWD in 1908 was paid 35 cents for an eight hour shift.[35]

4. The Residential System

The British Resident was the "agent and representative" of HM Government in Brunei.[36] Appointed by the High Commissioner without reference to (or subsequent approval from) London,[37] he held office (theoretically) "during the pleasure of His Majesty".[38] Within Brunei the Resident was the chief executive, judicial and legislative officer. He exercised the "general functions of administration", sat in the highest court of justice, and drafted legislation. In the words of one Whitehall clerk, the Resident was "practically the Sultan's Prime Minister and Chief Justice combined".[39]

The Sultan was required by Treaty to accept the Resident's "advice" on all matters within Brunei except those affecting the Muh-

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34. Jeffries, op.cit., p 38.
35. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1908, p 9.
36. Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 82 (reproduced in Appendix 1.1, below).
37. CO 144/81 (28124) Brunei Order in Council 1906, paragraph 3; and CO 537/1614 minute by Mr N Mayle (1899-?1981), 12 March 1946.
38. CO 144/81 (28124) Brunei Order in Council 1906, paragraph 6.
39. CO 531/1 (5867) minute by Risley, 27 February 1907.

ammadan religion. The power of enforcement had been obtained deliberately because, without it, advice to the Brunei monarch would have been "of little use".[40] Hence the Resident was the chief executive officer in Brunei. Under the enactments of 1906 and 1908, the new Court of the Resident was the highest in the land. It had been agreed in 1905, however, that "no judicial powers may be exercised and no decision on any matter may be given in Brunei unless it purports to be with the approval of the Sultan and the Resident".[41] All legislation was drafted by the Resident, and the texts, based usually on enactments passed in Malaya, were scrutinized by the law officers of the Straits Settlements.

Brunei questions referred from the Resident were dealt with in the first instance by the 'Secretary to the High Commissioner'[42] who had an office and a small establishment in Singapore:

"His office is the High Commissioner's Secretariat for the Unfederated Malay States (UMS) and conducts any correspondence with the Colony (i.e. the Straits Settlements), the Federated Malay States (FMS) or any particular UMS in matters affecting the UMS as a whole or as a part". 43

Brunei, therefore, came to be regarded administratively as one of the UMS.[44] The post of 'Secretary' was one of the more responsible (Class II) in the MCS and its holder was expected to take decisions in the name of the High Commissioner.[45]

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40. FO 12/122 p 56ff, memorandum by Mr WH Treacher (1849-1919) to Sir F Swettenham, 6 July 1903, para' 8; and McArthur, "Report", para' 104.
41. See p 559 (below), Appendix 1.1, "Enclosure B", clause 6.
42. See p 610 (below), Appendix 2.3.
43. CO 865/21 SW Jones CMG (1888-1962), "Notes on the Government and Administration of Malaya".
44. CW Harrison, Some Notes on the Government Services in British Malaya (MSIA 1929), p 88. See also (below), p 268 (fn) and p 456.
45. CO 717/137 (File 51670) Sir TSW Thomas (1879-1962) to CO, (Malayan Establishment), confidential, 29 March 1939, paragraph 4.

The High Commissionership itself was held ex-officio by the Governor of the Straits Settlements until 1941.[46] This officer, described in 1908 as "practically Governor"[47] of Brunei, was responsible to the Colonial Office for the proper administration of the Sultanate. Sir John Anderson (HC 1904-11) pointed out that in the east there was

"no practical distinction between the powers of a High Commissioner and those of a Governor. As High Commissioner of the FMS (the UMS did not yet have British Advisers in 1908) my authority and powers in those territories are as extensive, and my responsibility for the administration as complete, as within the Colony of which I am Governor". 48

But Brunei's poverty and comparative lack of importance, on the one hand, and the pressure upon the High Commissioner of more important business, on the other, restricted the direct interference of High Commissioners in Brunei, as recalled by Mr GE Cator (Resident 1916-21) in 1941:

"Brunei was a delightful post for a young officer. The Resident was responsible direct (sic) to the High Commissioner, who had other fish to fry than meticulous attention to the small affairs of Brunei, so he left the Resident to his *own* devices in the comfortable assurance that lack of money would be a stopper on any exuberant or expensive schemes". 49

It should not be supposed that Residents had a completely free hand. The High Commissioner scrutinized the budget estimates and legislation and acted as an appellate authority from administrative decisions by the Resident. The High Commissioner required to be kept informed of all important events in Brunei. One Resident recalls:

"I had to submit a monthly diary of things official and unofficial to

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46. See Appendix 2.2 (below, p 609).
47. CO 531/1 (2916) minute by Stubbs, 27 January 1908.
48. CO 144/79 (35852) Anderson to FO, 7 September 1905, paragraph 6.
49. GE Cator, "I Remember" in British Malaya, February 1941, p 160. One of Mr Cator's first duties as Resident was to superintend the execution of his predecessor's murderer.

the High Commissioner. From time to time he would comment on them or ask for further information". 50

The same Resident adds:

"It was not my experience that instructions were given on taking up any new appointment. There was always a period of overlap, during which one had the opportunity of meeting one's predecessor and discussing the current policy". 51

The principal objects of the Residents included the maintenance of peace and law, the provision of honest, impartial and efficient administration, the execution of justice without fear or favour, the maintenance of sound finance, the fostering of economic development, and the preservation of racial harmony. A cardinal principle of British policy was that administration should be run as inexpensively as possible and that the country should be self-supporting. Hence social progress (the provision of medicall and educational facilities) did not become a priority until the 1930s, or, arguably, the 1950s. In general, the Resident was to run the country smoothly and competently, raising the least amount of difficulty for the High Commissioner.

Ultimate responsibility rested with HM Government in London. The Colonial Office exercised a broad overview. It examined the annual estimates, demanded annual reports of social and economic conditions (for presentation to Parliament) and quarterly reports on the oil industry, scrutinized legislation, negotiated with oil companies, and supervised Brunei's relations with neighbouring British protectorates. Although the Colonial Office laid down the broad direction of policy, it

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50. Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 12 April 1983, paragraph 2.
51. Ibid., paragraph 3.

made no attempt to interfere with the detailed administration of Brunei. Distance alone made this an impractical proposition: in 1906 the steamship took a few days to get from Labuan to Singapore; and from Singapore to London took about three weeks. Secretaries of State personally minuted papers relating to Brunei on rare occasions and it was not until 1955 that a Colonial Secretary actually visited the country.

The best summary of the position appears to be that the Resident exercised executive power (delegated from the High Commissioner) and that policy was decided by the Resident subject to overrule by the High Commissioner, who in turn was subject to overrule by the Colonial Office. London never reached important decisions, however, without prior reference to the High Commissioner, who, likewise, depended upon the Resident for information and guidance. The minutiae of day-to-day administration were left to the Resident; the more important matters were referred to the High Commissioner; and strategic planning was the function of the Colonial Office. Although the Sultan and wazirs exercised a deliberative role by virtue of their membership of the State Council, they took little part or interest in the administration.

The Residential System, initially, was indeed of a most simple character. As late as 1932 only five European officers were stationed in Brunei. At first the Resident, Director of Public Works, Chief Police Officer and doctor were shared with Labuan. The Assistant Resident (1906-14; reinstated 1931-) and Superintendent of Chandu Monopoly, later Treasurer (1913-19), were stationed in Brunei itself. From the 1920s the link with Labuan was gradually severed. A separate Resident for Brunei

was appointed, briefly in 1915–17, and permanently from 1921. Similarly, Brunei acquired a resident State Medical Officer in 1929. A Brunei Police Force was founded in 1921, although it continued to be supervised from Labuan. Other departments were headed by non-British personnel: in the mid-1920s, for example, a Malay headed the Public Works Department and from 1910/11 until 1929 a Chinese doubled as postmaster and chief (medical) dresser. The Wireless Department, created in 1921, was run by British officers until 1928, when a Malay was appointed instead.[52] When specialist advice was required, particularly for departments not led by British officers, an expert in the field concerned would be despatched from Malaya.[53] In addition there were annual audits conducted by the Auditor-General of the Straits Settlements until 1920, and annual inspections of the police by the Inspector-General of the Straits Settlements' Force.

The initial combination of the Brunei Residency with that of Labuan was a matter of administrative convenience for the British. Brunei and Labuan remained entirely separate countries, the former a Malay Sultanate under British Protection, the latter a Crown Colony attached to the Straits Settlements. In September 1914, Mr RJ Wilkinson (1867–1941), the acting High Commissioner, decided that some re-organization

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52. For lists of officials, see Appendices 2 and 3.
53. The first such visits appear to have taken place in 1914, when Mr Hummel (cf. fn. 33, above) made "a preliminary inspection of the timber resources of the State" and Mr JB Scrivenor (1877–1950) made a geological survey. Other such experts were FH Dupree (wireless, 1919–21), Dr AL Hoops (health, 1921), Dr H Tempany (agriculture, 1932), CCL Durant (forestry, 1932), ES Willesbourn (mines, 1932), N Jones (labour, 1937), RFC Markham (education, 1938) and GD Boissier (water, 1938).

was necessary. The Resident in Labuan, it was claimed, lacked the local knowledge of the Assistant Resident on the spot in Brunei

"and is apt either to trust too much to that officer or to interfere too much in Brunei affairs. The Assistant Resident has to visit outstations and is liable to be absent from headquarters at inconvenient times. The Superintendent of Chandu Monopoly (an office created at the end of 1912) has too little to do and draws a salary which would not attract a man competent to be the Assistant Resident's Deputy during that officer's absences from Brunei (Town)". 54

Mr Wilkinson decided that the best solution would be to end Brunei's connection with Labuan and to appoint a Resident for Brunei alone, abolishing the Assistant Resident's post. The salary of the Assistant Resident would be sufficient "to ensure the services of a picked junior officer who would be able satisfactorily to fill the position of Resident in Brunei". A senior officer was unsuitable for "a post involving tiring outdoor work and long journeys on foot". He suggested that the Superintendent of Chandu Monopoly might be replaced by a Treasurer paid a higher salary. Certain other savings would be possible (in Labuan).

This scheme, thought to have originated with Mr Lee-Warner, was approved because it was considered to be "sound besides being economical".[55] But in August 1915 Mr FW Douglas, who had just completed his term as Resident, suggested that the administrative separation of Brunei and Labuan had been a mistake. It had led to a certain duplication of expenditure (e.g. separate launches); and the "identity of interest" due to one officer controlling both places was lost. Another argument for amalgamation was to improve the level of interest of British

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54. CO 531/6 (38332) RJ Wilkinson CMG to Colonial Office, No 8 (Brunei), 2 September 1914, paragraph 3.
55. Ibid., minute by Mr JRW Robinson (1880-1918), 19 November 1914.

administrators: an officer stationed in Labuan "soon gets slack" through lack of work whereas his colleague in Brunei "feels the effect of solitude". Mr Douglas recommended that the proposed re-combined unit should then be placed directly under the Colonial Office because the existing practice of dealing with Sarawak and the oil companies *via* Singapore retarded progress.[56] Mr Collins at the Colonial Office suspected that Mr Douglas himself was angling for the proposed post of Governor of Brunei-Labuan:

"but the prospect of our having to find a grant-in-aid to make up the deficits is not attractive and the idea is out of the question at present". 57

Following the Labuan Resident's departure to serve in HM Forces (1917), both Residencies were held once again by the same officer (Mr Cator). This situation persisted until the latter left in early 1921. The post of Treasurer, suggested in 1914, had been abolished in 1919, the Resident taking over the duties of Mr Goldfinch, the original incumbent.

5. Resident and Sultan: "The Resident's advice must be promptly followed".

One of the principal responsibilities of the Resident was to maintain cordial relations with the Sultan.[58] In January 1906 Sir John

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56. CO 531/9 (37469) Mr FW Douglas (1874-1953) to CO, 12 August 1915.
57. *Ibid.*, minute by Collins, 20 August 1915.
58. During the Residential Era the Sultans of Brunei were:
May 1885 - May 1906: Hashim Jalilul Ahamal-din (b ?1820/5).
May 1906 - Sep 1924: Sir Muhammad Jemalul Alam KCMG (b ?1889)
Sep 1924 - Jun 1950: Sir Ahmad Tajuddin KBE CMG (b 1913)
Jun 1950 - Oct 1967: Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin III GCVO KCMG (b 1914; abdicated 1967).
NB. The two *wazirs* acted as Joint Regents from 1906 to 1918 and again from 1924 to 1931.

Anderson noted that Mr McArthur had "evidently won the confidence of (Sultan Hashim)";[59] and the first Resident himself commented that the weight of his (Sultan Hashim's) authority, when bolstered by that of the Resident, was of great assistance in the "peaceable introduction of reforms and changes".[60] Unfortunately, Sultan Hashim was already an octogenarian and his death in May 1906 left no indigenous authority of sufficient influence to prevent intrigues against the Resident by the Pengiran Bendahara. Sir John Anderson reported that

"Brunei Malays are far from trustworthy and are fond of intrigue, and would be only too glad if, by playing off the Rajah against HM Government, they could secure some personal gain". 61

He was sure, however, "that the new order of things is acceptable to all but those whose powers of extortion and oppression have been clipped and the few who live by intrigue".[62] This view was not unreasonable.

In August 1906 the young Sultan, Muhammad Jemalul Alam, and the Regents presented a list of five demands to the High Commissioner, of which only one (that the Brunei flag should fly on Government buildings) was considered sufficiently reasonable to be accepted (see also, below, pp 145-7). Sir John Anderson insisted on the principle that "his friend" (the Sultan) should seek "advice and information, in accordance with the Treaty..., from the Resident only".[63]

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59. CO 144/80 (5578) Anderson to CO, No 1 (Labuan), 25 January 1906, paragraph 18.
60. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1906, p 15.
61. CO 144/80 (35280) Anderson to CO, No 13 (Brunei), 27 August 1906, paragraph 4.
62. Ibid., paragraph 5.
63. CO 144/80 (36822) Anderson to HH Sultan Jemal, 7 October 1906, p 3.

After Mr McArthur's departure from Brunei in April 1908 considerable friction arose between a new British Resident, Mr JF Owen (who had a good reputation for his dealings with Malays)[64] and the Sultan because of the new Land Codes. Tension lasted during 1909 and 1910. The original Land Enactment had been promulgated without incident in 1907; but in 1908-9 Mr Owen wished to replace this with an entirely new law rendering the issue of titles less elaborate and costly.[65] After a delay lasting a year (1908-9) the Sultan was "advised" to pass the proposed legislation. This he did, but only under protest. Subsequently, after he had hindered the implementation of the new law, his monthly allowance was halved (from August 1910) and he was warned that unless an improvement in his behaviour was "patently and swiftly assured" it would be necessary to remove him from his existing position.[66]

Sultan Jemal declared that all State Land was his own property and that the Government was not empowered by the 1905-6 Treaty to alienate it. Upon being confronted with contrary evidence - his father's acceptance, as a personal entitlement, of a small area around his own house free of charges (cf. p 108, above) - he declared that Sultan Hashim's consent to this clause (in the document subsidiary to the main treaty) was "improper".[67] Sultan Jemal complained, further, that he was required to accept dictation rather than advice from the Resident. He requested that

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64. CO 531/2 (40185) minute by Stubbs, 14 December 1909; and CO 531/1 (30998) Anderson to CO, No 4 (Brunei), 30 July 1908, paragraph 7.
65. CO 531/2 (34102) JF Owen (1868-1942) to 'Secretary to High Commissioner', confidential, 10 September 1909, paragraph 2.
66. CO 531/2 (26804) Chevallier to Anderson, confidential, 12 July 1910.
67. As note 65, paragraph 8.

he should receive an increase in his annuity, a share in the land revenue, and the rents paid by the Rajah for his two coal mines.[68] Finally, it was feared that he intended to repudiate legislation (including the Courts Enactment of 1908) passed during Mr McArthur's term of office. His Highness, judging from his own words, acted purely out of financial greed: he made no objections to State ownership of land on Muslim religious grounds (as occurred, for example, in Trengganu in the 1920s).[69]

The British authorities adopted a firm line with Sultan Jemal because the land issue raised a principle considered to be fundamental to the entire Residential System. Decisive action was necessary to make the Sultan realize that "the Resident's advice must be implicitly and promptly followed and acted upon".[70] His Highness was informed that the Land Code could not be revoked nor could his allowance be increased or supplemented: it was paid, indeed, "only so long as my friend follows all the advice given by the Resident who is empowered to carry on the administration of the country of Brunei".[71] Mr Chevallier noted that

"affairs (there) were in danger of slipping backward rather than forward and that the sooner the Augean Stables are cleaned, the sooner we may look forward to a clear and progressive renaissance". 72

The Sultan had incited some Kedayans to resist the new land legislation. In 1909 the matter was brought to a head because approval was granted by the Resident to a number of Europeans to establish rubber

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68. Sir Charles paid annually $2,000 for his Brooketon mine and $1,200 for the one at Buang Tawar.

69. Cf. H Sutherland, "The Taming of the Trengganu Elite" in R McVey (ed.), South East Asian Transitions (New Haven, Conn., 1978), esp. pp 73-80.

70. CO 531/2 (34102) Owen to Anderson, 10 September 1909, paragraph 12.

71. Ibid., Anderson to HH Sultan Jemal, 17 September 1909.

72. CO 531/2 (28323) Chevallier to Anderson, confidential, 26 July 1910, paragraph 9.

estates immediately outside Brunei Town and also in Temburong district. Some Kedayans, by contrast, boasted that all the hinterland was theirs and that so long as they paid poll tax no man could enter or occupy areas over part of which they had strong claims. A large majority of the headmen were reassured that the Government did not intend to permit them to lose their plantations of jungle fruit trees although it was asserted at the same time that "wasteful methods" of shifting cultivation were gradually to be curbed. A first attempt to settle the Kedayan issue was on the point of success, when it was undermined by the Sultan. At a State Council meeting in July 1910, attended by about 500 Kedayans[73] and their chiefs, Mr Chevallier advised the Sultan to inform them that the Government intended to safeguard their tenure of land under unusually favourable terms. His Highness insisted - without any apparent foundation - that land rent equivalent to, or in place of, poll tax would be a breach of the treaty.[74] Mr Chevallier replied that the Government meant to remit poll tax to all landowners who, if Kedayans, would receive fifteen acres on perpetual tenure per man for two dollars land rent annually, whereas at present each Kedayan paid two dollars poll tax annually with no return at all. The Resident feared that "His Highness endeavoured, by constant prevarications, to set at naught my advice, which he does not consider conducive to his own aggrandizement and profit".[75] The reduction by half

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73. In 1911 4,931 Kedayans were enumerated in Brunei (cf. p 7, above). Hence, about 10% of these people were present on this occasion.
74. In any case, poll tax, like land rent, would have had to be paid to the State rather than to the Sultan, so why did he make an issue of it? Presumably, he wanted poll tax to be paid to himself, though this is not stated in the papers.
75. CO 531/2 (26804) Chevallier to Anderson, confidential, 12 July 1910. Cf. the objection made in note 74 (above). Mr Chevallier continued:

of his allowance from August 1910 was expected, therefore, to have a salutary effect.

The Kedayans, for their part, appeared to have developed a "superstitious dread" of the word 'demarcation'.[76] By the end of 1910, however, practically all the headmen were willing to follow the directions of the Government. The line of action adopted was to mark out selected tracts known as Kedayan Reservations of unspecified area for which no title was to be issued unless specifically requested. Mr Chevallier reported:

"His Highness instigated the Kedayans to disobey orders. He then turned round upon them when he found that my intention to remind him of the treaty obligation was no longer to be trifled with. The Kedayans, naturally, looked upon His Highness as having betrayed them". 77

Whatever the initial difficulties, the population (especially

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"...in agriculture and systematic land tenure, free from the exactions of His Highness and pengirans, Brunei can find its one hope for future progress, and...if His Highness will not prove loyal in furthering our objects to this end, Brunei will not advance".

76. "The root of the trouble", Mr Lee-Warner commented, "lay in this: to deal successfully with such suspicious natives, time was needed; and time, in the present instance, was not available. The European applicants had justice on their side to a large degree, when they claimed that their applications had been approved and that they were entitled to enter on the land. The Kedayan, suspicious by nature, and accustomed to continued cruelty and oppression under the old regime in Brunei, feared that he was about to be driven out. Frightened by vague and untrue rumours disseminated by certain disloyal persons, he saw an enemy in everyone who approached him" (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 13). Earlier, Mr Lee-Warner had commented that the Kedayans had power, in the past, to "make or unmake" Sultans. The present writer is unable to reconcile these statements. Again, if Kedayans suffered "continued cruelty and oppression", why did some of them at least support the Sultan's opposition to land settlement? And why should the Sultan have looked to them for such backing in the first place?

77. CO 531/3 (2874) 'Chevallier to 'Secretary to High Commissioner', confidential, 12 December 1910, paragraph 2 (i).

Kedayans) began eagerly to take up land.[78] A change was noticed in the Sultan: the Kedayan issue was settled, he no longer opposed land settlement, he pointed out his own tulin claims, and he withdrew his buffaloes, which had been causing damage to the property of other landholders. In the past the young Sultan had been dominated by the Regents.[79] His introduction of a subject conveyed the impression that "it has been forced upon him by others and his statements resemble the repetition of a lesson learnt by heart".[80] By December 1910, however, his demeanour had changed completely: he was now friendly and far more approachable. The Assistant Resident believed that

"he is beginning to act for himself, that he is less tied by his former evil counsellors and that he is beginning to believe in the honesty of purpose of the advisers sent to him". 81

Mr Chevallier deduced that a "new era" had begun: the former distrust had been overcome, the rakyat were "entirely loyal", most of the pengirans were learning to respect British motives and the Sultan, "just more than a lad", had "learnt his lesson".[82] Hence his full allowance, cut in August 1910, was restored from January 1911.

After the conclusion of the land dispute, UK-Brunei relations

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78. See below, p 211.
79. On 22 September 1909 Sir John Anderson had stated precisely the opposite. At that time the Sultan was "nominally still under the Regency of the Resident (sic) and of the (two wazirs) but his native guardians seldom see him and appear to have little influence with him" (CO 531/2: 34102). Since Sir John supposed that the Resident was one of the Regents, his statement may safely be disregarded.
80. CO 531/1 (46522) JF Owen to 'Secretary to High Commissioner', No 126 (Brunei), 13 November 1908, paragraph 3.
81. CO 531/3 (2874) Chevallier to 'Secretary to High Commissioner', confidential, 12 December 1910, paragraph 3.
82. Ibid., paragraphs 4-5.

did indeed improve rapidly. Evidence of increasing co-operation dates from as early as 1911, when the Sultan's "active and energetic" assistance alone made possible the taking of a census of population.[83] A further sign of improved relations came in March 1913, when the $2,500 which had been withheld from the Sultan's allowance for the period August-December 1910, was restored to him. The monarch's behaviour since the autumn of 1910 had been "exemplary"; and the High Commissioner, who visited Brunei in 1913, recommended His Highness for the CMG to "show that HM Government recognize and appreciate this change".[84] In accepting the honour, Sultan Jemal pledged his determination "not to separate myself from the Government of HM the King",[85] a pledge of friendship repeated on the outbreak of the First World War, and again on the commencement of hostilities between the United Kingdom and Muslim Turkey.[86]

The Regency had persisted long beyond Sultan Jemal's minority (he was born in c1889). Installation fully in office as Yang Dipertuan (Overlord, crowned Sultan) was delayed by custom, until approved by the people through certain of their major chiefs.[87] In the summer of 1917

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83. Mr Stubbs noted that "His Highness seems really to have turned over a new leaf" (CO 531/3: 34002). A little earlier Sultan Jemal contributed $50 towards the celebrations in Labuan connected with the coronation of George V: "an unusual sign of grace on the part of this undesirable young man", Mr Stubbs minuted (CO 531/3: 20100).
84. CO 447/91 (14293) Sir A Young to CO, 23 October 1913 (enclosed in Young to CO, 21 March 1914).
85. CO 447/91 (50400) Sultan to Acting High Commissioner, 21 August 1914. See also CO 447/91 (67).
86. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1915, p 12: "Prayers for the triumph of the Allies are offered daily in the mosque" (in Brunei Town). Yet Mecca was still nominally part of the Ottoman Empire at that time.
87. CO 717/143 (File 51908) Sir TSW Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) confidential, 13 January 1940, paragraph 1.

the State Council "spontaneously" suggested to the Resident that Sultan Jemal should be crowned. Mr Cator agreed that the Regency served no useful purpose because the Pengiran Bendahara, who died a few months later, was "blind, deaf and senile" whereas the new Pengiran Pemancha possessed "the intellect and attainments of a child". On the contrary, Mr Cator argued, the Regency "derogates from the position of the Sultan and perpetuates the objectionable tradition of the semi-regal dignities appertaining to the great chiefs".[88] Mr Cator recommended that, since real power was then in the hands of the Resident,

"it should I think be our policy first to assure ourselves of the Sultan's loyalty and then to foster and support his prestige as against that of the great houses". 89

The 1918 Coronation, which marked the conclusion of the Regency, illustrated the revival of the Brunei monarchy. Mr McArthur, who attended the ceremony as the High Commissioner's representative, reported that the enthusiasm and excitement were so intense that "no spectator could have failed to be thrilled by it".[90] It would not be enough to argue that Sir Muhammad Jemal KCMG (as he became in 1920) had simply become a more complete British puppet. First, there had been a definite development in the Sultan's character, as Mr McArthur noted in 1918:

"When I left Brunei in 1908 he was a shy and rather clumsy youth whom it seemed impossible to interest in any matter brought before him. He has developed during the last ten years into a young man of intelligence and the courtesy of his demeanour creates a most favourable impression". 91

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88. CO 531/11 (50598) GE Cator to High Commissioner, No 2 (confidential), 30 April 1917, paragraph 5.
89. Ibid., paragraph 6.
90. CO 531/12 (38835) MSH McArthur to Secretary to High Commissioner, 31 May 1918, paragraph 7.
91. Ibid., paragraph 11.

The monarch now took the keenest interest in the country's advancement, as shown, for example, by his encouragement of education and his support for agricultural and vaccination campaigns. Secondly, alliance with the British strengthened the Sultan's position within Brunei, particularly relative to the wazirs. Sultan Hashim's ministers had been territorial magnates beyond effective royal control; His Highness himself was penniless and a pawn of usurers, especially Jawatan Abu Bakar; and no-one, even in the capital, paid much attention to his orders. By 1924, however, a completely new situation obtained. Sultan Jemal had a reliable source of income; a loan from the Government, at a reasonable rate of interest,[92] helped him to redeem cession monies and escape from the clutches of extortionate money-lenders (the Jawatan had died in 1912). In addition, territorial power having been removed from the wazirs, they had been reduced to pensioners of the State and their relative power had diminished in proportion as that of the Sultan had been bolstered by the British. A succession struggle was unthinkable (cf. pp 473-6, below). The monarch's prestige was enhanced by his visit to Singapore in 1922 (the first modern Brunei monarch to venture beyond Labuan); by the visit of the Prince of Wales to Brunei in May 1922; and by the move from the old palace in the River Village to a new one on dry land, also in 1922.[93] In short, a remarkable regeneration had occurred since 1905 when it had seemed impossible for the Sultanate to survive at all.

In 1924 malaria claimed the lives of the Sultan's second wife

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92. The loan totalled $41,000 at 7% interest (cf. p 20, fn 13, above).
93. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1922, p 15 (paragraph 112).

and their two young children. The Sultan himself was said to have contacted the disease; certainly he died in September 1924. The late monarch - formerly (1909) "an ignorant and selfish youth" quite unfitted to occupy the position he held and without "any single redeeming point in his character"[94] - had become, by 1924, a "most loyal friend" of HM Government and by his premature death "the State has lost a dignified and enlightened ruler".[95] It was during his reign that the regeneration of the Brunei monarchy began and the foundations for the present-day (1985) royal autocracy were laid.

6. The State Council

In Brunei, the State Council, originally the Sultan's advisory body, was taken up and adapted by the British after 1906. In Perak the equivalent council had been seen as "a great safety valve"; and it proved such a success that "similar councils were instituted in each of the Malay States and the procedure in all is identical".[96]

The composition of the Brunei State Council fluctuated between a nadir of five members in 1913 and a peak of 23 in 1925. In 1927, at the request of the Resident, the constitution of the Council was altered and its numbers reduced to ten:[97] these comprised the Sultan (who presided), the Resident, the two wazirs and three other Malay chiefs, the

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94. CO 531/2 (34102) JF Owen to Anderson, 10 September 1909, para. 13.
95. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1924, p 15
96. The following section is based upon RH Hickling, "Memorandum upon Brunei Constitutional History and Practice", unpublished manuscript, confidential, 2 January 1955 (copy courtesy of Awang Eussoff Agaki).
97. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1927, p 18. The following year the Council had only eight members (Brunei Annual Report 1928, p 24).

Capitan China[98] and two members appointed by the Sultan with the Resident's approval. Dr Hickling (then a law officer) commented in 1955 that this format was not adhered to strictly (see fn. 97, above).

The "supreme authority" in Brunei was vested in the Sultan-in-Council. Its assent was required for the enactment of legislation and all important questions of policy affecting the administration of the State were supposed to be referred to it. Although the functions of the State Council had never been clearly defined,[99] its principal role, undoubtedly, was as a legislature: all new laws were passed by the Sultan-in-Council subject to the approval of the High Commissioner. The State Council also exercised extremely minor judicial and executive functions. In the judicial sphere, it heard appeals from the Court of the Kathi (Muslim religious judge) and its confirmation was required for the execution of death sentences. The right to approve appointments in the 'Brunei Administrative Service' carrying a salary above $150 a month in 1940 is cited as an example of executive powers exercised by the State Council. Special expenditure had always required the approval of the State Council.

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98. The first mention of the Capitan China as a member came on 14 July 1921. Presumably this was Cheok Boon Siok (see Chapter 5). Mr JG Black comments that the Capitan China, the "foremost Chinese", acted as spokesman and settled civil disputes among the Chinese, "which of course had no legal force" (letter to the author, 11 June 1983, paragraph 3).

99. In a letter to the Sultan dated 22 September 1952, the then Resident claimed at times to have been "perplexed to know whether a certain matter should or should not be referred to Council. The Council undoubtedly is an advisory body; as I see it, it is there to advise (the Sultan) on matters of general policy amongst which, I suppose, must be included our legislation. I do not think it was intended, however, that Council should deal with detailed administration". (Letter quoted by Dr Hickling, loc.cit., paragraph 52).

There was no case on record of a Sultan acting contrary to the advice of the Council, Dr Hickling commented in 1955.

Once the British Residential System had become fully established (i.e. by the end of 1910), the State Council became little more than a rubber stamp for the Resident. Mr JG Black, relying upon a memory of events 45 years earlier, stated that the financial and social policy which he devised in 1938 (see Chapter 7, below), was not a matter which would have been referred either to the Sultan or the State Council;[100] whilst Datuk RN Turner remembers:

"The State Council was nothing more than a rubber stamp. It dealt with legislation, financial provision and matters of policy, but in the only one I attended it was all over in ten minutes...". 101

Originally meetings of the State Council were held for the transaction of such business as there might be. Such occasions were extremely rare, and it was difficult to get members to speak. In 1909 the Resident commented:

"Meetings of the Council are but rarely necessary or advisable in the present state of Brunei. Their old age precludes the presence of the Pengirans, Bendahara and Pemancha, and the attitude of the other leading nobles shows that as yet they are incapable of forming any opinion for themselves, the discussion of which might tend to the benefit of the country". 102

By 1924 matters had advanced somewhat:

"These meetings (of the State Council) are attended with a good deal of ceremony and hitherto it has been difficult to get the lesser ministers to voice their opinions at all, though an improvement in this respect was noticeable during the more recent meetings". 103

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100. Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 28 September 1983, paragraph 1. (Mr Black could not recall drawing up the social and economic policy).
101. Datuk RN Turner, letter to the author, 24 February 1983, p 4.
102. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1909, p 6.
103. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1924, p 14.

The duties of the wazirs were, in the main, traditional and they were of little assistance in the administration of the State because they were illiterate or, even in the 1950s, "practically illiterate".[104] Early in the Residential Era the wazirs were rather unfriendly towards the British Residents, who were only slightly less objectionable to them than the Rajah of Sarawak. If the Residential System was useful from Brunei's viewpoint in restraining its acquisitive neighbours and preserving the Sultanate, it had little else to recommend it. Further, if the Resident in Brunei could be played off against Sarawak to the profit of the wazirs, so much the better. When Pengiran Pemanoha (Muhammad Salleh) died on 2 December 1912 he was described as "a pengiran of the old class and though he acquiesced in British Protection, he never conformed more than outwardly to the new order of things".[105]

Reporting on his visit to Brunei in 1908 Sir John Anderson commented:

"The two men whose influence has been most adverse to any advance in Brunei and who would be glad to see the old state of things continue, viz. the Bendahara and Pemancha...wrote that they were ill and therefore unable to meet me. I do not think any good result would come from an interview with them and I look to the rising generation of pengirans, several of whom are showing a desire to learn, for assistance in developing the country". 106

About this time the Pengiran Bendahara (then Joint Regent), declared in a letter to the Assistant Resident that the enforcement of any regulations which had not received the approval of himself and the Pengiran Pemancha was a breach of the Treaty (cf. p 119, above).[107] It

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104. CO 1022/396 (item 12) Sir A Abell (b 1906) to CO, No 54 (saving), 13 May 1953, paragraph 4. For a full list of wazirs, see Appendix 4.2.
105. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1912, p 6.
106. CO 531/1 (30998) Anderson to CO, No 4 (Brunei), 30 July 1908, para. 4.
107. CO 531/1 (46522) Owen to Secretary to High Commissioner, No 126

will be recalled that in 1906 the leading wazir complained that Mr McArthur never consulted him: the first Resident tacitly conceded that the wazir was entitled to expect such deference but complained of the latter's selfish demands. Mr Owen, the third Resident, clearly held that the Resident did not require the approval of the wazirs for his actions.

"(The Sultan) has rarely left the palace", he added, "...and takes little or no interest in affairs of State, declining to express opinion without previous reference to the wazirs...

Though the guidance of the existing triumvirate is not unattended with difficulty, any alteration at present would only aggravate the position without providing any corresponding advantage. Moreover, the mental capacity of the Sultan renders alteration inadvisable and such a course would be contrary to the tradition of the State". 108

Mr Stubbs, reflecting on the situation from the Colonial Office, thought that Mr Owen had found "some way of managing" the Pengiran Bendahara.[109]

In 1910 the wazirs again were "conspicuous absentees" from the State Council, leaving the young Sultan to incur British displeasure for what they had put him up to in the land dispute.

In short, the wazirs simply became an irrelevance: "They had become honorifics so far as the Government was concerned", Datuk Turner recalls. Deference was paid to the wazirs because of their standing in Brunei society; otherwise they were ignored. Yet if the wazirs had troubled to educate themselves and to take greater interest in their country, they might have played a significant role in the administration. Only their own temperament and personality prevented this.

(Brunei), 13 November 1908, paragraph 2. ("The incident which evoked the letter affected the writer's personal property and was doubtless prompted by his nephew, Pengiran Anak Munggu, to whose influence most of the Pengiran Bendahara's ill-advised actions are attributed").

108. Ibid., paragraphs 3 and 8.

109. Ibid., minute by Mr RE Stubbs, 22 December 1908.

7. Law and Order

In 1908 the very enactment of legislation by the Sultan-in-Council was declared to be an innovation "in a State where formerly the Sultan and chiefs were laws unto themselves".[110] Pre-Residential Brunei had, theoretically at least, three systems of law: hukum sharia (Muhammadan religious law); hukum kanun (Brunei traditional law); and adat (the customary law of the various tribes).

The sharia ('path to the watering place') is a total way of life as explicitly or implicitly commanded by Allah, based on the Koran (Recital of Allah), Sunna (Way of the Prophet), Ijma (the consensus of scholars) and quiyas (analogical reasoning from the first three). The State itself is a religious institution having as its constitution the

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110. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1908, p 7. NB. In pre-Residential Brunei, Consul P Leys commented in 1883, pengirans who owned territory exercised the powers of "punishing the people by fine, placing in the stocks and moderate flogging. Persons charged with crimes the punishment for which would be death or mutilation are tried by the Temenggong in Brunei and the Sultan's approval has to be obtained before the punishment is inflicted. The Brunei authorities are extremely dilatory in examining into civil and criminal cases but once the case is taken up, it is gone into very thoroughly and usually a very sensible verdict is found. If a pengiran of rank, however arbitrarily, causes one of his own people to be put to death for no sufficient reason, no notice is usually taken of it, otherwise than that he, by repetition of such acts, acquires a reputation for cruelty. Possibly a remonstrance may be sent him by the Sultan, but such acts are comparatively rare. The real oppression, and it is great, exercised by the pengirans over their people exists in the ...extent to which fines and taxes are imposed upon them. As all the rulers in Brunei are always impecunious...the power to punish the delinquincies of their own people by the imposition of a pecuniary fine is very apt to be abused. As a matter of fact it is not unfrequently abused, and, by some pengirans, most heinously so". (CO 144/57: 12509: Leys to FO, No 12 consular, 5 May 1883, paragraph 15). British officers made similar comments about law in Trengganu; but Dr Leys has been described as an able reporter by a modern social scientist.

sharia, i.e. the religio-moral values of Islam. The sharia includes all that a westerner would term law, but much more besides, including details of religious ritual and the ethics of social conduct.[111]

The reign of Sultan Hassan (early seventeenth century) is the earliest period to which may be attributed the application of the traditional code of laws known as the kanun, composed of some 50,000 words which, until the introduction of the Residential System in 1906, "constituted the entire penal and civil codes of the State".[112]

Each of the various tribes had their own customary law, or adat, which was upheld by the incoming Residential administration.[113]

All legislation after 1906 was enacted by the Sultan-in-Council. The bills so passed were called enactments and were published in English. Mr Lee-Warner commented in 1910 that "no elaborate legislation is required in Brunei. The fewer and simpler the laws are the better".[114] So it was: only three enactments were passed in 1906 and only six in 1908. In practice the Sultan was bound to follow the advice of the British Resident, who presented him with legislation for preliminary observations and then for formal approval in the State Council. Brunei laws were drafted by the Resident (subject to modification by the High Commissioner's legal

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111. JND Anderson, "Islamic Law" in Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago 1972), Vol 12, pp 679-80.
112. HR Hughes-Hallett, "A Sketch of the History of Brunei" in JMBRAS (1940, Part II), p 31. Mr Hughes-Hallett (Assistant Resident 1936-8) expressed an intention to publish the hukum kanun, but appears never to have done so. In 1842 Sir James Brooke undertook to uphold in Sarawak the ondong-ondong, the 'traditional written law of Brunei': presumably this was the hukum kanun.
113. For example: CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 17.
114. Ibid., p 21.

advisers). The Colonial Office was the ultimate authority but did not take much interest in Brunei's legislation, deciding in 1907 that the Sultanate's laws were merely to be 'acknowledged' by London rather than 'approved'.[115] This situation still existed in 1933 when another CO clerk, referring to the Brunei Labour Code of 1932, commented:

"I do not think a detailed scrutiny of UMS legislation is called for. It is for the authorities in Malaya to see that UMS legislation follows FMS (legislation) as closely as possible". 116

On another occasion a Whitehall clerk observed that a law was "clumsily drawn in several respects but I don't think there is anything sufficiently serious to call for observation".[117] In 1913 the High Commissioner was asked by the Colonial Office to repeal a particular provision of one Brunei enactment: this was executed in due course.[118]

The Colonial Office took a closer interest, however, when Brunei legislation necessitated similar provisions in the United Kingdom itself. Concerning the 1908 Courts Enactment, for example, Mr Stubbs complained:

"I don't think this Enactment ought to have been issued without further reference to us as it is awkward to have an Enactment giving appeal to the Privy Council in force in the State before there is an Order in Council here giving the Privy Council power to hear such appeals". 119

Occasionally, Brunei legislation, such as the Mining Enactment (1920) and the Savings Bank Enactment (1939), were passed at the instigation of the Colonial Office.[120]

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115. CO 531/1 (7040) minute by Mr JS Risley (1867-1957), 27 February 1907.
116. CO 717/87 (File 92268) minute by Mr JA Calder, 2 February 1933.
117. CO 531/4 (24473) minute by Mr GV Fiddes, 13 August 1912.
118. CO 531/5 (17487 and 2023).
119. CO 531/1 (25183) minute by Mr RE Stubbs, 13 July 1908.
120. The Mining Enactment of 1920 was passed to enable the Colonial Office to award more liberal terms to a certain mining company than were allowed

The enacted legislation of Brunei included laws to provide for the establishment of a currency (1906), courts (1906, 1908), a police force (1920), sanitary boards (1920) and a savings bank (1934); laws to regulate customs duties (1906), mining (1908, 1920), opium smoking (1912, 1932), labour conditions (1913, 1932), friendly societies (1933) and forest working (1934); and laws to require attendance at school (1929) and to prohibit gambling (1919) and the mui tsai system (1933). The external legislation applied to Brunei comprised, inter alia, the penal and procedural codes of the Straits Settlements and the Law of Contracts of the Federated Malay States. Where no provision was made by the enacted or adopted law of Brunei, the Common Law of England had the force of law in the Sultanate (see p 462, below).

In 1906 an enactment was passed "providing for the establishment of civil and criminal courts and for the administration of justice throughout the State as far as possible on the lines in force in the FMS".[121] Sir John Anderson suggested the abolition of the extra-territorial consular court;[122] and Whitehall agreed that, with a Resident to try cases, there was no further need for extra-territorial jurisdiction. In the past there had been a right of appeal from the consular court in Brunei to the Supreme Court of the Straits Settlements and then, in

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under the existing 1908 Enactment (CO 531/13: 62532). The Savings Bank Enactment (1939) was passed to give effect "to the recommendations contained in the report of the committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to examine the Savings Bank system in the colonies" (CO 717/137 File 51656).

121. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1906, p 12; and CO 531/1 (5865) Anderson to CO, No 1 (Brunei), 24 January 1907, paragraph 1.

122. CO 531/1 (5867) Anderson to CO, No 3 (Brunei), 24 January 1907, paragraphs 1-4.

ordinary course, to the judicial committee of the Privy Council in London. Mr Risley, Legal Adviser at the Colonial Office, suggested that a similar provision should be made for the new Resident's Court. The Foreign Office disapproved of an arrangement which had the "somewhat anomalous result of allowing an appeal from the tribunals of a foreign ruling prince to one of HM's Colonial Courts".[123] Mr Fiddes at the Colonial Office disagreed and commented that

"We might as well put up the shutters at once if we are to put an end to all the 'somewhat anomalous' arrangements in the Empire. If the proposed arrangement is convenient, promotes the administration of justice and is acceptable to all parties, that is enough for us". 124

A new Courts Enactment, in accordance with Mr Fiddes' opinion, was passed in 1908, taking effect on 1 April of that year. The Straits Settlements was given the right of original jurisdiction in capital cases because the officer holding the post of British Resident would probably lack sufficient legal experience to make it desirable for him to hear those cases.[125] One such instance was the trial, before Sir John

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123. CO 531/1 (11769) FO to CO, 30 March 1907.
124. Ibid., minute by Fiddes, 8 April 1907. NB. Why was the appeal to the Straits Settlements? Mr Risley minuted: "In the FMS there is an appeal from a Judicial Commissioner's Court (equivalent to the new Resident's Court in Brunei) to the FMS Court of Appeal and thence by arrangement with the Sultans to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (in London)...(In) this matter the FMS model is impossible for Brunei where there is no court equivalent to the FMS Court of Appeal and it would be undesirable to have appeals going direct from the Resident's Court to the Privy Council. Therefore I suggest that the present position should be maintained, i.e. that provision should be made for appeals from the Resident's Court to the Supreme Court of the Straits Settlements" (CO 531/1: 5865).
125. CO 531/1 (25183) Anderson to CO, No 3 (Brunei), 18 June 1908. The Colonial Office noted that whereas originally only civil cases were included, now there was to be an appeal also in criminal cases to the Straits Settlements and to the Privy Council in London. The necessary Orders in Council were passed on 26 September 1908: the first revoking

Bucknill (1873-1926), the Chief Justice of the Straits Settlements, of the murderer of the British Resident in 1916.[126] This right of original jurisdiction by the Straits Settlements' court appears to have been surrendered by 1937, when the post of Resident had been upgraded.

The 1908 Enactment established several tiers of justice: the Resident's Court, which exercised "original and appellate jurisdiction in all civil and criminal matters (excluding capital cases until not later than 1937) and might pass any sentence authorized by law";[127] Magistrates Courts of the first, second and third classes; and the Court of the Kathi (Islamic religious judge).

Reference was made earlier (p 126) to a list of five demands presented to the High Commissioner by the Sultan and Regents in August 1906. Three of these petitions concerned the judicial system.[128] First,

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the Orders in Council of 1901 and 1906; the second allowing appeals to HM in Council from the decisions of the Straits Settlements Supreme Court sitting as a Court of Appeal from the courts having jurisdiction in Brunei (CO 531/1: 36993).

126. Note that Sir John Bucknill came to Brunei to judge the case because it would have been prohibitively expensive to transport all the witnesses to Singapore (CO 144/80: 40566).

127. There was one instance of hanging in 1916 and two in 1927. In 1927 an escaped prisoner was "shot dead resisting arrest" (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1927, p 12).

Note. Datuk Turner thought that all cases in the Resident's Court were heard by the Resident (or, in his absence, the Acting Resident) in person. The Assistant Resident was a Magistrate, First Class. (letter to the author, 28 January 1985, paragraph 1). Mr JG Black adds: "As far as I can remember I sat in court only infrequently in serious of difficult cases. There was very little (grave) crime in the State... Oddly enough, I can remember in 1930, in my capacity as Resident, Labuan, I sat in Brunei as appeal judge in an appeal against the decision of the Resident in a civil case. This was a one-off occasion, however". (Letter to the author, 25 January, 1985, paragraphs 4 and 6).

128. This section is based upon CO 144/80 (36822).

it was demanded that Islamic religious courts should be constituted for the hakim, who should sit with the Resident to try and determine cases. Mr McArthur pointed out that it was well known that HM Government had promised not to interfere in matters concerning breaches of Muhammadan religious law. He believed that the real object was "to ensure the presence on the bench of a hakim...on the ground that what the Brunei authorities are pleased to call...religious law provides penalties for all kinds of offences from murder to failure to attend Divine Service". He suggested that in reply it should be stated that provision was being made for the trial of offences against Islamic law by kathis to be appointed by the Sultan but that the Government did not intend to "invoke the assistance" of the former Brunei judges in the trial of offenders.

The Sultan and Regents demanded, secondly, that warrants against persons of standing were not to be issued or executed until after consultation with the Sultan and his Council. The adoption of this proposal was out of the question, Mr McArthur declared, because it would make the attempt to administer justice a farce, by exempting privileged persons from the law. (But in fact no attempt was made to charge the Regents for fraud, although it was well-known that they had forged tulin claims).

It was demanded, thirdly, that the High Commissioner must uphold his (alleged) assurance that the customs and laws of Brunei were to be kept inviolate for ever. This demand, the Resident claimed, was a case of wilful misrepresentation. The answer might be that "every country has from time to time to alter and revise its laws, and that the ridiculous statement attributed to (the High Commissioner) was never made,

the whole object of intervention being the amendment of existing customs and so-called 'laws' which were ruining the country".[129] (The High Commissioner replied to the Sultan along these lines).

By 1916 a comprehensive scheme for the mutual rendition of offenders involving all British-controlled territories in the Far East from Hong Kong to India had been concluded.[130]

Pre-Residential Brunei had no police, apart from the small contingent maintained illegally by the Rajah of Sarawak at Brooketon. There was "little to prevent crime should anyone be inclined to commit it". By and large, however, the people were "mild and peace-loving". Petty thefts in the capital tended to increase and were looked upon as a matter of course, but were no worse than those of any European sea-port of comparable size. In addition, "bad characters" from neighbouring countries used Brunei as an asylum. The rulers relied on headmen to preserve order; and would take "no action except in cases where pressure (was) put upon them by HM Government".[131]

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129. Mr McArthur reminded the Pengiran Bendahara that, if the customs of Brunei were to remain inviolable, his (the wazir's) annuity would be the first casualty because no provision for its payment existed under the pre-Residential constitution.

The outstanding demand in the petition concerned slavery: "As regards slaves, wherever they take refuge the Government of Brunei must help to recover them. If the slaves do not wish to return, whoever shelters them must pay the just value to their owners". The Government could not countenance slavery in any form and, while it would refrain from freeing existing slaves, it could give no assistance to those seeking to recover slaves who had absconded.

130. CO 144/80 (32631); CO 531/10; CO 874/800-1; and CO 273/347-434.

131. FO 572/39 MSH McArthur, "Report on Brunei in 1904", paragraph 36; CO 144/73 (5120) Keyser to FO, No 4 (political), 25 December 1898, paragraphs 28-9; and CO 144/74 (17694) Keyser to FO, No 23 (political), 30 April 1900. ("Notorious crime goes unpunished").

During the first four months of 1906 Brunei was policed by one Pathan and one Sikh. Arrangements were made for the establishment of a combined constabulary for Labuan and Brunei. As soon as accommodation was ready, nine Sikhs were stationed in Brunei Town. Later three Malays were engaged, "but the difficulty of recruiting and the lack of suitable candidates made it impossible to bring the force up to reasonable limits". There were at this stage no police in the outstations; and the services of existing policemen were confined to "routine guard duties".[132]

The first Chief Constable, Mr HG Crummey,[133] remained in control until 1917, when he was succeeded by Mr GA McAfee. They were based in Labuan, but made periodical visits of inspection or investigation to Brunei. The conduct of the Sikhs was not good and discipline in the outstations was "extremely lax".[134] In 1918, however, Inspector McAfee "worked a great change for the better in the Malay contingent" who were gradually becoming "a smart and useful body of men".[135]

A law of 1920 provided for the establishment of a separate Brunei Constabulary from 1 January 1921. The Chief Inspector and non-commissioned officers continued to be seconded from Singapore but the Sikhs (and later the NCOs) were replaced by local Malays. (The murder of the British Resident by a Sikh policeman in 1916 may have contributed

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132. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1906, p 12.
133. The unfortunate Mr Crummey, appointed in ?c1906, contracted leprosy whilst on service in Brunei and had to be invalided home. He appears to have survived into the 1930s (CO 273/498: 12660. CO 273/501: 48543. CO 273/549 File 52115. CO 273/558 File 62132 and CO 273/575 File 82133).
134. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 8.
135. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1918, p 5.

to this decision). The new force had an initial strength of thirty nine men. A major problem was to instill a sense of discipline and to create an esprit de corps. Breaches of discipline were "unacceptably high" and there was a large turnover of personnel due to defaulting or dismissal. Constant efforts were made to improve standards, for example by the establishment in 1926 of a Jawi literacy class for policemen; from 1931 recruits were required to be literate in Malay and the necessity for strict adherence to the regulations was emphasized. Individuals were sent to Singapore for more advanced training. A musketry course was started (1927) and a school opened for all constables (1931).

The principal functions of the police, naturally, were the maintenance of law and order and the detection of crime. The only felonies in 1906 were an amok, a murder and a gang robbery (including murder) all of which occurred in the Brooke-controlled Muara district. In sum, ten criminal and eleven civil cases came to court in 1906, resulting in the gaoling of six offenders.

The people of the capital appear to have been remarkably law-abiding, a fact remarked in 1913, 1919 and again as late as 1938. Murder was uncommon but not unknown in Brunei. Apart from the Resident in 1916, the Malay magistrate in Tutong had been a victim five years earlier, and there were occasional amoks. Headmen in the various rivers improved yearly in their relations with the Government and rarely if ever failed to report misdeeds in their districts. (It may be, however, that offences occurred in Brunei Town of which the police remained completely unsuspicious).

The main problems were smuggling and buffalo-rustling, the latter described in 1911 as "rife" and something of a sport. This form of crime was particularly acute in Tutong, the main cattle district. An additional difficulty lay in the reluctance of people to register their cattle and marks. Cattle thefts fluctuated in number, for in 1915 there were few reports of them, whereas in 1918 mention was made of a "plague" of buffalo-rustling. In 1917 at least 40% of all complaints received by the police related to the theft of buffaloes, but because these seldom reached the police till 5-6 days afterwards, the percentage of recoveries naturally was low. The chief receiver in ulu Tutong was caught early in 1918, whilst in December a gang working on the Limbang border was broken up by the arrest and punishment of the leader and some of his followers. The lack of communications made prompt dealing with this crime very difficult. A further success was scored in 1919. Inhabitants of Tutong had formed a 'company' with branches in Limbang and Tutong for purposes of buffalo stealing. The 'manager' was arrested with remarkable results: in 1918 there had been 313 reports of crime, of which 84 concerned buffalo theft, compared with 183 and 4 respectively in the following year.

Apart from cattle-lifting, however, crime was rare. In 1920 the registration of 'aliens' was introduced "with the hope of perpetuating this happy state of affairs".[136] It is certainly true that Chinese and other immigrants comprised a majority of prisoners held in the State. The more serious offenders were repatriated. The reported incidence of

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136. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1920, p 4.

crime nearly tripled between 1920 and 1938,[137] during which period the population had increased by about half, but offences remained of a minor nature (and many reports revealed no offence at all). The value of property stolen averaged about $2,000 annually, of which the police sometimes managed to recover up to one half.

The "crying need" of pre-Residential Brunei was a gaol,[138] because the Sultan lacked the means to retain offenders in custody. Other offenders flouted the Sultan's authority by returning to Brunei under the protection of the Sarawak flag. In 1906, therefore, the former consular agent's house over the water was bought and adapted for a temporary police station and lock-up. A new prison was built in the capital by 1914 and a second was established in Kuala Belait in 1929. The number of prisoners rose from six at the end of 1906 to 19 at the end of 1919, falling again to only five at the end of 1936. Most prisoners served short terms of less than one year, during which time they performed useful public works which could not otherwise have been done if wages had had to be paid. Prisoners regarded themselves, indeed, "less as convicted felons than as valuable public servants".[139]

The cost of the constabulary was comparatively high. But, apart from the maintenance of law and order, the police were also responsible for the registration of aliens (from 1920), the licensing of firearms

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137. See Appendix 6 for an abstract of judicial statistics.
138. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 55. But cf. in 1900 one Dato Mandat of Kuala Lama and another man were reported to have died in Brunei 'gaol' from the cruel manner of ironing them (CO 144/74: 914); and one Sahid died in custody in 1904 (McArthur, "Report", paragraph 39).
139. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1920, p 4.

and dogs, the registration of motor vehicles and bicycles (from 1924 and 1925 respectively) and the supervision of weights and measures. In addition policemen manned the new Brunei telephone exchange in the 1930s. Finally, they assumed the functions of a 'fire brigade', commencing in Brunei Town in 1927, when fire-fighting appliances first were purchased, and at Kuala Belait from 1932.

The Malay and Chinese communities settled civil cases according to their own customs. Nor were there any "lawyers or litigously-minded chettiars, as in Malaya, to keep one on one's toes" - thus Datuk RN Turner.[140] It was probably just as well that the crime rate was so low because the Brunei Police Force, in common with the entire governmental machine, was not very efficient, certainly by Malayan standards.

7. District Administration

The territorial power of the pengirans had been broken when all land was taken into State ownership and they were relieved of their former rights of administration and taxation. In due course, this made possible the creation of an efficient central authority, whose writ ran throughout the country.

Indigenous chiefs were placed in charge of outlying areas as soon as the redemption of monopolies provided employment for Government servants (see Chapter 5). In 1907 there were six such officers stationed in different places. The Resident claimed that their "ignorance and inexperience" made it "impossible to hope that they will be of much

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140. Datuk RN Turner, letter to the author, 16 February 1983, p 5.

assistance in the general development of the district of which they are in charge".[141] No Government official at all was stationed in Belait until September 1907 because of the delay in coming to terms with the previous tulin holders. In the case of Temburong, a Malay magistrate was appointed early in 1907, but had to be prosecuted and dismissed for extortion after a few months; and for the remainder of the year, the district was left without a Government representative because of the difficulty of finding a suitable replacement. Similarly the customs clerk at Limau Manis had been dismissed; and in 1908 the station there was abolished and the administration of the district combined with that of Brunei. All revenue from Tutong, other than customs, was collected in the State capital. Even so, the Native Officer - "a Sarawak Malay of advanced age" - had to be retired in 1908 because of "numerous and well-founded complaints regarding his administrative methods".[142] No doubt, however, it took time for Malays to adjust to the new methods required of them; and Mr McArthur's selection policy must also have been at fault. Other Malay officers, particularly Pengiran Anak Hashim (twenty-five years, 1907-32, a district officer, first in Belait and then in Brunei-Muara), were considered very worthy; [143] and Mr Cator commented upon the fairness

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141. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1907, p 5.
142. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1908, p 4.
143. CO 824/1 BAR 1912, p 5 and BAR 1918, p 5; and CO 824/2 BAR 1932, p 35. PA Hashim was the son of the Pengiran Shahbandar, tulin owner of Padas Damit, who took on the BNBC in 1889-90 and died in 1912. PA Hashim was appointed Pengiran Shahbandar himself in 1918 and was a State Councillor from 1921 until his death in 1949. Lady R Peel knew him in 1946-7 as still a racy octogenarian, partial to tea and cakes, and lengthy visits to the Residency. He was "rather toothless and has a large family". Having lost two wives during the Japanese occupation, he was on the point of remarriage. (Lady R Peel, letters home 1946-7; courtesy of Lady Peel).

and justice of Malay magistrates during his tenure. Perhaps the most successful of the district officers (as Malay magistrates were styled after 1932), was Inche Ibrahim bin Muhammad Jahfar. Born in Labuan in 1902, he was DO Brunei and Muara (1932-5), then Secretary to Resident (1935-41) and chief administrative officer under the Japanese (1941-5). After the war he became secretary to Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin III. It is significant (because indicative of royal dominance by 1959) that it was he, rather than one of the wazirs, who emerged as Mentri Besar when Brunei was granted internal autonomy at the end of the Residential Era. Awarded the titles pehin and dato, he ended his career as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and died in 1971.

The Residents exercised a much less ineffective control over district administration than Sultans had done before 1906. The four Malay district officers, recruited mainly from outside Brunei at first, were his appointees and were responsible to him alone. Their duties consisted originally of little beyond the adjudication of petty civil cases and the collection of customs duties and poll tax. In 1914 the Malay magistrates were urged "to induce the people living in their districts to plant padi in order to minimise any possible shortage due to the war".[144] Malay magistrates were also responsible for land work.[145]

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144. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1914, p 4.

145. Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 25 January 1985, paragraph 7. Also from Datuk Turner. Mr JO Gilbert comments that there were no Malay DOs "in the real sense of the word": they were more like the Native Officers in Sarawak (see R Pringle, Rajahs and Rebels, especially pp 149-54). In the 1950s, Mr Gilbert adds, "appointment of these officers would be made by recommendation from the Assistant Resident by the British

In 1924 it was reported that Belait had become the most important district in the State apart from Brunei itself.[146] Efficient administration of the river was rendered difficult by its inaccessibility and distance from headquarters:

"This is felt most acutely now that the operations of the BMPC, with a staff of four Europeans, are becoming so extensive, while the Chinese immigrants are not of the most law-abiding class. If the oilfield develops as it is hoped and anticipated, it will be essential to station a European District Officer here". 147

This accounts for the eventual re-instatement of the Assistant Resident in 1931. The Malay District Officer at Kuala Belait then came under the supervision of the Assistant Resident.

The lowest rank of administration was occupied by the village headmen, whose duties were to report any crime and to collect poll tax.[148] They also relayed Government propaganda, for example to promote vaccination against smallpox or improved agricultural methods. (In 1915 buffalo straying was damaging roads: after "repeated interviews", however, Kedayan headmen were showing readiness to meet the wishes of the Government in this matter). In addition, they represented their villagers' interests: the administration clearly took these wishes into account

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Resident, who need not, but...would, consult the Sultan, before making the appointment" (letter to the author, 12 November 1983, paragraph 2).

146. In May 1924 a transfer was effected whereby the officer in Tutong, Pehin Dato Shahbandar (d 1947), exchanged places with his counterpart in Belait, Pengiran Anak Haji Muhammad (d 1926) - BAR 1924, p 14. The Pehin Dato Shahbandar (Abang Seruji) was appointed to the title (with a seat on the State Council) in 1920.

147. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1924, p 14.

148. Mr JG Black recalls: "The village headmen (in 1937-40) had no legal powers. They acted as a link between the kampong people and the Government, for example, identifying the parties in transfers of land" (letter to the author, 25 January 1985, paragraph 8).

as is proved by their negotiations with the Kedayans in 1909-10 over the land issue. In 1931 penghulus were appointed in the padi-growing districts. They had "certain powers as peace officers" in the areas for which they were responsible.[149]

Sanitary Boards were created for Brunei Town in 1920 and for Kuala Belait and Tutong in 1929. Comprising official and unofficial members appointed by the Resident, they supervised sanitation, conservancy, street lighting, rating and municipal matters generally.

8. Conclusion

In this chapter it has been seen that the traditional system of administration, taxation and land tenure based upon kerajaan, kuripan and tulin rights was swept aside; a natural concomitant was the abolition of serfdom and the possibility, for the first time, of land ownership by the ordinary people. The British introduced a new structure of central government and district administration controlled by the Resident (acting in the name of the Sultan) whose writ was effective throughout the country. They laid the foundations for a new bureaucracy and reformed the judicature. In the following chapter another important aspect of the Residents' work, financial reform, is analysed.

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149. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1931, p 3.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINANCE 1906 - 1932

1. Introduction

This chapter will examine the attempts of the early Residents to re-establish Brunei's finances on a sound basis. In 1906 the Sultanate was not only bankrupt but its future revenues had been anticipated for many years ahead - as far as 1929 in one instance. The British relieved the pengirans of the power of taxation and established a national treasury and a reformed system of taxation. A large bridging loan was obtained from the Federated Malay States to enable the Brunei Government to buy up mortgaged monopolies, cession monies and tulin rights. Before the discovery of oil, however, Brunei remained a land of slender economic resources, its principal export products being cutch, coal and, later, rubber (see chapter 6). Hence there was nothing to generate a substantial income for the Government and Brunei remained heavily indebted throughout the pre-oil era. This affected the quality of administration that could be offered: in 1911 the Brunei Government had only five dollars to spend in the year for each citizen, in 1931 less than twelve dollars. After essential administrative expenditure had been taken out, little remained for the provision of social services, which, in consequence, remained rudimentary.

2. Establishment of a Currency

Brunei has had a modern currency of its own only since 1967. Although a mint may have existed in the Sultanate as early as the sixteenth century,[1] the production and use of coins remained patchy, the 1868 tokens issued by Sultan Abdul Mumin being the first which may be dated precisely.[2] Professor DE Brown points out that during the nineteenth century brass objects were widely used as a means of exchange. He adds that other media were in use, including "measures of fabrics, standardized bits of iron, Chinese cash...and, after closer British contacts, British and Straits Settlements' coinage and Mexican dollars".[3] Much trade continued to be conducted by direct bartering. In 1887, however, Sultan Hashim decided that he ought to have a coinage of his own. Although his coins remained in use as late as 1901, Mr McArthur commented in 1904 that, among other deficiencies, Brunei had "no coinage".[4]

In 1903 the Straits Settlements abandoned its silver currency, adopting instead the gold standard. One of Mr McArthur's first tasks as British Resident was to pass a Currency Enactment (1906) demonetizing British and Mexican dollars in Brunei and introducing instead the new Straits' dollar (worth $0.12) as the only legal tender in the Sultanate. Originally the former dollars were to be demonetized at a discount of 10%: in other words, the people of Brunei would receive nine new Straits' dollars for every ten British dollars. The Colonial Office

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1. JS Carroll, "Berunai in the Boxer Codex" in JMBRAS (1982, Pt 2), p 19.
2. JA Davidson, "Brunei Coinage" in BMJ 1977, p 48.
3. DE Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate (Brunei 1970), p 66.
4. FO 572/39 MSH McArthur, "Report on Brunei in 1904", paragraph 55.

insisted, therefore, that - to avoid hardship - debts and contracts of date prior to demonetization must be subject to the same discount of 10%: i.e. that a debt of ten old dollars must be repayable at nine new ones. It seems, in fact, that the Brunei Treasury exchanged the former currency for the new at a discount of only 5% instead of the 10% originally intended. The Resident commented that though this 5% rate

"compared favourably with that charged by private traders in Labuan, where the prevailing rate was 10%, few of the (people of Brunei), some of whom possessed hoards of silver, took advantage of the facilities offered them, the general idea being apparently that the Government was not disinterested in its action and that they would be wiser to wait for a more favourable rate of exchange. Approximately $42,000 were received and exchanged during the three weeks fixed for the purpose. Probably as much remained in the country in private hands". 5

3. Taxation Reforms

From 1906 (despite the delay in settling tulin claims) all rights of administration and taxation in Brunei were vested in the Government alone. The previous irregular, arbitrary and excessive taxation, which had aroused such discontent in pre-Residential Brunei, was abolished, along with 'serfdom'. The one exception was an annual poll tax of two dollars for all non-Malay indigenous subjects of Brunei who had not taken up registered land. (The Government received various forms of land revenue from those who rented land from it or were licensed to use State Land for economic purposes, such as tapping jelutong trees). At the beginning of 1933 poll tax was reduced to fifty cents and four years later it was abolished altogether. In his 1904 "Report" Mr McArthur had

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5. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1906, p 12. (There was no evidence that the Government did make any profit on this transaction).

hoped for annual receipts of $15,000 from this source, but nothing even remotely approaching such a yield was ever realized. The ammount collected, indeed, was so niggardly, and the cost of collecting it so great, that the poll tax would have been discontinued earlier but for the Government's desire to hold out the possibility of exemption therefrom as an inducement to people to take up land for cultivation.[6] In the early years of the Residential Era it was discovered, also, that Kedayan headmen had not been collecting the tax fully: the 1911 census materially assisted their honesty by making default more obvious.

In 1906-9 $7,045 of the FMS loan was used to purchase tulin revenues (see above, pp 109-10). Whilst the liquidation of such rights was essential if one authority was to be exercised throughout the country, the redemption of monopolies was more significant in terms of providing an income for the new administration. At the beginning of 1906 most of Brunei's revenues were in the hands of monopolists, chiefly Chinese, who had the right to collect them by payment of cash in advance to the Sultan. In some cases the monopoly of trading in certain articles had been granted; in others the sole right of charging duties on imports or exports had been sold outright, no limit being fixed for the rates to be charged by the monopolist. The only article not thus exploited was rice.

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6. In 1939, however, the State Forest Officer pointed out that the cost of obtaining a title for the five acres of rice land necessary to support an average family came out at twelve dollars, so the people naturally did not avail themselves of the proffered exemption from poll tax (CO Flemmich, "History of Shifting Cultivation in Brunei 1906-1939" in Malayan Agricultural Journal, May 1940, p 236). Cf. p 129, above.

The more valuable monopolies were leased to only two Chinese traders, Chua Cheng Hee and Cheok Yu, who enjoyed the additional advantage of being able to import their own merchandise free of tax. To take the case of 'sundry goods': at the end of 1904 it was reported that Chua had acquired the right to levy 5% duty on such imports from 1901 to 1929 (for which he had paid $15,000), plus the right to collect an additional 2% duty during the years 1904-10 (for $8,800). On top of these 7% duties, his rival, Cheok, had purchased, for $7,500 in cash, the right to levy 5% taxes on the same articles from 1905 to 1910 (making duties of 12% in all). Mr McArthur, writing in 1904, noted that the last-named lease (to Cheok) was already chopped and dated 1905.[7] But these 12% duties were only a beginning, for, as the Resident explained, it was in the interest of the original monopolist to sub-let the monopoly and so receive a fixed income from other traders rather than go to the trouble and expense of maintaining a private preventive staff. The profits of successive middlemen added sharply to retail prices (see above, pp 31-2).

Since no administration was possible so long as these monopolies remained in existence, a loan of $200,000 was secured from the Federated Malay States to enable the Brunei Government to buy them up. In the years 1906 to 1908 a sum of $72,009 was spent in the redemption of over thirty monopolies. The procedure adopted was to offer monopolists their original purchase money, less an amount proportionate to the number of years the

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7. McArthur, "Report", Appendix III; cf Belfield Report (FO 12/128 p 450). The example given was the most extreme; but it provides a glimpse both of the financial plight of Brunei's rulers and of the task facing the new administration at the beginning of 1906.

monopoly had been held already. An exception to this rule was Sir Charles Brooke, who was allowed to retain his monopolies in Muara Damit. Another Briton, Mr James Hatton Hall, held the monopoly of tobacco import into Brunei provided he paid the Sultan import duty of twelve dollars a pikul (i.e. a tax which he was legally bound to pay anyway); but since he had paid no consideration fee for exemption, he received no compensation from the new regime. As a result he took his case to the Colonial Office; but enquiries disclosed that he was a slippery character "clearly engaged in something little short of swindling".[8] His petition was dismissed, therefore; and he did not pursue the matter further. Apart from his protests, the liquidation of monopolies was achieved without incident.

After monopolies affecting the import trade of the capital had been eliminated, customs regulations were introduced (April 1906) substituting a "fixed and moderate" scale of import duties for the restrictions which had been enforced previously. The "tentative and temporary" initial customs regulations were repealed at the end of the year when a Customs Enactment was passed and made applicable to the entire State.[9]

Sir John Anderson, the High Commissioner, reported:

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8. CO 144/80 (40567) minute by Lucas, 10 November 1906. NB. Mr Hall exaggerated grossly the scale of his profits, existing and anticipated, the basis upon which he claimed compensation. He sold mouldy, third-rate tobacco as the price of the best grade. Finally, he imported his tobacco in cake form instead of "in twists" (his concession was for sigep bilai, "tobacco in twists"). It was argued that, by abandoning the "twist" form, Mr Hall had begun to import an article for which he had no concession. See Appendix 1.4, pp 589-606 (below).
9. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1906, p 11.

"In April last (1906) I approved certain customs regulations for Brunei as it was found that the import rates hitherto charged by Chinese monopolists were excessive and because, in some cases, the monopolies had been cancelled on payment of compensation, with the result that goods were being brought into the port of Brunei free of duty.

In September last the Resident reported that these regulations (had) proved unsatisfactory in some respects; that retail prices in Brunei had been substantially reduced since their introduction and submitted a draft Customs Enactment with Rules made thereunder making some further reduction in the duties charged.

In submitting the draft Enactment, the Resident reported that though these new duties were, in the main, lower than those in force in British North Borneo, some of the duties were higher than they should, theoretically, be in a State under British protection, but that it had to be remembered that monopolies of import and export of the articles dealt with that had been granted by the late Sultan (Hashim) had had to be redeemed by cash payments and that it was necessary for the Government to make some effort to recover the sums so expended.

After consulting the acting Attorney-General of the Straits Settlements I approved the draft Enactment and Rules and they were duly passed by His Highness in Council on 29 November last". 10

The Colonial Office had "some doubts as to the policy of imposing export duties" and requested the Resident to watch their effect on the trade of the State.[11]

Sarawak sources reported that the tariff of taxation imposed since the British flag (sic) was hoisted in Brunei was very high indeed and "evidently not appreciated by the Brunei people who have hitherto had so few of their necessities or luxuries taxed by the State".[12] The key phrase there is "by the State", as explained by the first Resident: "...the implication that they were not, therefore, taxed (hitherto) is not in accordance with the facts. The new import duties do not cover many articles previously taxed and in many cases impose a duty of 5% instead of 10%. Retail prices are going down and...this fact alone shows how inaccurate the Rajah's statements are". 13

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10. CO 531/1 (7040) Anderson to CO, Brunei confidential, 31 January 1907.
11. Ibid., CO to Anderson, 1 March 1907.
12. CO 604/1 Sarawak Gazette, 5 June 1906, p 141.
13. CO 144/80 (35280) McArthur to Secretary to High Commissioner, No 150, 28 June 1906, paragraph 3 (my addition in parentheses).

The Resident invited attention, also, to the fact that exports from Sarawak-held Limbang to Brunei had to pay 10% duty and the export from there of nibong palms used in house-building in Brunei Town had been completely prohibited. In the light of this evidence, the Rajah's criticisms seemed due "less to sympathy than to pique". The main point, indeed, is that the abolition of monopolies reduced the cost of living in Brunei and allowed greater freedom of trade; also, customs duties remained the principal source of income there until the oil era (see below, p 168ff).

Towards the end of 1908 the original Malayan loan to Brunei of $200,000 was already virtually exhausted. Ordinary revenue in Brunei amounted to only $51,777 in 1907 and $43,539 in the following year.[14] Of these sums, the allowances payable to the Sultan and wazirs alone absorbed $24,000 annually. It had become clear that a second loan was imperative; and, although Mr Churchill had assured the House of Commons in 1907 that it was not intended to make the FMS loan an annual occurrence,[15] it was obvious that Brunei

"must be financed for some time to come and there appears to be no other course but to apply again to the FMS for what is necessary". 16

Mr Stubbs argued that there was much to the said for the view

"that Malay States which have flourished extraordinarily owing solely to

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14. Cf. Sir Charles Brooke's claim in 1895 that "the local revenue of the Sultan is only about $800 a month", or $9,600 annually (CO 144/70: 19976 - Rajah to FO, 4 November 1895).
15. CO 531/1 (26381). Mr WS Churchill (1874-1965) was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1905 until 1908.
16. CO 531/2 (7111) Anderson to CO, Brunei (confidential), 3 February 1909, paragraph 6.

British Protection should, as a thanks offering, aid a kindred State to secure the same advantages. There is no visible alternative except to hand over the State to Sarawak, which would...be a crime". 17

By June 1911 a second and a third loan, both of $100,000 - making $400,000 in all - had been obtained and expended. Although a fourth loan had become necessary, the situation seemed to be improving:

"It should be possible now to pay the FMS Government interest at the rate of 4% on the whole loan of $400,000 and during the next three years it may also be possible to pay the overdue interest for the years 1906-10, amounting to about $48,000. The unofficial members of the Federal Council were consulted as regards a further loan of $100,000 (making $500,000 in all) and, with one dissentient, they approved it". 18

Mr Stubbs was satisfied that the money had been spent "to good purpose" for Brunei, "and if, as seems possible now, the FMS (?is) to get their interest as well (which I scarcely expected to happen in my time), the situation has resulted very satisfactorily".[19]

By April 1914, when the Colonial Office called a halt to any further borrowing by Brunei for the time being, $39,750 of the fourth loan had been drawn. Mr Griffin commented that, if the oil business came to anything, the Brunei Government "ought to be able to carry on".[20] The loan money had been used as shown in Table 3 (overleaf).

In 1922 Brunei received a further loan, this time of $20,000 from the Straits Settlements, which was used for the purchase of cession monies and the capitalization of political pensions granted in compensation to former tulin holders. In the case of this particular loan, repayment

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17. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 6 March 1909.
18. CO 531/3 (22583) Acting High Commissioner, Mr (later Sir) EL Brockman (1865-1943) to CO, 12 June 1911, paragraph 4.
19. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 14 July 1911.
20. CO 531/6 (28412) minute by RH Griffin (1879-1917), 6 August 1914.

Table 3. Brunei: Loan Expenditure 1906-14 (in $ Straits)

Use	$	%
1. Redemption of cession monies	174,377	39.65
2. General purposes	106,980	24.33
3. Redemption of monopolies	72,009	16.37
4. Loan to Sultan Jemal	41,000	9.32
5. Government buildings and launch	38,339	8.72
6. Redemption of tulin rights	7,045	1.60
T O T A L	439,750	100.00

Source: CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1926, p 24.

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was made at the rate of $2,000 a year and was completed by 1933.

Thus it will be seen that the cost of establishing the finances of Brunei on a sound basis was rather more than had been anticipated by the British authorities on the eve of the Residential Era (only one loan of $200,000 was planned). Interest payments long remained a heavy burden; and, but for the fortuitous discovery of oil, indebtedness would have persisted for far longer than actually transpired.

In 1914 Brunei's national debt represented the equivalent of three and a half years' ordinary revenue (and, at one stage, it had been over seven years' revenue). By the beginning of the oil era (1932) the deficit, although reduced comparatively little in absolute terms, represented barely one year's income because of the expansion, in the interval, of ordinary revenue. This is demonstrated in the following table.

Table 4. National Debt as a Percentage of Government Revenue ($ Straits)

Year	Income (1)	Expenditure	National Debt (2)	(2) as %age of (1)
1906	28,173	145,245	200,000	710
1910	77,051	73,513	300,000	389
1915	129,529	114,518	439,750	338
1920	206,253	223,690	430,000	208
1925	345,573	245,286	430,000	124
1930	333,069	373,604	401,000	120
1935	813,532	786,201	133,000	16
1940	1,556,354	1,462,174	nil	-

Sources: Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports 1906-46.

4. Ordinary Revenue

Ordinary revenue (as opposed to the FMS loan) rose steadily during the early years of the Residential Era until further progress was interrupted by the Great War. In 1910 a surplus was achieved for the first time, and in the following year an annual revenue of six figures was attained, rising to a pre-war peak of $165,082 in 1913. During the Great War revenue slumped; but, apart from untypical years (such as 1914 and 1930), Brunei usually showed a surplus. In 1911 it became possible to begin paying interest on the FMS loan; and repayment of the principal commenced in 1920.

Although nearly 40% of loan expenditure had been devoted to the redemption of cession monies, and $80,870 of ordinary revenue had been expended for the same purpose by 1928, net receipts from redeemed cession monies were slightly less before 1932 than the sums applied to redeem them. After the Second World War Brunei agreed to the Sarawak

Government's request for a compounding of annual cession money payments.[21]

The redemption of monopolies was far more valuable, however, in permitting alternative forms of revenue collection for the administration thereafter. Customs duties, which replaced monopolies, remained the most significant source of income until the beginning of the oil era. In 1906 direct customs duties collected by the Government amounted to only $7,720 of the total revenue of $28,173. A further $12,210 was derived indirectly from the import duty farms for opium and spirits ($4,950), tobacco ($6,050) and kerosene and matches ($1,210). The tobacco and opium farms were resumed by the Government on 1 August 1908. On the same date a chandu farm was constituted and let to Cheok Boon Siok, who also held the pawnbroking and gambling farms. At this time the Customs Department suffered from a number of disadvantages, including lack of staff, and geographical and political factors made Brunei ideal smuggling country. The Brunei Government also had no power to impose duties in the Brooke-controlled Muara Damit district. Finally, many months elapsed before suitable Government officials could be found for Belait and Temburong districts; and, as late as 1915, difficulties of communication made it impossible for the Resident to exercise adequate supervision over these new Malay magistrates because of distance.[22]

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21. After the Second World War the British Resident in Brunei was pressurized by Sarawak and North Borneo (which became British Crown colonies in 1946) into compounding cession monies on extremely favourable terms (ten years' annual payments). Private holders of cession monies in Brunei refused to settle on the same basis, which they regarded as inadequate (CO 537/3781 and CO 537/2242).

22. CO 531/9 (37469) Mr FW Douglas (1874-1953) to CO, 12 August 1915.

In 1910 several attempts were made to improve the customs yield. Matters were helped by a rise in the price of jungle produce, especially jelutong, which encouraged trade and increased revenue from customs. Indeed, the Government found itself having to caution people of the dangers of excessive reliance on one industry. Secondly, by this time Government supervision had improved somewhat. Two of the largest Brunei importers were fined in 1910 on the prosecution of the Assistant Resident for declaring false values on dutiable articles; whilst the leading Chinese trader at Tutong was charged with smuggling and fined heavily on conviction. Thirdly, in April 1910, a general codification of customs duties was introduced throughout Brunei. It was found that Chinese traders had been declaring entirely false values on their getah and jelutong exports - in some cases 50-60% below the true value. Hence customs schedules were prepared, providing for a uniform duty throughout Brunei.

Smuggling remained a perennial problem:

"Around Brunei Bay there are four different administrations...all within a radius of fifteen miles and all with different tariffs - a perfect paradise for smugglers, with all the existing creeks and islands...". 23

As late as 1924 there had to be a "considerable tightening up" of customs supervision.

The increase in customs revenue (shown in the table overleaf) was taken as "an index of the rising prosperity of the country" but, initially, continued to be too heavily dependent on jelutong, which

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23. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1924, p 4.

Table 5. Selected Sources of Brunei Government Revenue 1907-41 (in $ Straits).

Year	Total Income	Customs	Licences	Gov't Mon's (*)	Cession Money	Poll Tax	Lands & Mines
1907	51,777	13,587	15,900	-	n.a.	605	3,200
1910	77,051	39,627	2,705	-	20,813a	4,266b	12,145
1915	129,529	42,584	18,148c	n.a.	21,646	5,164b	14,343
1920	206,253	69,872	20,637	35,481	20,038	3,544	24,973
1925	345,573	132,682	15,025	65,615	15,175	3,566	42,986
1930	333,069	130,881	17,242	52,974	15,200	1,988	72,595
1935	813,532	229,129	30,146	53,369	15,200	1,034	420,924d
1941	1,325,913	335,963	53,761	84,344	15,200	nil	603,894d

Notes: * Government Monopolies
a 1911 (including "repayment of loans").
b includes market boat tax and launch freight tax
c probably includes Government Monopolies (created 1913)
d includes oil royalty.

Source: compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports.

Table 6: Selected Sources of Government Revenue as a Percentage of the Total Revenue

Year	Total Income	Customs	Licences	Gov't Mono's	Cession Money	Poll Tax	Lands & Mines
1907	51,777	26	31	-	n.a.	1	6
1910	77,051	51	4	-	27	6	8
1915	129,529	33	4	n.a.	17	4	11
1920	206,253	34	10	17	10	2	12
1925	345,573	38	4	19	4	1	12
1930	333,069	39	5	16	5	0.6	22
1935	813,532	28	4	6	2	0.1	52
1941	1,325,913	25	4	6	1	nil	46

Source: compiled by author from the data in Table 5.

earned large sums for both dealers and collectors.[24]

By way of contrast to effective export duties, the imposition of customs duties on imports hit the poorer people, as the Government itself admitted in 1911:

"As soon as the revenue permits, the import duties on everything except oil, tobacco (which is one of the main factors in the increased revenue), and spirits, should be reduced and eventually abolished as their collection does more than anything else to retard the progress of the country, especially with regard to an increase (through immigration) of population, the crying need of the country". 25

So long as the price of jelutong remained high, the Government had no fears that the populace would be in actual want;[26] but a warning was given that it was by no means certain that jelutong would continue to provide profit and in that event Government expected to be confronted with a reduction of at least $20,000 in annual revenue.

The pre-war peak of customs duties - $57,816 - was achieved in 1913, but further growth was halted by the First World War, only $38,823 being collected in 1918. This slide followed the enforced removal of import duties from certain foodstuffs and the general depression in trade because of war conditions and shipping restrictions. The immediate

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24. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1911, p 3.
25. Ibid. The Resident added that "taxation of imports as collected in Brunei is a heavy fine on capital, while that of exports was a small charge on income"; i.e. import duties discouraged new investment in Brunei from overseas.
26. In 1912 repeated warnings were given "in Belait district especially of the necessity for cultivation of cocoanuts, as well as of the advisability of cleaning the sago plantations. The (people), however - with a blind trust in the unlimited wealth of Government now that British officers are employed in Brunei - elaborate that trust by a steady disinclination for any sustained manual labour, a somewhat embarrassing condition of affairs in the light of what the future is almost sure to bring forth" (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1912, p 4).

aftermath of war was a time of extreme hardship because of the acute shortage of rice which caused its price to soar but this increased cost was offset to some extent by increased demand for Brunei sago, jelutong and dried fish. India, which had substantial surpluses of rice, "bled Malaya shamelessly" at this time.[27] Tariffs on foodstuffs and other essentials were kept low or remitted in 1920-1. In the latter year a duty was levied on coal exported from Sir Vyner Brooke's mine at Brooketon; but the rapid increase in the yield from customs duties during the 1920s was due principally to the rubber export boom and the importation of machinery by the British Malayan Petroleum Company.

Chandu Monopoly. A second major source of Government income during the pre-oil era was "Government monopolies", meaning chandu.[28] The ethics of relying upon such a product for revenue became a matter of international concern. At the first International Opium Conference held at The Hague in 1912, it was agreed that, in future, the manufacture and sale of opium would be monopolised by the State. Hence, after 1 January 1913, the Brunei administration received all chandu imported into the country from the Government factory in Singapore, and a Monopolies Department, headed (1913-19) by Mr EG Goldfinch, was created. It was feared, however,

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27. CO 717/59 (File 52332) minute by Sir G Grindle (1869-1934), 29 January 1928. See also CO 273/503 (2986 20/21) Sir LN Guillemard (1862-1951) to CO, SS confidential, 18 December 1920; and enclosure, Guillemard to Lord Chelmsford (Viceroy of India), 18 December 1920. India had made a profit of $39,000,000 from rice sales to Malaya, Sir Laurence claimed.
28. Before 1906 the monopoly of chandu import "1901-15" had been sold to Chua Cheng Hee for $14,040 cash (McArthur, "Report", Appendix III). "This represents $1,080 per annum (sic)", Mr McArthur added. "At Brooketon, where there is a smaller Chinese population, the farm fetches $5,760 per annum. The Limbang farm fetches $4,800 per annum". NB: 14,040 divided by 1,080 equals only 13; therefore, either the dates "1901-15" or the annual receipts "$1,080" given by Mr McArthur is incorrect.

that the ease of smuggling would complicate the enforcement of the international opium policy. Finally, the Brunei Chandu Enactment of 1912 confined the sale of chandu in the Sultanate to adult male Chinese. Shops and customers had to be registered.

During 1913 the total sale of opium in Brunei actually increased (by about 10%), instead of falling, and produced a net revenue for the Government of $37,070 (instead of only $12,000 the previous year, when the former system had been in operation). By 1924 this rose to $58,975, which represented over 20% of total revenue, compared with about 45-50% in the Straits Settlements. It was found, also, that the amount spent by a labourer on opium tended to increase with his earnings. If the price of Government chandu became too high, he simply turned to cheaper supplies of smuggled Persian opium, or to more dangerous drugs, such as heroin or cocaine, or to excessive consumption of alcohol.

A commission of enquiry, appointed in 1923, reported on opium in 'British Malaya', including Brunei. It was discovered that 80-85% of those who smoked opium had acquired the habit locally. About 60% of the sample smoked for pleasure and about 40% for relief from pain: Chinese labourers looked upon opium as possessing curative qualities. The dose taken was governed by two factors, tolerance and pocket, the latter being of increasing importance as the income scale descended.

The Geneva Conference of 1924 envisaged the complete suppression of opium smoking within fifteen years of the date when smuggling had been completely suppressed. The date of the latter, which was to be announced, was to be not later than 1935: hence total abolition was scheduled for

1950 at the latest.[29] The British Government remained sceptical of such rapid progress.[30]

Also decided at Geneva and implemented in Brunei was, inter alia, the complete control by Government of opium retailing from 1 January 1925. In Brunei Town there was a Government retail shop in the charge of a Government servant who was paid a fixed wage, and in all the out-stations, with one exception, opium could be obtained only at Government outlets. There were only eight retail shops in Brunei on 1 November 1925 and no smoking divans. Anti-opium instruction in schools, as required by the Convention, was considered undesirable and unnecessary in Brunei. A system of registration of smokers was prepared.[31]

In order to make provision against the day when opium revenue would cease, all the Malayan administrations introduced Opium Revenue Replacement Funds (ORRF). In 1925 the Resident of Brunei proposed to earmark 20% of opium revenue until 1927, and thereafter the whole of such revenue, towards a replacement fund. The Malayan opium funds were set up to demonstrate to a sceptical public opinion that the various Governments, which derived up to 50% of their revenue from opium, seriously intended to stamp out the habit. This was done "ostensibly as a result of local initiative but in fact under pressure from here (Whitehall)".[32]

It was decided that the reserve funds should remain in effect until they

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29. CO 273/525 (18501) Sir LN Guillemard (1862-1951) to CO, confidential, 18 March 1924, enclosing the Opium Committee's report.
30. CO 273/532 (17553) minute by Mr JJ Paskin (1892-1972), 5 November 1926, paragraph 9.
31. CO 273/531 (7462) memo by Mr EEF Pretty, 1 November 1925, paragraph 3.
32. CO 717/66 (File 62427) minute by Mr S Caine, 26 August 1929.

reached the equivalent of three years' revenue from opium. The Brunei fund, standing at $201,903 on 31 December 1940, easily achieved this objective; but by that time oil revenue rendered the replacement of opium revenue less urgent (but easier to do). The underlying objective was

"to free Malayan administrations entirely from any embarrassment which their dependence upon opium revenue might cause in carrying out the policy of the ultimate suppression of opium-smoking". 33

Although consumption of opium had been in decline for some time beforehand, the Japanese occupation (1941-5) indirectly and finally solved the evil of opium-smoking in Brunei "by killing off or curing all addicts".[34] After 1946 the chandu monopoly was not re-established.

Lands and Mines. Lands and mines provided a third major source of Brunei's income. In 1908 land revenue was obtained chiefly from payments by the Rajah of Sarawak for coal rights and by the Island Trading Syndicate for the area occupied by their outch factory at Subok. At this stage it was not possible, in the absence of the necessary staff, to carry out the survey of occupied land, and no rents were as yet assessed. (The Rajah and ITS paid fixed sums specified in their respective leases).

After the introduction of land legislation (1907, 1909) and the resolution of tulin claims, many lots of land were taken up and several estates were established in Brunei. The Government then derived from these holdings, sometimes in lieu of poll tax in the case of non-Malay indigenous cultivators, land rents and fees for survey, demarcation and

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33. Ibid., CO to High Commissioner, 1 October 1929, paragraph 7.
34. (RHO) Mss Pac s71 (8) CFC Macaskie (1888-1969), "Notes for an Autobiography of a North Borneo Career" (1964), p 128. Consumption of chandu fell from 12,660 tahils annually in 1926 to only 6,000 tahils in 1938.

registration of title. Survey fees were not specifically included as an item in land revenue, but were not inconsiderable in themselves, reaching a peak of $8,583 in 1913. High land prices ($100-$400 per site) were obtained in Brunei Town as early as 1909, which was taken as a sign that the Chinese had some faith in the country as a commercial centre. The first rubber was exported in 1914 (which added to customs receipts and enabled the purchases of the new wage earners to be taxed). Local people, particularly Kedayans, began to take up land after their initial hostility and suspicion of Government intentions had been overcome by the tact of Mr Lee-Warner. A land-boom (by Brunei standards) followed in the mid-1920s when there was a rush, mainly by smallholders, to take up land for the purpose of rubber planting.

There were hopes, also, that a substantial timber industry would develop in Brunei. The North Borneo Trading Company made such an attempt in 1909-11 but gave up in failure (see below, p 209). Forest revenue also derived from licences for jelutong tapping and the collection of other jungle produce. With regard to mines, the main elements were prospecting fees and mining rents, the latter often minimal. It was upon oil, however, that British Residents placed their only real hopes for a substantial mineral-based revenue.

Miscellaneous sources of income included posts, interest, municipal revenue, fines and fees, poll tax and licences. A postal system was introduced in October 1906, when stamps were issued for the first time. This source of income was volatile, large increases occurring after new issues of stamps, which were bought up by European

philatelists. Hence, in 1907, postal revenue, standing at $14,587, accounted for 28% of State income; and 1912 was an even better year ($15,957). But, at other times, annual receipts fell below $2,000.[35] Government 'interest' was derived from a 7% loan of $41,000 made to the Sultan in c1911 on the security of his private cession money receipts. A further loan of $20,000 was made to his son and successor in 1932 to enable him to spend a year in the United Kingdom. Fines and fees of justice remained constant at about $2-3,000 annually. This may seem small; but fees or a fine even of $10 would have stretched severely the means of most Brunei people at this time. Municipal revenue grew after the introduction of Sanitary Boards for Brunei Town in 1920 and Kuala Belait and Tutong in 1929. Rates were imposed to cover the cost of water supplies, scavenging and sewage disposal, the latter being primitive. A regular surplus was achieved over the expenses of these services. Finally, the Government obtained increasing revenue from 'licences'. Before 1912 'licences' meant the farming of the right to collect import duties, but later, licences were imposed on everything and everybody, from arms to

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35. In 1910 the postal clerk, Mr S Murugasu, was arrested and charged with embezzlement of $448.87, not including sums sent by foreign stamp dealers in letters addressed to the postmaster. Mr Murugasu was appointed to the Brunei service on 18 May 1909 on a monthly salary of $50. He had worked in Pahang and for the Duff Syndicate in Kelantan. Later, in 1907, he had joined the Johore Medical Service, whence he had moved to Labuan. The man was suffering from alcoholism in 1910 and was thought to be unfit to stand trial (CO 531/2: 9625). Mr Stoney later minuted that Mr Murugasu had been convicted and sentenced to 5-6 years (sic) imprisonment, to be served in Labuan (CO 531/2: 26308). Foreign dealers flooded the Colonial Office with demands for reimbursement, but the latter denied liability (CO 531/2 items 29939, 15751, 26208, 27278, and 26921).

Mr Murugasu's replacement, Mr Leong Ah Ng, doubled up as medical dresser until his retirement in 1929.

aliens, dogs to fishing, and motor vehicles to warehouses. Many of these were introduced only after 1924, but produced $42,313 by 1939. In 1923 a licence fee was imposed even upon the Brunei Town padian (river hawkers),

"an innovation (sic) by which the river dwellers, comprising more than three quarters of the population of the town, were led to contribute something to the revenues of the State, whereas formerly they had been subject to no direct and practically no indirect taxation". 36

5. "I have taken steps to ensure that the utmost economy is exercised"

In view of Brunei's heavy indebtedness and low revenues before oil export commenced in 1932, the strictest control had to be maintained over expenditure. The table (overleaf) shows that during the year 1911 the Brunei Government had only five dollars to spend for each citizen, whereas the National Debt stood at over eighteen dollars per head. Even as late as 1931 indebtedness remained higher than annual revenue.

In the early years of the Residential Era, therefore, all unnecessary, and many necessary, items of expenditure had to be eliminated ruthlessly. Even so, Residents were occasionally provoked into defending their failure to make further cuts:

"I can find nothing" - thus Mr McArthur in 1908 - "which I should venture

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36. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1923, p 7. Cf. McArthur, "Report", Appendix III: "Market (monopoly): - Leased to Chua Cheng Hee, 1900-20. No consideration stated. (This gives him the right to collect a fee from every boat trading in the padian - a market held daily in some one (sic) of the channels running through the town". Hence the imposition of padian licences in 1923 was not an innovation. The padian itself - women hawkers wearing broad-rimmed hats selling their goods from boats - existed at the time of Pigafetta (1521); but I understand that in the very last few years it has died out. See, also, the statement made in 1925 that "the present scale of import duties is very high and is felt by all classes" (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1925, p 5).

Table 7. Brunei: Revenue per Head of Population 1911-59 ($ Straits)

Year	Census of Population	Revenue Total	Revenue Per Head (in $ Straits)	National Debt: Total	Per Head
1911	21,718	109,430	5.04	400,000	18.42
1921	25,454	165,890	6.49	427,317	16.79
1931	30,135	342,011	11.35	395,000	13.11
1947	40,670	4,389,974	107.94	nil	nil
1959	83,877a	129,568,762	1,544.75	nil	nil

Note: a: 1960 figure.
Sources: compiled by the author from Brunei Annual Reports.

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to cut out as unnecessary. On the contrary there are numerous omissions which I would gladly see rectified if only I were sure that funds would be available. Among such I would mention provision for vernacular education in Brunei, Brooketon, Tutong and Belait, a dresser and dispensary in Brunei and new roads - more particularly between Tutong and Belait. It is evident, however, that none of these can be provided for out of the funds now available and there seems some doubt whether those funds will suffice in any case for the current year". 37

"Rather melancholy reading", commented Mr Stubbs.[38] During the following year Sir John Anderson assured the Colonial Office that he had "taken steps to ensure that the utmost economy is exercised".[39] Mr Chevallier, in his annual report for 1910, noted that:

"Every effort was made to economize; thus the Resident's boatmen, now an unnecessary luxury, were done away with: there was no sufficient need for employing a clerk for Brunei Court work alone, and, on the first opportunity, a saving was effected by making the former Courts Clerk take over the duties of Chinese Customs Clerk as well; there was no necessity for expending $1,200 upon a station for the Malay Police, who have now been adequately and satisfactorily housed at an outlay of $200. In several minor points economies have

37. CO 531/1 (24281) McArthur to Anderson, 24 February 1908.
38. Ibid., minute by Mr RE Stubbs, 8 July 1908.
39. CO 531/1 (7111) Anderson to CO, Brunei (confidential), 3 February 1909, paragraph 3.

also been carried out...".[40]

The policy of avoiding expenditure on new offices was continued.[41] The Resident warned, however, of the danger of making false economies:

"A Land Code which pre-supposes the existence of a survey staff has been approved and it is absolutely necessary to make some effort to deal with land matters as soon as possible. The (people) are applying for land in all parts of the State and the Government is at present quite unable to proceed with the applications owing to the absence of a survey staff. Some arrangements must be made for demarcating the land...and unless the staff applied for is approved, the work cannot possibly be done". 42

Brunei was well on the way to balancing increased current expenditure, excluding loans, when the outbreak of the Great War redoubled the need for economy: revenue, which had reached $165,082 in 1913, fell to $126,647 in 1914 and in the following four years annual income did not exceed the level of $136,610 achieved in 1918. Mr Cator (Resident 1916-21) later recalled that "many were the shifts to which we were put to keep expenditure within income". On one occasion, for example, the High Commissioner was due to visit Brunei:

"Greatly as we appreciated the honour, we felt it would be a sinful waste of money to spend it on repairing the jetty to which His Excellency would arrive when a capital flight of steps was available elsewhere and was not at the moment required for its legitimate purpose. So steps were borrowed from the gallows, and...discreetly veiled in red bunting". 43

The Great War was followed by a scarcity of rice (which forced

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40. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 4. Before the end of 1909, the post of messenger was abolished, and the Assistant Resident was instructed to live in the Residency, thereby eliminating the need to maintain separate quarters for him.
41. The Resident added: "The present offices can amply accommodate staff until the success or non-success of Brunei Town, as a town built on terra firma, has been proved. Until that time, there is no need to increase the State debt by useless outlay" (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 9).
42. CO 531/2 (11169) memorandum by Chevallier, 9 February 1910.
43. GE Cator, "Brunei" in Asian Review 1939, p 738.

prices up to famine level), and then there was a trade depression, particularly in the rubber industry. By the close of 1922, however, the worst of the depression, which had "severely tried the State for two years", had been "safely weathered". This period had been trying to the Government "but through the loyal co-operation of its officers in effecting economies, the financial position had improved by the end of the year".[44] (See, also, Appendix 6.2 on p 632, below).

The mid-1920s were years of unprecedented prosperity: "trade is growing by leaps and bounds, more immigrants are entering the country and the making of the road to Tutong has opened up large tracts of valuable land which are being eagerly taken up by cultivators".[45] Indeed, Mr Pretty, the Resident, recommended that the State's expanding cash balances "should be spent in improving communications throughout the country".[46] The end of the year 1925, he suggested, marked a watershed:

"In the past all that has been possible was barely to make both ends meet. I am convinced that the lean days are over and that the State is now safely embarked on a course of real prosperity". 47

A further reason for optimism was that, in 1924, the British Malayan Petroleum Company (BMPC) was already producing a small quantity of oil for its own use; and the Resident anticipated "with confidence"

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44. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1922, p 16.
45. CO 531/19 (1972) memorandum by Mr EEF Pretty, No 363 (Brunei), 18 December 1925, paragraph 6.
46. Ibid., paragraph 10. In 1928 Mr Pretty was happy to report that "the hope of a settled agricultural community is being rapidly fulfilled". (CO 717/59 File 52345; statement by Mr Pretty, 4 January 1928, 'General' section).
47. As note 45, paragraph 11. Revenue reached a pre-oil peak of $440,870 in 1927 (approximately $18 per head of population); cf. $396,834 in 1926, $393,875 in 1928 and $345,290 in 1929.

that 1925 would see the actual commencement of export from the State.[48]

This belief was rather premature:

"The export of oil from the BMPC's field at Belait has not yet (1925) materialized, but this is always a great potential source of revenue if and when it becomes an accomplished fact - and no-one really seems to doubt the eventuality, even though the results of boring up to date have been disappointing". 49

Brunei had to face one final trial, however, before it became the land "flowing with oil and gas". Since the outbreak of the Great War, many of the public had taken up rubber smallholdings so that in early 1928 Mr Pretty warned that "the welfare of the majority of the population is largely dependent upon the steadiness of the price of rubber".[50]

Hence the Great Depression came as an especially severe blow:

"The low price of rubber which prevailed throughout 1929 was again responsible for a further drop in the revenue of the State...". 51

In 1930 Brunei earmarked $50,000 of its cash reserve to build a wharf at the capital. Mr Gent at the Colonial Office suggested that this might be a case for Colonial Development Fund assistance; but his seniors ruled that, since Brunei was prepared to meet the cost out of its own capital, this would be inappropriate.[52] It was fortunate, however, that in 1930-2 there was

"a steady increase in the (oil-linked) revenue coming in from the Belait district...which is almost offsetting the tremendous drop in the general revenues of the State consequent on the slump in trade and the fall in

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48. CO 531/18 (6383) Pretty to Guillemard, No 315 (Brunei), 21 December 1924, paragraph 10.
49. As note 45, paragraph 9.
50. CO 717/59 (File 52345) statement by Mr Pretty, 4 January 1928.
51. CO 717/70 (File 72349) statement by Mr PAB McKerron, 3 February 1930, paragraph 6.
52. Ibid., minutes by Messrs GEJ Gent (12 March), WD Ellis (12 March) and Boyd (13 March 1930).

the price of rubber particularly. Were it not for the new source of revenue now coming in the State would have to go in for retrenchment with a vengeance". 53

6. Social Services 1906-1932

Given the severe general and persistent financial constraints just described, the resources available for the provision of social services necessarily was extremely limited before 1932. After the ordinary administrative expenditure had been met, very little remained for anything else, as indicated by the table overleaf. Ordinary administrative expenditure does not appear to have been excessive: as late as 1928, the British Resident's Office was staffed by four clerks (including one apprentice), a punkah-puller and three gardeners.[54] Lack of funds was not the sole difficulty: Brunei was handicapped, also, by the absence of a skilled professional and educated class (the population being almost entirely illiterate in 1906), a shortage of labour, and the difficulty of obtaining construction materials, especially timber and stone. In the remainder of this chapter, I shall concentrate on three spheres of activity: public works, health and, finally, education.

(a) Public Works. The Public Works Department (PWD), generally, was the biggest-spending Government department; and, because its activities tended to increase rapidly (especially from the 1920s), its staff had to work at great pressure to keep up. After Dato Roberts' retirement in

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53. CO 717/78 (File 82349) statement by Mckerron, 19 February 1931, paragraph 6.
54. CO 717/63 (File 62345) Mr RJF Curtis, Brunei Estimates 1929.

Table 8. Brunei: Selected Items of Government Expenditure 1907-38
($ Straits)

Part I:-

Year	Total Revenue	Selected items of expenditure:- Political Pensions (a)	Resident's Office	Police & Prisons	Interest on FMS loan
1907	51,777	25,445	n.a.	5,194	nil
1910	77,051	31,709	11,972b	7,114	nil
1915	129,529	29,841	10,196	10,213	17,590
1920	206,253	33,134	15,260	39,545c	17,590
1925	345,573	29,404	15,396	29,555	17,566
1930	333,069	40,546	21,143	31,383	16,321
1935	813,532	66,520	20,422	38,910	15,132
1938	1,179,979	84,205	24,025	44,539	nil

Part II:-

Year	Selected items of expenditure:- Public Works $	% of revenue	Education $	%	Health $	%
1907	14,705d	28.40	nil	nil	nil	nil
1910	14,705	19.08	nil	nil	nil	nil
1915	14,299	11.04	405	0.31	241	0.19
1920	34,454	16.70	1,381	0.67	3,105	1.51
1925	58,176	16.83	2,770	0.80	5,009	1.45
1930	132,704	39.84	7,289	2.19	17,396	5.22
1935	137,773	16.94	11,859	1.46	41,809	5.14
1938	239,284	20.28	20,755	1.76	47,466	4.02

Notes: a: Includes allowances to the Sultan and wazirs; 'political pensions' to former tulin holders; and, from 1919, retirement pensions to former Government officers.

b: 1911.

c: Expenditure upon police and prisons was exceptionally high in 1920 (cf. 1919 $12,505; 1921 $24,690 and 1923 $23,261). There were two reasons for this: (1) the establishment of a separate Brunei Police Force at the end of 1920; and (2) the exceptionally large number of prisoners (for no reason assigned) in 1920 (167) - cf. 35 in 1921 and 39 in 1922. Only 19 people were being held at the end of 1919.

d: The cost of building schools, hospitals and dispensaries is included under "public works". There was no European head of the Medical Department until 1929 or of Education until 1949. This resulted (before those dates) in lower expenditure upon salaries.

Sources: Brunei Annual Reports 1906-1938.

1921, the State Engineer was usually seconded from Malaya.[55]

The main tasks of the PWD were (i) the construction and maintenance of public buildings, roads and bridges; and (ii) extraordinary projects such as Brunei Town (land capital), the wireless station (1920-1), water supply and, later, the provision of electricity. In Belait district, beginning in 1922, many of these duties were undertaken by the BMPC, with Government in a subordinate role: the oilfield towns, essentially, were built and serviced by the oil company.

The scarcity of construction materials and skilled labour interfered seriously with the accomplishment of projected works; and since Brunei could not afford to build roads during the early years of the Residential Era, efforts turned instead to clearing rivers "of the obstructions which impede the progress of the boats trading upriver"[56] and the construction of bridle paths.[57] The first rapid expansion of public works dated from the mid-1920s. A large proportion of national resources was devoted to this cause: annual spending rose from only $14,288 in 1923 to $132,704 (40% of total revenue) in 1930. At the end of 1932 the department had constructed about one hundred buildings, which were made of temporary or semi-permanent materials.

Brunei Town was linked by earth road with Tutong (1925-7),

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55. In 1922-76 the department was headed by a Malay, Inche Awang bin Haji Hanafi. No appointment was made in 1930-2 as an economy measure.
56. CO 531/2 (11169) memorandum by Chevallier, 9 February 1910.
57. By 1919 thirty-five miles of bridle paths were in use, including sections between Batu Apoi and Temburong (1911), Menglait and Demuan (7 miles, 1917) and Temburong and Pandaruan (3½ miles, also 1917).

Kumbang Pasang estate (1927)[58] and Bangar (*via* Limbang) in 1933.[59] The BMPC built its own roads in Belait district. The Brunei-Tutong road "opened up much valuable agricultural land"[60] and brought extra revenue to the Government because higher rents were charged for farms with road frontage. The road to Bangar was a joint Brunei-Sarawak project, undertaken at the behest of the latter, as part of a proposed road link between Miri in the south-west and Lawas in the north-east. In mid-1936 the British Resident informed the Sarawak Government that the costs of maintenance were not warranted by the utility to Brunei of the road and it was proposed to maintain it in future as a bridle path only.[61]

The numerous rivers necessitated many bridges. These were liable to be washed away by floods (e.g. Kianggeh Bridge 1928). Wooden culverts were gradually replaced with concrete structures and many new bridges constructed, the most important being the Clifford Bridge (completed in 1928) which spanned 360 feet across the River Kedayan.[62]

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58. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1927, p 19.
59. The section from Bangar to the Pandaruan was completed in 1931, that from Brunei Town to Limbang in 1932. After the introduction of a ferry service across the Pandaruan in 1933, it became possible to motor from Brunei to Bangar *via* Limbang. (The Sarawak section of the road had been completed in 1929).
60. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1932, p 19; cf WS Maugham, "Virtue" in The Complete Short Stories II (London 1975), pp 171-207.
61. CO 604/21 Sarawak Gazette, 1 September 1936, p 229. Cf. RHO, Mss Pac s74 Mrs Kathleen Kortright to "Aunt Annie", 23 June 1929: "For the first time (we) drove the whole way to Pandaruan (from Limbang), the eight miles of new road being just completed. I stayed in the car...and about a dozen Kedayans came along who had never seen a car before...They were so comic over everything, the lamps amazed them, and they were terrified when I touched the...?horn. First they said it was a devil and then a deer barking".
62. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1928, p 20.

Elsewhere, pontoons or ferries were called to the aid of the motorist.

The first car was imported by Mr Pretty in 1924. In 1933 211 new cars and 220 new drivers were registered.[63] Most of these vehicles must have belonged to the BMPC. The Brunei rakyat certainly lacked the resources to purchase a car: for them, paddling by prahu along rivers constituted the principal means of travel. The BMPC maintained a light railway (built in 1924-5) from the mouth of the River Seria to Badas (about nine miles inland), which the public was permitted to use if space was available.[64]

(b) Public Works Extraordinary

(i) Brunei Town (land section). The principal extraordinary public works project was the establishment of the capital on neighbouring terra firma, a scheme initiated by the first Resident:

"23...The Sultan's house...lies at the junction of a tributary creek (the Sungei Kedayan) with the main river...At the back of his house is an extensive tract of flat land, which would make an excellent site for a properly laid out town. It has on it ruins of old brick shop-houses, but they are only the relics of former prosperity...

24. Some way below the Sultan's house is an inlet called Subuk, the site of the Island Trading Syndicate's cutch factory...

25. Below Subuk is the Consulate land, originally granted to Sir Spenser St John, on which can still be traced the ruins of his house. It is an excellent site for a European dwelling". 65

Later Mr McArthur added:

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63. Cf. 1934: 174 and 179 respectively. In 1936 the Government derived $5,533 from such licences (cf. 1937: $6,123 and 1938: $7,922).

64. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 36. There was no aerodrome in the State, but a temporary landing ground at Seria had on occasion been used. The rivers near the coast provided good landing sites for seaplanes.

65. McArthur, "Report", paragraphs 23-5. (Sir James Brooke had the same idea: cf. Journal entry for 25 July 1842, quoted by H Keppel, The Expedition to Borneo of HMS 'Dido' I - London 1846 - p 323).

"I wanted a clean dry village, with 'suburbs' of kampong houses. I also wanted to discourage houses in the river". 66

After being appointed Resident, Mr McArthur set about establishing the new capital. He showed the way by having the site of the former British consulate cleared of jungle and a temporary building put up in its place to accommodate European officers of the State. In December 1906 work commenced on a permanent Residency on this site and it had been completed, at a cost of $8,000 by July 1907.[67] In addition a road - soon dubbed Residency Road - was built from this site to the plain behind Kampong Ayer, a distance of one and a half miles.[68]

As presaged in the 1904 "Report", the plain behind the Sultan's istana was opened up in 1906; and by 1908 two short streets had been made, and street lamps erected. During 1910 Chinese shopkeepers transferred their operations to the lands this resulted in increased trade with the Kedayans, better sanitary conditions, and an impetus to others to follow the example set. The shops themselves - none of which cost less than $1,000 - were "a credit and an attraction to the place".[69] The fringes of the Rivers Brunei and Kedayan had also been alienated and titles issued; many of these lands were fully planted up; on several, houses were being built and occupied; and the general feeling of the mass of Brunei inhabitants was that a move to the mainland would be profitable. The people seemed to be favourable to land settlement.

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66. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 15.
67. See AC Watson, "Notes on the History of Bubongan Dua-Belas" in Brunei Museum Journal 1982, pp 37-104.
68. Cf. P Blundell, op.cit., pp 220-1.
69. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 14.

"The country will not and cannot ever really advance until the capital is on dry land", Mr Lee-Warner commented. "Hitherto advice has been given and no orders for removal have yet been laid on the natives of Brunei. Nor do I consider from the present aspect that any definite orders will be needed. If, however, the end of the year 1911 does not see a large exodus from the water, the Government should, I consider, issue definite regulations appointing a definite period within which migration must be carried out by such persons who have the means and whose vocation is not confined to fishing or bark collecting, these two occupations necessitating proximity to the water". 70

In 1911 a start was made with more permanent buildings along Residency Road, because the old ones were in a dangerous state. The filling in of swampy ground was continued, but much remained to be done - "the want of money being sorely felt in this direction".[71] As late as 1920-1 arrangements were being made for further swamp reclamation. The Sultan was built a new lapau on the mainland in 1921.

Two fine rows of new shops were constructed in 1920, which was cited as evidence of general prosperity. Five years later seven shop lots put up for auction fetched a sum of $14,650, which was about three times in excess of the most optimistic anticipations.

"The appearance of the town was entirely changed and great improvements made", the Resident reported in 1925. "The old market and customs house were both demolished, a spacious new market was erected and the customs wharf entirely rebuilt and enlarged so as to accommodate a customs house in the middle and a godown at either end. The old sea wall was rebuilt and extended to a length of 700 feet, a considerable area of land being reclaimed within it from the river bed, which was subsequently alienated for the erection of seven new shophouses facing the waterfront. There is now an esplanade 500 feet long and 70 feet broad between the sea wall and the first row of shops". 72

Chinese people predominated in the land capital, which consisted

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70. Ibid., pp 15-16.
71. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1911, p 11.
72. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1925, pp 17-18.

mainly of Government buildings, shophouses and many private houses.[73] The State doctor noted that a regular scheme of 'town planning' had been adhered to and adequate steps taken to maintain a "good average health of the citizens".[74]

The whole land town was bombed flat by the Allies in 1945, so building had to begin anew. Although the population of the new capital had reached almost 10,000 by 1960, even more people lived in Kampong Ayer. Hence only half of Mr McArthur's plan had been achieved: a new town had been built on land; but the River Village had not disappeared, as he had hoped.

(ii) Telegraph. In 1920-1 a wireless telegraphic installation was constructed at a total cost of $12,000. A central station was built at Brunei Town, with subsidiary stations in the outdistricts. The system was opened for traffic on 17 May 1921 and placed every part of Brunei in telegraphic communication with Singapore and Europe, an "event of no small importance to the future of the State".[75] Thereafter a separate Wireless Department was organized under the supervision of Mr PHF George from 1921 to 1926. Two years later the post was occupied by Pengiran Muhammad bin Pengiran Piut, who held office until 1967. Despite the telegraph, Brunei remained geographically isolated. From 1930, however, the Straits Steamship Company's steamer, Brunei, operated between Brunei Town and Labuan, visiting Kuala Belait occasionally. The Sarawak Steamship Com-

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73. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1928, p 2.
74. CO 824/1 Brunei Medical Department Annual Report 1925, p 2; and BMDAR 1926, p 2.
75. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1921, p 5. (In 1938, 4,589 telegraphic messages were handled in Brunei).

pany's vessel, Auby, called about once a month direct from Singapore.[76]

(iii) Telephones. The earliest located mention of a public telephone service - albeit it one confined to Government offices in Brunei Town - came in 1928. By 1929 it was extended to the residences of officials. An effort was made in the same year to induce the neighbouring estates to subscribe to the service and it was intended to construct a line to Tutong in 1930. The BMPC was given permission to link up Kuala Belait with the Sarawak frontier and with their field headquarters at Seria and Badas. These plans were executed. At the end of 1931 a cable was put across the Tutong River and the line was extended to Kuala Belait during 1932.

(iv) Water Supply. In 1908 a supply of potable water for the land capital was piped from a concrete tank positioned about one mile from the nascent township. In the early 1920s "considerable improvements" resulted in the continued availability of water even during a prolonged drought. In 1926[77] a reinforced concrete dam (the first of a series) was constructed at the head of the waterfall at Tasek, about two miles from Brunei Town; and the connection of a supply to shophouses and other buildings was achieved during the following year.

The people of Kampong Ayer depended for their water supply,

"on the streams which run down to the river from the hills fringing the left bank between the Residency and the town. These streams have been ingeniously conducted into bamboo pipes which project over the river

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76. Steamers drawing up to 12 feet could reach the capital, but only vessels less than two hundred feet in length could negotiate an artificial barrier of rock in the river. There was a weekly mail service from Brunei Town to Kuala Belait. Buses ran at irregular intervals.
77. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1926, p 21.

banks and discharge their crystal contents into jars and kerosene tins which are brought over in canoes each morning". 78

Later it was suggested that the safety of such water was open to question because the streams passed over human burial grounds and were liable to contamination. It was decided that the piped water service from the reservoir to Brunei Town should be extended to the river banks and stand pipes be put up where the people from the adjoining Kampong Ayer could collect sufficient water for their own use.[79]

The majority of people in rural areas, on the other hand, continued to rely on wells or streams for water. These were also liable to contamination.[80] Worse still, most people to Brunei had yet to learn filtering or even the value of boiling water prior to use for drinking.[81]

(c) Health and Education. In the first decades of the Residential Era, the population of Brunei was overwhelmingly illiterate and not very healthy. In 1906 there was neither school and teacher nor hospital and doctor in the Sultanate.

Apart from periodic outbreaks of cholera and smallpox (before 1906), those lucky enough to survive infancy continued to be ravaged by malaria, beri-beri, yaws, tuberculosis, even leprosy. In addition, there

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78. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1921, p 6.
79. CO 824/1 Brunei Medical Department Annual Report 1929, p 11.
80. CO 824/1 Brunei Medical Department Annual Report 1925, p 2. ("Kedayans: Drop latrines over shallow streams are not unknown but defecation on the surface of the soil in and around their dwellings is a common mode of nightsoil disposal. A shallow well constitutes their water supply for all purposes and its liability to contamination becomes obvious". By 1929 part of the routine duties of the travelling dresser was "to do propaganda work to promote sanitation in rural districts" (BMDAR 1929 p 13).
81. CO 824/1 Brunei Medical Department Annual Report 1929, p 7.

were diseases, such as dysentery, enteric fever and ankylostomiasis, caused by low standards of hygiene and poor sanitation. Improvement in the people's health, therefore, depended upon progress in other spheres. Better sanitation, less overcrowding in houses, the elimination of poverty, advances in education and a more varied diet were essential preconditions for a hale and vigorous populace.

Prior to the establishment of the Brunei Medical Department in 1929, health matters there had been overseen by the Labuan doctor. In 1919 arrangements were made for him to visit Brunei at least once a month; and experts also came from Singapore to offer advice. The postal clerk doubled as a resident dresser in the capital; and in 1918 a travelling dresser was engaged to visit the outstations. These constituted the entire medical staff employed by the Government as late as 1926.

Health efforts during the pre-oil era were handicapped by the lack of money and information and the desultory interest and effort on the part of the authorities. Medical supplies were insufficient; it was difficult to reach rural dwellers because of poor communications; and indigenous suspicion of foreign medicines and methods had to be overcome. In 1922 it became compulsory to register all births and deaths in the hope that "opportunity will be given to extend considerably the benefits of medical assistance throughout the State".[82] For a long time records remained incomplete; hence even the causes of death were imprecisely known.[83]

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82. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1922, p 16.

83. "The vast majority of (recorded) deaths in the State", Dr OE Fisher recalls, "were certified by the penghulus and the favourite causes of death were demam (fever) or, in the case of anyone over the age of fifty, cukup umur (...'fullness of years')". Letter to the author, 3 May 1984.

It was somewhat complacently believed, indeed, that the people were healthy at this time.

During the early years of the Residential Era there were two principal concerns. First, to prevent a further smallpox epidemic; and, secondly, to resettle the population of Kampong Ayer on dry land.

The 1904 smallpox epidemic had approximately decimated the population of the capital. In 1911 it was reported that the postmaster had vaccinated 475 people against the disease; but plans to appoint a resident doctor[84] appear to have fallen victim to retrenchment at the beginning of the Great War. The last case of smallpox in Brunei seems to have occurred at Muara in 1914; but the infection did not spread thanks to prompt vaccination of the neighbouring population. The most satisfactory feature of the year 1919 was the "sudden popularity" of vaccination, to which Malays previously had had "an ineradicable objection".[85] By 1922 virtually everyone had been injected. This obviated the necessity for legislation, which was being considered for 1920 through fear of a recurrence of smallpox in epidemic proportions: such legislation was always difficult to enforce and tended to promote a prejudice against "modern medical methods" - something which it was "particularly desirable" to avoid.[86] But the doctor warned that the danger of another smallpox outbreak still could not be over-estimated.[87] There was, fortunately, no repetition of the earlier tragedy.

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84. CO 531/4 (26950) and CO 531/5 (37747).
85. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1919, p 6.
86. Ibid.
87. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1922, p 11.

The 1904 smallpox epidemic, and the outbreak of cholera two years beforehand, were adduced as evidence of "how really insanitary the place (Kampong Ayer) is"[88] and contributed to a determination to resettle the population of the capital on terra firma. Mr Lee-Warner conceded that Brunei Town enjoyed the "proud distinction of being a unique city built upon the water"; but, he added, the distinction

"is a costly one. For (i) infant mortality in Brunei is appalling; the children and their mothers are cramped; lack of exercise causes debility, debility fever, and fever for a young child exposed to continuous damp - death; and (ii) the filthy water continually used, and the germ-breeding debris continually under the houses undoubtedly cause the dysentery and diarrhoea which annually decimate the whole population. The fish caught under the houses (the staple lauk or seasoning for curry in Brunei) feed on garbage and cause disease; and (iii) pneumonia is rampant". 89

This remained the prevailing orthodoxy until 1918, when Brunei's escape from the world influenza epidemic prompted second thoughts:

"Much has been written" - thus Mr Cator - "about the unhealthiness of Brunei houses perched as they are on mudbanks; but after this year's experience it may be doubted whether this system is altogether bad". 90

Dr AL Hoops,[91] Principal Medical Officer of the Straits Settlements, agreed that there was no justification on health grounds for removing the people from Kampong Ayer. On the contrary, "the question of scavenging is inexpensively and suitably solved. The river is tidal and dejecta are speedily washed away".[92] A later observer, noting a tendency among

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88. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 23.
89. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 14.
90. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1918, p 5.
91. "A persuasive Irishman with a wonderful gift of dealing with natives" (Sir LN Guillemard, Trivial Fond Records - London 1937 - p 130).
92. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1921, p 6. But later it was objected that flushing was "never perfect and a certain amount of the dejecta is left behind on the banks a little higher up, thus keeping up continuous sources for contamination and forming suitable breeding grounds for flies,

the younger generation to settle on the mainland, commented that "though the salutary effect of the river is absent, the old habits (of rubbish dumping) still remain".[93] The population of Kampong Ayer in 1947 was at approximately the same level it had been in 1921.[94]

The first Government hospital in Brunei was begun in the capital in November 1928 and opened by the Sultan himself in the following September. It was originally designed to contain thirty beds for third class patients. The Malay, however, "usually prefers to stay at home when he is suffering from a severe illness".[95] The more serious cases were sent to the hospitals in Labuan or Miri for treatment. Finally, in 1926, the larger employers of labour were required to establish a 'hospital' and engage a dresser on their sites.

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which are found in abundance in all these houses". This opened the possibility of more serious types of intestinal infections, such as typhoid and cholera. Furthermore, "this highly-polluted water is used by the entire population (of Kampong Ayer) for bathing and washing purposes". Another feature of the River Village was "the prevalence of preventable eye diseases, chiefly among children under six" (CO 824/1 Brunei Medical Department Annual Report 1929, p 11).

93. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1937, p 13.

94. But, during the interval, it had probably increased and then fallen back again.

95. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1937, p 11. In 1924 the doctor complained that the populace was "very conservative in the matter of health and treatment for ill-health". The Malay "is extremely reluctant to be seen by a European Medical man and when seen he is still more reluctant to take the treatment prescribed. His prejudice against admission to hospital is so deeply-rooted as to make him rather lose his life than come to hospital" (BMDAR 1924, p 2). Most patients, therefore, were Government servants, police officers and prisoners (ibid., p 4). Dr Cleverton, the visiting medical practitioner, "considered a hospital in Brunei as quite unnecessary for the present and that the lines on which medical work has been pursued in the past will meet the present (1924) and immediate future requirements" (ibid). Admissions to Labuan Hospital from Brunei comprised people from estates and Government servants (BMDAR 1927, p 3).

Improvement in health required, inter alia, progress in other spheres such as education. Stress was laid upon helping children, who were often more receptive than their parents. Government Malay primary schools were founded in Brunei Town (1912), Muara (1915), Belait (1917) and Tutong (1918); and a small private Chinese school for the benefit of the children of the capital's shopkeepers was started in 1912. Education in Brunei, Mr Cator noted in 1916, needed all the encouragement the Government could provide because three of the four Malay magistrates and most of the Malay clerks hailed from neighbouring Sarawak:

"It is greatly to be desired", he continued, "that when these retire there shall be natives of Brunei fitted by education and birth to take their place and to assume their proper share of responsibility for the administration and development of their country". 96

A scheme was inaugurated in 1917 whereby the most promising pupils were taken into Government service as apprentices and it was hoped in this way to secure a succession of Brunei-born people who had sufficient education and training to fit them for responsible appointments. A further step became possible in 1919, when arrangements were made by which Brunei contributed to the cost of the English school "recently opened" in Labuan and a certain number of vacancies there were reserved for Brunei pupils. This would, in theory, enable successful Brunei scholars to qualify for higher posts in the administrative service for which a knowledge of English was required.

The first difficulty hindering the development of education in Brunei itself was the absence of trained teachers. Schools were unknown

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96. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1916, p 5.

in pre-Residential Brunei and it was most difficult to find anyone literate to open one. The dilemma was that candidates for training as teachers could not emerge without prior schooling; but without teachers there could be no schools. Secondly, as the Resident commented in 1922, there remained "a fair amount of lethargy amongst parents in Brunei" concerning the education of their children "and if attendance is not made compulsory, it is improbable that the numbers (of schoolchildren) will materially increase".[97] This was underlined the following year when enrolments declined because a revival in the rubber industry prompted parents to withdraw children from school to help with the tapping and weeding of their smallholdings.[98] Thirdly, education was not one of the administration's priorities: annual spending on this item was a mere $713 in 1918 and still only $3,425 ten years later. Finally, there were few outlets for the products of Brunei's schools at this time. Hence, in 1928, Brunei still boasted only four Government schools (with 198 pupils), plus the independent Chinese school in the capital (with 30 pupils).

7. Conclusion

In this chapter it has been shown how, in the first years of the Residential Era, a series of relatively huge loans were obtained from the Federated Malay States in order to buy up mortgaged Government revenues. Servicing this loan remained a heavy burden in the pre-oil

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97. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1922, p 12.
98. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1923, p 13.

era; but the level of debt declined in relative importance as ordinary revenue increased. There was no income tax; hence the principal source of income before 1932 remained customs duties. Annual revenue per head - five dollars in 1911 and still less than twelve dollars in 1931 - was so small that provision for social services necessarily remained limited and the utmost economy had to be exercised. The problem was that, before the discovery of oil, Brunei produced nothing which could generate a substantial revenue for the Government, as shall now be shown.

CHAPTER SIX

THE ECONOMIC BASE 1906-1932

1. Introduction

In this chapter I shall examine the economic base in Brunei from 1906 until 1932, when the first cargo of petroleum was exported from the Seria field. This chapter is an appropriate place to consider, also, certain aspects of the non-oil economy (such as rubber regulation) in the decade beyond 1932. After describing the situation and prospects on the eve of the Residential Era, and the extent to which these prospects were fulfilled subsequently, I shall examine the development of the main non-oil industries, and, finally, the condition of the people. A full discussion of the oil sector of the economy and the subsequent transformation of Brunei follows in Part III (chapters 7-9) of this work.

2. The Prospects in 1906

At the beginning of the Residential Era Brunei was a land of slender economic resources. In 1904 its total trade was estimated at $500,000, divided equally between imports and exports, or $612,000 if coal exports from Brooketon (then "to all intents and purposes part of Sarawak") were included.[1] The most valuable exports were coal and cutch both produced by British concerns. The majority of indigenous people

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1. FO 572/39 MSH McArthur, "Report on Brunei in 1904", paragraphs 45 and 109.

were fishermen, farmers, craftsmen or collectors of jungle produce, living at subsistence level or little better. Domestic production had stagnated because of the extortions of Malay pengirans;[2] foreign investment had been discouraged because of unstable political conditions. Imports comprised principally the necessities of life: piece goods, cocconut oil, sugar, salt, matches, kerosene (plus tobacco and opium). There were no additions to this list before 1918, when 'preserved provisions' and 'flour' appeared.

Mr McArthur was optimistic, nonetheless, about the country's prospects in 1904:

"The soil is fertile, except in places where the hills are precipitous or where salt water impregnates the ground, and, judging by the condition of the few plantations that exist, is well adapted for the cultivation of rice, cocconuts, fruit trees, gambier, pepper and similar native products, such as getah, rotan, sago and timber.

The country...is reported to be rich in minerals. Coal is found in many places...as is also mineral oil. Antimony is said to be plentiful. I am told that traces of iron ore are also to be found, and that gold has been won...in...Temburong district". 3

Mr McArthur suggested that the comparatively large population (and potential labour force) of the capital was an asset in itself, which had contributed to the decision of the Island Trading Syndicate to establish its outch factory there: "I know of no other Malay country which could boast, before European intrusion, a town of at least 12,000 ...inhabitants".[4]

Mr HC Belfield MCS, writing six months later, agreed that the

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2. CO 144/57 (12509) Dr P Leys to FO, No 12 (consular), 5 May 1883, paragraph 21; and CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1911, p 7.
3. McArthur, "Report", paragraphs 5-6; see also paragraphs 90-1.
4. Ibid., paragraph 92.

mineral resources of the State "may in the long run prove to be an asset of more value than all other alternative sources of revenue".[5] Otherwise, he was rather less optimistic than Mr McArthur:

> "With the exception of...cutch...there is now little or no export of produce from Brunei (Town). The loss of the Limbang territory has killed the sago trade and reduced the export of jungle produce to a negligible quantity. The resuscitation of an export trade could under the most favourable circumstances only be accomplished by judicious encouragement and careful management, and it is questionable whether it could ever reach important dimensions so long as the Limbang trade goes elsewhere.
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> I...cannot imagine that there can be any reason why the introduction of a carefully regulated land system should not eventually result in material contribution to revenue. It is probable, however, that it will be (a) matter of much difficulty to instill into the Brunei people a knowledge of the value of agriculture...I have never seen any Malay people so uniformly indifferent to the cultivation of the soil as the inhabitants of this State...and the small amount of desultory planting which is done, is the work of the Kedayans, not of the Malays". 6

3. The Extent to which these Prospects were Fulfilled.

There were four major hopes for the regeneration of Brunei's economy: the recovery of Limbang; the reported presence of minerals; the introduction of capital; and the encouragement of land settlement. To these a fifth was shortly to be added: viz., an increase in population through immigration. Efforts to recover Limbang, which ended in failure were discussed in a previous chapter. Reports of gold, diamonds and antimony remained unsubstantiated even in the 1950s.[7] Iron minerals were

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5. CO 273/310 (33426) Mr (later Sir) HC Belfield (1855-1923) to Sir John Anderson, 5 June 1905, paragraph 37; also in FO 12/128 p 450.
6. Ibid., paragraphs 35-6.
7. GE Wilford, The Geology and Mineral Resources of Brunei and Adjacent Parts of Sarawak (Brunei 1961), pp 263-4.

indeed common, but not in commercial quantities. Mineral oil from Buang Tawar (as opposed to petroleum from Seria) never became a significant export. Coal production in Brunei effectively ceased in 1924.

If Brunei failed to recover Limbang and reports of minerals were little more than hearsay, hopes for a substantial inflow of capital proved equally illusory. Existing investments comprised only the Rajah's two coal mines and the Island Trading Syndicate's cutch factory.[8]

In 1906 four applications by Europeans for large areas for rubber planting were received. Three were judged to be speculative and were disallowed. Progress was delayed by tulin claims; for three years after 1906 investors turned "a cold shoulder on Brunei". But at the end of 1909, there was "at last some prospect of cultivation in Brunei on a large scale".[9] The attitude of the Colonial Office is indicated by the case of one Mr Altman,[10] who wished to obtain a concession in Temburong district:

> "I hope his proposals will be considered sympathetically if they are at all reasonable" - thus Mr Stubbs - "because Brunei needs money so badly that it would be better to give exceptionally favourable terms than to let a good chance fall through". 11

Mr Collins agreed that "every encouragement" needed to be given to

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8. In addition, Mr EE Abrahamson (d ?1915), Secretary of the ITS, had acquired, in his own name, a separate concession in Labu district for gambier cultivation. Although the lease had been running since c1887, no planting had been done; but the annual rent of $500 had been paid regularly to Pengiran Muda Muhammad Tajudin.
9. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1909, p 6.
10. Mr Altman was a fellow of the Royal Colonial Institute. He had spent twenty years in Borneo before 1909, mainly in Sandakan (CO 531/2: 33176).
11. CO 531/2 (31778) minute by Mr RE Stubbs, 29 September 1909.

enterprise in Brunei.[12] Hence Mr Altman was given a letter of introduction to the High Commissioner; and by April 1910 he had secured his concession. Subsequently he formed a company (Brunei Estates Limited), chaired by Sir William Treacher, with an authorized capital of £75,000. Another company was raising £50,000 for an estate in Brunei: "all this introduction of capital", minuted by Mr Stubbs, "will lead to increased (Government) receipts from customs etc".[13] The Resident commented:

"The terms approved (to four concessionaires in 1910) were generous and were granted under the impression that British capital would never be attracted to Brunei". 14

In fact, the rubber plantation industry did not develop on any great scale in Brunei. Of the eight individuals who had acquired land before the end of 1911, four fell by the wayside almost immediately.[15]

From the table (overleaf) it will be seen that there were only five viable British-owned plantations during the Residential Era, three in Temburong district (at Labu, Batu Apoi and Biang) and two in Brunei district (at Gadong and Gumbang Kasang or Berakas). At least four of these estates had been established by 1910; the exception, the one at Gadong, was acquired by the Island Trading Company not later than 1922. Two of the three estates in Temburong district were owned by one company

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12. CO 531/2 (33176) minute by Mr AE Collins, 6 October 1909.
13. CO 531/2 (11169) minute by Stubbs, 21 April 1910.
14. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 10.
15. The four individuals who made nothing of their concessions were Messrs Bruce, WE Roberts, H Marshall and H Abrahamson. The latter had formed a company, the Tanah Brunei Company, which collapsed in 1912 (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 18; BAR 1911, p 8; and CO 531/4 items 10226 and 25392).

Table 9. European Rubber Estate Ownership in Brunei During the Resident-Era 1906-59.

Estate	Year	Owner
1. Labu	?1906	Concession acquired by Mr Abrahamson.
	1911-58	Brunei Rubber and Land Company (formed 1909; liquidated 1959).
2. Biang	1910	Concession acquired by Mr GJ Altman.
	1911-18	Brunei Estates Limited (formed 1910; Receiver appointed 1918; company wound up in 1923).
	1918-29	n.a.
	?1929-?59	Lawas (Sarawak) Rubber Estates Ltd; renamed in 1934 Lawas (Sarawak) Estates Limited.
3. Batu Apoi.	1910)	Concession acquired by Mr J Kime.
	1912-?29	Liverpool (Brunei) Para Rubber Company.
	?1929-?59	Lawas Rubber Estates Limited (which also owned Biang Estates: see above).
4. Gadong	by 1922 - 1955	Island Trading Company (liquidated 1957).
5. Gumbang Pasang (or Berakas)	1910	Concession acquired by Mr Hatton Hall.
	c1920-53	Brunei United Plantations Limited.

Notes: (1) The Lawas company definitely owned Batu Apoi estate not later than 1932 and both Biang and Batu Apoi estates not later than 1937. From other evidence, too detailed to be presented here, it might be deduced that the most likely year in which the Lawas company acquired both estates was 1929. This firm made its last appearance in The Stock Exchange Official Year Book in 1959. Presumably both estates had been sold in either 1959 or late 1958.

(2) The Liverpool (Brunei) Para Rubber Company was not featured in The Stock Exchange Official Year Book.

(3) The Brunei United Plantations Limited was registered in Singapore.

Sources: compiled by the author from (a) Brunei Annual Reports; (b) The Stock Exchange Official Year Books; and (c) Rubber Producing Companies (Official Guide to Investors of Rubber Shares) - editions of 1915, 1924, 1936, 1940, 1942 and 1944 - Financial Times, London.

- Lawas (Sarawak) Rubber Estates Limited, renamed Lawas (Sarawak) Estates Limited in 1934 - from about 1929 to about 1958.

In the case of three estates (Labu, Gadong and Gumbang Pasang) there was no change of ownership after the original concession-holder had set up a company to run the property. The first companies to own Biang and Batu Apoi estates, on the other hand, did not survive. Brunei Estates Limited, which went into liquidation in 1923, sold Biang to an unknown buyer in 1918. Similarly, the Liverpool (Brunei) Para Rubber Company, which owned Batu Apoi, went to the wall (or was taken over), most probably in 1929. These two estates were then acquired by the Lawas company.

Excluding Brunei Estates Limited and the 'Liverpool' company, an analysis of the four main companies (see table, overleaf) reveals that they were really small family concerns with interlocking directorships. They lacked capital, paid low and irregular dividends, and possessed comparatively small acreages. The most substantial company, the Lawas, had most of its acreage outside Brunei. Similarly, the Island Trading Company also owned two cutch factories, one in Brunei Town and one in Sarawak. Labu Estate, for its part, attempted some diversification by experimenting at various times with coffee (1910s), rice (1910s and 1930s) and coconuts (1950s). Scant commercial success appears to have attended such ventures. An area of 'native gardens' was also set aside on Labu estate; and the company issued licences to people wishing to tap <u>jelutong</u> within the area of its concession.

The total European-owned acreage of rubber in Brunei had reached

Table 10. British Rubber Producing Companies in Brunei 1906-59.

Company	Estate Acreage: Year	Acres	Capital: Year	Authorized £	Paid-Up £	Dividends of 5% or more (a)
1. BRLC	1911	300	1934	70,000	55,000	1920
(Labu)	1915	483	1938-59	70,000	58,000	1925-7
	1934	1,073				1940
	1940	1,128				1950-6
	c1949	750				
	c1954	780				
2. Lawas	1925	985b	1923	50,000	40,000	1936-7
(Biang and	1936	3,959b	1925	150,000	85,000	1939-40
Batu Apoi).	1941	5,944b	1930	200,000	149,640	1950-2
	1949	5,855b	1935	200,000	159,362	1954-7
	c1959	3,511b	1937-59	400,000	202,362	
3. ITC	1936	1,459	1904	40,000	21,000	1923
(Gadong)	1941	1,489	1911	80,000	n.a.	1929
	1952	713	1938-57	100,000	86,216	1933-4
						1936-7
						1939-40
						1948-52
4. BUPL (Gumbang Pasang)	n.a.	n.a.	1953	233,000	66,500	n.a.

Notes: (a) The maximum dividend was the 12½% paid by the BRLC in 1926. The next best level, 10%, was achieved by all three companies for whom details are available on a collective total of eight occasions

(b) Most of this acreage was outside Brunei (in 1925, indeed, all of it was outside the Sultanate). The Lawas company actually paid dividends of 35% in 1925, 50% in 1926 and 25% in 1927 (5% in 1928); but, as mentioned, it did not own property in Brunei during those years.

Source: compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports and The Stock Exchange Official Year Books.

c4,000 in 1929-33 and c5,000 in 1934-8. Of the latter figure, Gadong had 1,459 acres and Labu 1,073 acres, leaving an average of about 800 acres each for the three remaining estates. Three of the four companies had a paid-up capital of less than £100,000.[16] The Lawas company was best placed with a paid-up capital reaching £202,396 by 1937. (Most of this company's property was outside Brunei, however). Shareholders did not make much profit out of Brunei: no dividends at all were paid by at least three companies (a) in the period before rubber reached full maturity (c1910-18); (b) during the Great Depression (especially 1929-32); and (c) during the Japanese occupation and its aftermath (1941-7). To give an extreme example, during the period 1929 to 1949 the Brunei Rubber and Land Company (BRLC) paid dividends in only three years (1937-8 and 1940). The best profits, generally, were achieved in the mid-1920s and the early 1950s, particularly during the Korean War.

The companies were really small family concerns: the BRLC, for example, was dominated by the Dolbey family, which also held the chairmanship of the Island Trading Company from c1947 to 1956. Mr A Parker-Smith (director, 1927-33, and Chairman, 1934-c58) of the Lawas company, was also on the board of the BRLC (during the Second World War) and of the ITC (c1947-57). The Brunei United Plantations Limited, which owned Gumbang Pasang Estate, was founded by the Mr Hatton Hall encountered in a previous chapter. This was the first European estate to be sold to

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16. Some concerns operating in Malaya, by contrast, had paid-up capital of £1 million, e.g. Linggi Plantations Limited.

the Government (1953), setting thereby a trend to be followed by most, if not all, of the other rubber companies before the end of the Residential Era.[17]

Apart from rubber, Brunei's timber resources offered another possible sphere for foreign investment; but, after two shipments of railway sleepers by the North Borneo Trading Company in 1911, operations ceased. Thereafter, the Brunei Government looked to local Chinese contractors to develop the industry. In 1920 mention was made of a Shorea Produce Trading Company which "exhausted itself in the effort of coming into being".[18] One of the more bizarre applications came from a certain Lord Erroll, who sought a concession of "30,000 square miles" in Brunei for collecting jungle produce and selecting land for planting purposes.[19] His Lordship was reminded that the entire Sultanate could have been fitted several times over within the area he was seeking.

A proposal which might have resulted in considerable development in Brunei was that of the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company in 1911 to build an oil refinery at Brooketon and a pipeline from the Miri field in Sarawak. Although the Colonial Office was not obstructive, the scheme fell through.[20] British Residents placed their greatest hopes in the

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17. Part of the Gumbang Pasang estate was used as a Government rubber nursery from 1954 and part was cleared to make way for an airport. In the late 1960s, Batu Apoi and Labu estates (?Government-owned) were still in operation, but Biang was not.
18. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1920, p 3.
19. CO 531/3 (14763) Nineteenth Earl of Erroll (1852-1925) to Sir John Anderson, 9 March 1911. Erroll commanded British forces in the Great War.
20. CO 531/3 (1219, 14523, and 33188).

discovery of petroleum within Brunei itself; but prospecting operations were desultory, and it was not until the formation of the British Malayan Petroleum Company in 1922 that energetic operations commenced.

In sum, therefore, European capital investment in Brunei amounted to four viable rubber companies; a short-lived timber concession; and, before 1922, lethargic exploration for oil. In these circumstances, it was the Chinese who formed the backbone of the business community there. They were the principal shopkeepers, traders, and entrepreneurs. Before 1941 their interests included rubber estates, sago factories, pig-breeding, pepper, timber, charcoal and dried prawns. They also financed indigenous fishermen and jelutong tappers. Finally, when a large population began to settle in the oilfield, especially in the 1930s, it was the Chinese who exploited the potential for market gardening:

"The well-known skill and industry of the Chinese gardener has even succeeded in growing vegetables of a fair standard in the poor soil of Kuala Belait itself. Vegetables and fruits find a ready market and the supply is not equal to the demand". 21

The fourth possible avenue of economic prosperity was effective land settlement and development. Very little cultivation had been attempted immediately before 1906; and, pending the settlement of tulin claims, no permanent agriculture was expected. Attempts to persuade River Villagers to take up land occupation began to bear fruit in 1909, when a small settlement was started at Tumasik, where several influential pengirans took up small blocks. The Sultan himself selected some land on a hill at the back of the palace (but he did not personally settle on

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21. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1933, p 19.

terra firma until 1922).[22] At a lower social level, however, practically all the available land in Sungei Tekuying and Sumbiling was given out to applicants. This represented a limited success for the Government's policy.

The people were advised to plant coconut, fruit trees and rice, but the chief attraction to most of them was rubber. In 1909 rubber prices were at their peak: the delay in settling tulin claims was doubly unfortunate from Brunei's point of view, therefore, because, by the time trees were ready for tapping (1914-5), owners had missed the best of the boom. The pioneer land-settlers were money-lenders and members of the rakyat class who believed and followed the advice given to them. The pengirans, slowly at first, but subsequently in larger numbers, began to follow the example set.[23]

Survey staff throughout Brunei rarely worked at less than full pressure and in 1920-1, indeed, the office had to be closed altogether to enable the backlog to be cleared. The population "endorsed with acclamation" the policy of the Government and preferred to pay for the registered ownership of land rather than pay the poll tax exacted from indigenous people other than Malays who did not own land.[24] But Brunei remained little developed agriculturally. Of the total State Land area

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22. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1922, p 15.
23. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 11.
24. By the end of 1922 a total of 2,013 titles (1,913 for less than 25 acres) covering 26,309 acres had been issued; and it was hoped that this should gradually tend to more settled cultivation. An annual peak of 475 applications for land had been received in 1919, principally because of the final resolution of the dispute with the Kedayans.

of 1,424,640 acres, a mere 31,710 (2.2%) had been alienated under the Land Code by 1938, not including a further 2,450 acres held under temporary occupation licence. Of the alienated area, 14,747 acres were under rubber, 5,023 under padi and a significant proportion (5,000 acres in 1933) under sago. Fruit, vegetables and sugar cane were confined to comparatively small areas around the main towns and round the houses on land where settlement was gradually taking place. The main reasons for the lack of development were the poverty of Brunei's soils and a dearth of "population of agricultural habit" (one-third of the people still lived in the River Village). (Far from being generally fertile, as Mr McArthur had supposed, very little of Brunei's soil was suitable for agriculture because of the intense leaching of nutrients caused by heavy rainfall).[25]

Attempts to broaden the base of Brunei's agriculture also failed: in 1919 it was lamented that at the Government test garden

"coffee was a complete failure, tea could not be induced to germinate, indigo did fairly well, but would probably not be an economic proposition because of pests; tobacco at first seemed promising but could not be freed from insect pests". 26

Peruvian cotton and cocoa both "promised excellently" but never became commercial propositions. Experiments with Manila hemp had "poor results".[27]

In the 1930s, when several Government test plots were established, the results were no more successful. Early in the Residential Era some rubber estates also attempted to diversify; but once again with little

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25. Wilford, op.cit., p 261; Brown, Structure and History, p 2; Borneo Bulletin, 4 October 1958; and Brunei Annual Report 1970, pp 73-6.
26. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1919, p 4.
27. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1923, p 5.

or no commercial success.

Exports in what Mr McArthur called the "hardly impaired stores"[28] of jungle produce amounted to a meagre $17,765 (2.4% of total exports) as late as 1916 and peaked at only $7,296 in 1923 (4.14%), thanks to an unprecedented crop of illipe nuts during that year.

Population growth was the final possible means of economic expansion. In 1904, Mr McArthur estimated the population of Brunei Town and State at 12,000 and 30,000 respectively: and he considered the former to be a significant asset. The 1911 census disclosed the much lower figures of 9,767 and 21,718 respectively: it was not until the mid-1920s, indeed, that a total population of 30,000 was achieved. Residents were soon describing the shortage of people as a "curse" by which the country was handicapped:[29] "the one need of the country is population",[30] cried Mr Chevallier in 1910. Mr Lee-Warner suggested that 500 familes might be imported from Banjermasin in order to transform Brunei into a prosperous rice-growing district as they had in Krian, Perak. This scheme was not implemented.

In sum, most of the hopes of 1906 came to nothing. Limbang was not recovered. No new minerals were discovered before 1929. The inflow of capital was derisory. Barely 35,000 acres were under cultivation as late as 1938, when Brunei could still manage to produce scarcely one-sixth of its rice requirements; the soil, generally, was not fertile; the

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28. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 91.
29. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 16.
30. Ibid., p 1.

only cash crop successfully introduced was rubber. Finally, there was an acute shortage of population, and, therefore, of labour.

What then was left? In 1906 the principal exports were cutch and coal, to be overtaken by rubber in 1923. The main subsistence agricultural products were padi, sago and fruit. Brunei also possessed fisheries, potentially-valuable forests, and a number of craft industries.

4. The Development of the Main Industries

During the pre-oil era Brunei's trade developed as follows:

Table 11. Brunei: The Balance of Trade 1908-32 ($ Straits)

Year	Exports	Imports	Total Trade	Trade Balance
(1) Brunei Town only (1908-14)				
1908	78,009	80,029a	158,933	- 1,120
1910	245,639	81,985a	327,624	+ 163,654
1914	216,282	126,743b	343,025	+ 89,539
(2) Brunei State (1915-32)				
1915 c	543,707	234,004	777,711	+ 309,703
1920	1,173,252	722,678	1,895,930	+ 450,574
1925	1,859,736	1,013,418	2,873,154	+ 846,318
1930	807,449	2,536,422	3,343,871	-1,728,973
1932	1,505,738	2,430,247	3,935,985	- 924,509

Notes: (a) not including rice or opium. (Rice imports into Brunei Town in 1914 amounted to $31,352; and into the whole State in 1915 to $83,067).

(b) not including opium.

(c) "The returns from the outstations are in some cases incomplete but the figures may be taken as approximately accurate". (BAR 1915, p 4).

Source: compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports. (For a complete set of statistics, see Appendix 6.3, below).

In 1904 Mr McArthur estimated the trade of Brunei Town at about $400,000, divided equally between imports and exports.[31] The total in 1908 was under-stated at $158,938 (see Table 11), rising to $343,025 in 1914. Again, in 1904, Mr McArthur estimated the total trade of Brunei State at $612,000. In 1915, the first year for which approximate national figures became available, the total figure was $777,711 and in 1917 the million mark had been well exceeded. This increase was due to a rise in the value of coal exports and the appearance of a new export, rubber, first shipped in 1914 and totalling $248,919 in 1917. Total exports reached a pre-oil peak of $1,859,736 in 1925 but fell to only half a million dollars in 1931 because of the Great Depression. The high level of imports in 1919-20 is explained by the famine price of rice (combined with the failure of the 1918/19 local harvest), the former being a result of profiteering by the Indian Government. Brunei's trade balance was usually favourable, except during the Great Depression (1928-33). The deficit during those years was accounted for as much by a steep rise in machinery imports by the BMPC as by the slump in the value of rubber exports. Hence imports rose from $1.38m in 1928 to $2.54m in 1930, before falling back slightly to $2.43m in 1932 (see below, p 634).

In the pre-oil era Brunei's principal exports were cutch, coal and rubber, as indicated in Tables 12 and 13 (overleaf).

Cutch, a khaki dye from mangrove, was used in the leather and fishing industries for tanning and for the treating and dyeing of nets

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31. Imports were actually put at $300,000; but Mr McArthur felt that they were worth only $200,000 sold at fair prices (cf. p 31, above).

Table 12. Exports of Coal, Cutch and Rubber 1915-24 ($ Straits)

Year	Cutch	Coal	Para Rubber	'Main 3' Total (1)	Total Exports (2)	(1) as %age of (2)
1915	237,400	148,730	60,103	446,233	543,707	82
1916	285,400	206,077	142,711	634,188	734,254	86
1917	330,700	295,800	248,919	875,419	952,260	92
1918	361,501	413,910	174,868	950,279	1,033,734	92
1919	304,249	296,621	243,596	844,466	1,134,864	74
1920	355,300	296,000	214,733	866,033	1,173,252	74
1921	240,740	275,570	82,217	598,527	791,028	76
1922	172,600	104,160	91,104	367,864	577,305	64
1923	238,000	102,820	363,200	704,020	900,307	78
1924	176,490	98,202	387,793	662,485	867,190	76

Note: coal mining at Brooketon colliery ceased in 1924.
Source: compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports.

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Table 13. Rubber Boom and Great Depression 1925-34 ($ Straits)

Year	Rubber Exports: Value $	% of total	Jelutong Exports: Value $	% of total	Total Exports $	Para & Jelutong: % of total exports.
1925	1,318,218	71	174,288	9	1,859,736	80
1926	1,032,055	62.5	295,978	18	1,651,048	80
1927	892,627	62	177,029	12	1,443,703	74
1928	581,265	55	151,501	14	1,058,071	69
1929	742,999	59	165,120	13	1,251,335	73
1930	377,927	47	68,922	8.5	807,449	55
1931	161,204	32	27,928	6	501,494	38
1932	104,899	7	32,773	2	1,505,738	9
1933	236,249	11	19,215	1	2,191,037	12
1934	671,970	19.5	39,134	1	3,439,501	21

Note. Rubber exports had recovered the 1928-29 level by 1934, but, whereas this had accounted for 55-59% of total exports in 1928-9, it represented only 19.5% in 1934. This decline in proportion is explained by the appearance of an unprecedentedly valuable export from 1932, viz., petroleum. See, also, Table 18 (below).

Source: compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports.

and sails. The process of manufacture, briefly, was as follows:

"The raw bark is crushed and placed in vats, to which water is added for leaching purposes. The liquid is then evaporated to dryness in vacuum pans, leaving a solid residue. The finished product is a hard, brittle substance, not unlike pitch, but reddish-brown in colour". 32

The cutch concession was obtained by the Island Trading Syndicate in 1900. A payment of $500 was made to Sultan Hashim for signing this agreement. Annual rent of $300 was to be paid in advance; and a duty of five cents for each pikul (133⅓ lbs) of manufactured bark.[33] Mr Stubbs at the Colonial Office noted that "the syndicate got it cheap, but, unlike most Brunei concessionaires, they seem quite honest workers".[34]

Features of the cutch industry included incompetent British management and the occasional total closure of the factory for prolonged periods. The Island Trading Company (as it became in 1911) suffered from its short-sightedness in the first years of the Residential Era, when mangrove areas near Brunei Town were recklessly wasted, with no attempt at conservation or reafforestation, so that by the mid-1920s most of the bark consumed came from outside Brunei at great extra expense and trouble.[35] At times - for example in 1907 and 1938-9 - the factory was practically closed; and in 1917-18 wartime shipping restrictions resulted in severe constraints upon output and redundancy among bark collecting gangs, who were difficult to reassemble thereafter. (During the 1930s, however, the cutch industry proved rather more stable than most others).

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32. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1937, p 26. See also P Blundell, The City of Many Waters (London 1923), pp 37-8.
33. CO 531/2 (28140) copy of concession dated 11 Rabiulawal 1318 AH (8 July 1900); also in FO 12/116, p 150.
34. CO 531/2 (28140) minute by Mr Stubbs, 26 August 1909.
35. CO 874 (Files 861 and 862). See also CO 852/635 (File 4).

The whole of the cutch production was exported, mainly to the USA at first; some went to France and Argentina; but during the Great War demand increased in the United Kingdom, Japan and China. After 1920 the output of cutch averaged around 2,000 tons annually, except during the Great Depression, when a higher level of almost 3,000 tons was attained. The slump in the price of rubber after 1929 gave cutch renewed comparative importance and, in 1931, it regained its position at the top of the export list ($194,457 or 39% of total exports). Thereafter cutch was again overshadowed, partly by the recovery of rubber, but principally because of the beginning of oil exportation. Hence in 1937 more cutch by value ($212,239) was exported than in 1931, but this then represented less than 4% of total exports. Nevertheless, cutch remained third in importance behind petroleum and rubber.

During the early years of the British Residential Era, coal - extracted from the Rajah of Sarawak's mines at Brooketon (1888-1924) and Buang Tawar (1900/1-17)[36] - disputed with cutch for the honour of being Brunei's most valuable export, coming out on top (for example) in 1918 and 1921. At Brooketon, coal was mined from seams more than twenty feet thick by opencast methods until the removal of overburden became prohibitively expensive and underground mining had to be introduced. At Buang Tawar on Berembang Island output was much smaller (usually 1,000-1,500 tons annually compared with 17-30,000 tons annually from Brooketon), derived from opencast and small underground workings. During the years 1906-24

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36. CO 604/5 Sarawak Gazette 16 March 1917, p 74; and CO 604/6 Sarawak Gazette, 2 January 1918, p 6.

315,396 tons of coal worth $2,688,400 were exported;[37] but the Rajah's mines were run at a considerable loss, "which is all the more to be deplored as the bulk of the coolies are Brunei Malays who earn a steady livelihood under sympathetic masters".[38] Matters improved somewhat after 1911, when a rival company ceased operations in neighbouring Labuan. Demand for coal remained uncertain, however; and the cost of transport from Brooketon to Labuan to sell the coal was heavy. Customers were mainly passing naval and steamship vessels. The mine at Brooketon managed to break even in 1917; and the post-Great War coal shortage ensured two unprecedentedly prosperous years (1918-19). But the imposition of an export duty on coal in 1921, plus various other factors (geological complications, the falling price of coal, the switch from coal to oil in shipping) resulted in the cessation of mining at Brooketon in 1924. Thereafter only a little coal was produced in Brunei by indigenous people using opencast methods. Most of the production was consumed locally; but a little was exported (49 tons in 1936, 3 in 1937 and 54 in 1938). A number of European concerns expressed an interest in resuming the commercial exploitation of coal but these attempts came to nothing.[39]

Para rubber took over as Brunei's most valuable export during the years 1923-30. Significant quantities of jelutong (wild rubber) were

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37. Wilford, op.cit., p 160. See also, ibid., pp 158-94.
38. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1909, p 8.
39. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1930, p 10 and BAR 1932, p 9; and CO 852/76/6. In the late 1940s the Colonial Office commissioned a report on the possibility of a renewed coal industry in Brunei. Investigators concluded that coal was not a viable proposition (CO 954/7 File 58938, items 12 and 14), a verdict confirmed by Dr Wilford (b 1928) in 1961 (op.cit., p 194).

also shipped from the Sultanate, especially in 1925-9, when the industry enjoyed its greatest prosperity. The jelutong tree was found in all districts of Brunei, but particularly in Belait; and in the early years of the Residential Era a considerable boost was given to production.[40] Mr Lee-Warner attempted to introduce improved methods of tapping and treatment of latex, but, quite correctly, he was not confident of success. National exports peaked at $295,978 in 1925, slumped to less than $20,000 in 1933, and had recovered only to $82,000 by 1938. The bulk of the jelutong (two-thirds in 1925) came from Belait, where it was worked almost entirely by Iban tappers employed by Chinese merchants. The preparation of the product, however, "left much to be desired" and it failed to command the same price as the FMS article.[41]

Jelutong never achieved the importance of para rubber. The first consignment of the latter was exported in 1914, when the total area planted amounted to about 2,200 acres, of which 56.6% was under European management. In 1915 several more holdings, including one owned by the Sultan, reached the tapping stage. This coincided with an unexpected rise in rubber prices. Evidence of the profits to be obtained caused a rush to take up land to plant the crop.

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40. Exports from Tutong, for example, jumped from $753 in 1908 to $12,597 in 1910.

41. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1925, p 7. The previous year the Resident commented that the Belait jelutong forests seemed "almost inexhaustible". They were worked chiefly by nomadic Ibans at that time, who were "at the mercy of the Chinese dealer, himself generally the sub-agent of a Labuan agent, who in turn is the agent of a Singapore towkay, a system which left little profit for the actual worker and is therefore not an incentive to industry".

"The continued demand for rubber" - thus Mr Cator in 1916 - "has, on the whole, a good effect in Brunei though some of its results are disquieting. The Bruneis themselves have no agricultural tradition and, until six or seven years ago, had little knowledge of, and less interest in, the subject. In the circumstances it is hardly surprising that, on taking up land, they devoted themselves to the most profitable and least troublesome product to the almost total exclusion of everything else. As a result, however, cultivation is lopsided - coconuts, fruits and pepper are nothing accounted - and should serious disease attack rubber, agriculture in Brunei would collapse.

Efforts have been made to counteract this tendency by making it a condition of title that cultivation must be mixed, but such a clause is easier to insert than to enforce, especially in a country where it is essential to attract people to the land. On the other hand, in Brunei rubber has not, as elsewhere, replaced useful products but scrub undergrowth and secondary jungle". 42

In 1919 the planted acreage of rubber smallholdings overtook that of large estates; by 1924 the production of smallholdings had drawn level with that of estates; and by 1938 the European-owned acreage accounted for only about one-third of the total area under planted rubber in Brunei.

The general slump of late 1920 to 1922 seriously disrupted Brunei's trade: the value of exports halved from $1.1m to $0.58m. At this stage, though, "only a small proportion of the native inhabitants were rubber planters, so few were directly affected by the fall of the market".[43] The depression came, however, just when success for the large estates, "which had struggled so long and so pluckily against adversity", seemed near. This was the more unfortunate because managers had succeeded in "the most difficult part of their task" - the building up of a permanent labour force, many of whom had then to be thrown out of work.

Following the introduction of the Stevenson Restriction Scheme

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42. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1916, p 3.
43. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1920, p 2.

in November 1922 the price of rubber rose and tapping commenced on all the smallholdings as well as on the few larger estates which had temporarily ceased production. A restriction committee for fixing the standard production of estates of more than 200 acres was formed; smallholdings were assessed by the Resident.[44] Prices then rose because of the American boom in the mid-1920s. In Brunei there was a scramble for land to plant rubber: in 1927 alone there were 876 applications (for a collective total of 10,000 acres), of which 614 were approved.[45]

During the Great Depression (beginning 1929) the price of rubber slumped to a nadir of 5¼ cents per pound in 1932. This was a severe blow to those who depended upon the crop, which had been Brunei's most valuable export since 1923;[46] but the country as a whole was pulled through by the gathering pace of oilfield development in Belait. The British rubber companies, with the price of rubber below the cost of

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44. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1922, p 4.
45. In 1926 5,289 acres were alienated (3,073 for rubber); in 1928, 838 (700); 1929, 538 (481); and in 1930, 443 (200). NB: A clause stating the purpose for which land was to be used was inserted by the Government into every lease before alienation. In some cases land alienated for coconuts and fruits was used illegally for rubber cultivation.
46. A most important insight into this question is provided by Khoo Soo Hock, writing in 1976: "Rubber in the smallholdings is grown in a combined activity with rice. Few of the smallholdings are full-fledged enterprises in the sense of the smallholding being the sole source of income of the owner. Even in the days when the crop was enthusiastically taken up, its cultivation was in the nature of a complementary activity to rice cultivation or to fruit growing...Despite the ease with which the crop has become a feature of their life, rubber had yet never supplanted rice cultivation, which remained throughout the dominant activity. It must have meant more at one time to the owner, however, in terms of the cash proceeds...". Khoo Soo Hock, "Agricultural Land Use" in Khoo Soo Hock, et al., Brunei in Transition, (Kuala Lumpur 1976), pp 124-5.

production, were forced to take "drastic measures of economy".[47] The estate labour force was reduced from 1,392 in 1927 to only 609 in 1932.[48] Basic monthly wages for an unskilled tapper then stood at only $7.50 but the price of rice fell in sympathy; and labourers could supplement their wages by growing their own vegetables and catching their own fish. The Depression was also a hard time for the rubber companies in Brunei, as indicated in the following table.

Table 14. The Finances of the Brunei Rubber and Land Company (£ Sterling)

Year	Production lbs	Receipts per lb d	Costs per lb: f.o.b. d	Costs per lb: all-in d	Profit & Loss £	Cash Balance £
1929-30	199,168	7.60	6.12	8.71	- 953	+1,006
1930-31	212,755	3.64	3.65	5.27	-1,352	- 346
1931-32	225,362	2.22	2.42	3.14	- 805	-1,151
1932-33	207,594	2.21	1.95	2.58	- 285	-1,346
1933-34	230,652	3.74	n.a.	3.57	+ 160	-1,276

Source: Rubber Producing Companies 1936 (London 1936, p 79). Dividends 1929-36: nil. The area planted with rubber at Labu Estate, the one owned by the BRLC, (cf. p 205 and p 207, above), amounted to 1,073 acres at this time, of which 857 were in bearing and 216 had been planted in 1927-8. Average yields per acre varied between 232 lbs in 1929-30 and 269 lbs in 1933-4.

Those smallholders who had planted rubber during the 1926-7 boom would not have suffered a substantial loss of income (unless they

47. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1930, p 7. (The decline of rubber exports after 1925 may have led to Batu Apoi and Biang Estates being transferred in 1929 to the Lawas company, which probably had greater capital resources than the previous owners).
48. This affected principally those Indians brought in during the 1920s, of whom 422 (out of 427) were repatriated. The number of indigenous labourers was 606 in 1926 and 527 in 1932; and the reduction of estate labour was more than matched, so far as indigenous people were concerned, by recruitment by the Island Trading Company, the number of whose employees at the cutch factory, only 500 in 1926-8, was 700 or more in 1930-2.

had existing mature smallholdings) for the simple reason that their rubber would not have reached the tapping stage before the Wall Street 'orash' of 1929.[49]

I shall now go slightly beyond chapter limits (1932) in order to discuss the effect of rubber regulation after 1934, which is most appropriately dealt with here.

Rubber Regulation. In 1934 all important rubber-producing countries subscribed to the International Rubber Regulation Agreement, which banned the further sale of land for rubber planting and imposed export quotas on each country, sub-divided between estates and smallholdings. As a result of these measures, the price of rubber tended to climb and in 1938 Regulation was extended, with modifications, for a further five years.

On the basis of the available evidence, the following conclusions seem tenable: that the smallholder was best-favoured in assumed yield within Brunei; that more rubber was exported during the period of rubber regulation than in the best pre-slump year (1929) and that exports in 1940-1 were about double the 1929 level; that, by contrast, exports of jelutong (a non-regulated commodity) collapsed after 1929 and even in 1941 had not recovered the 1929 level; that in 1930-1, when - in ordinary circumstances, a huge increase of rubber exports might have been expected as the area planted in 1926-7 reached maturity - there was actually a decline in exports and the rush to take up land for rubber planting had

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49. All four British rubber companies also planted up new areas in the mid-1920s.

ceased. In short, smallholders' overheads may have been much smaller than those of estates; but even a smallholder saw little point in tapping one pound of rubber when only 5.25 cents would be received in return for the labour. It was thought that a price of ten cents (c2.64d) was necessary for the smallholder to begin tapping. In Brunei smallholders maintained their share of the market; and an index of selected exports by value (1928 = 100), indicates that during the years 1929-33, when there was no regulation, rubber fared worse than almost any other export industry, yet during Regulation years after 1934, it did <u>better</u> than all other industries except <u>sago</u> (which was on an extremely low base) and petroleum, the export of which did not begin until 1932. During the Japanese occupation, moreover, rubber production ceased altogether because it was deemed "unnecessary" for the Japanese war effort. In short, it is unwise to rush to the conclusion that Rubber Regulation operated to the disadvantage of the smallholder. The evidence rather suggests the opposite, if anything.

<u>5. Grow More Rice!</u>

Rice was the staple food of the people of Brunei, but the country was unable to produce sufficient to meet its needs. In 1906 "large quantities of rice were brought in by every schooner, though the soil of the country is capable, were it only cultivated, of supply".[50] Rice topped the list of imports, by value, from 1915 to 1929 (except

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50. CO 824/1 <u>Brunei Annual Report 1906</u>, p 9.

1925 and 1928) and again in 1936-7.[51] At the beginning of the Residential Era, the amount of planting done by Malays was "not worthy of serious mention", the agricultural part of the population being formed by Kedayans and Bisayas. The sedentary cultivation of wet padi was virtually unknown. Kedayans were, traditionally, shifting cultivators of hill rice:

"Their usual method is to burn down the jungle on a hillside, build some huts to live in, plant their padi, reap it, and then move off elsewhere and repeat the operation". 52

From the first efforts were made to get the inhabitants of Kampong Ayer to settle on land to take up smallholdings to plant padi and rear livestock. There were stretches of swamp in valleys and over wide areas of lowland where irrigation would not have been needed to grow rice. Seeds were supplied from the FMS for distribution to the public. In 1910 Mr Lee-Warner declared that Brunei could not advance until the capital was on terra firma. Cheap land was currently available, but (he warned) unless advantage was taken of the opportunity while it lasted, land would be snapped up by speculators and cost more to obtain in future. The price which a coconut or comb of bananas then commanded was "comparatively ruinous". Personal occupation of the land, on the other hand, would enable all to grow these commodities and save the expense which then consumed at least one quarter of their expenditure on food.

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51. Rice imports stood at $83,067 (35.5% of total imports) in 1915, peaked at $312,820 in 1919 (51%) and fell to $187,421 (9%) in 1935. According to one estimate, rice worth $3,996,317 was imported in the years 1919-38.

52. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 31. (Cf. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, p 13, and BAR 1915, p 6: "Kedayans as a rule observe a certain rotation in the areas of cultivation").

An area of 500 acres was demarcated for settlers in c1910. (In fact, when River Villagers did begin to move to terra firma, they tended to adopt rubber rather than rice: see above, p 221).

Throughout the Residential Era, the aim of British policy was to stimulate domestic rice production in Brunei

"by the inculcation of modern and economic methods in place of the ancient and wasteful custom, by the encouragement of planting fresh areas, particularly of wet padi, and by the introduction of better and higher yielding strains". 53

The idea was to reduce dependence on imports, particularly in times of world scarcity, e.g. after both world wars.

Following the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, magistrates were urged to encourage people to grow padi. World rice scarcity led to the planting of record acreages in Brunei in seasons 1917-8, 1918-9 and 1919-20. The Dusuns and Bisayas, in particular, responded well to these exhortations.[54] The domestic harvest failed in 1918 and 1919 at a time when imported rice was most expensive: but thanks largely to encouragement by the Sultan, a record area was planted for the third season in succession (1919-20) and, this time, the resulting yield was "excellent" throughout the State. Good harvests were also achieved in the next two years, but an expert suggested that even better results might have been obtained if fewer varieties per acre had been sown.

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53. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1936, p 10.
54. "By the Brunei Malays, through ignorance of agriculture, and by the Kedayans, through natural perversity", the Resident commented, "the Government's advice was largely disregarded. With the price of rice reaching 75 cents a gantang (cf. 48 cents in 1930, 23 cents in 1933, 30 cents in 1939), these people have cause to review the soundness of their own judgement". CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1918, p 3.

Thereafter the amount of rice grown in Brunei tended to vary inversely with the price of rubber. When good returns could be obtained for the latter, the padi fields tended to be neglected; when rubber was unremunerative, on the other hand, more rice was planted. Even during the Great Depression (1929-33), however, when rubber prices slumped, never more than 40% of domestic rice requirements were home-grown.

Padi was planted "exclusively"[55] on indigenous smallholdings of two or three acres, particularly in the Kilanas, Sengkurong and Lumapas districts in the neighbourhood of the capital. During the Great Depression, when smallholder income from rubber collapsed, the need to produce a higher proportion of rice locally became acute. In 1932 Dr HA Tempany, Director of Agriculture in Malaya, stated that there was "no reason" why Brunei "should not become self-supporting in the matter of rice production in a comparatively short space of time".[56] On the basis of his recommendations, a number of padi test plots were established by the Government, in the hope of introducing higher-yielding strains and of demonstrating to the rural population the stages of wet padi cultivation which they could follow as the season progressed.[57] Other steps taken

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55. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1937, p 20. It is true that in 1919 a syndicate of Chinese traders in Brunei, with "praiseworthy public spirit", cleared and irrigated some land for rice cultivation; but the venture was short-lived (CO 824/1 BAR 1919, pp 3-4; and BAR 1920, p 3). In 1932 Dr Tempany (1881-1955) reported that two estates, at Berakas and Labu, were taking an interest in rice production (CO 273/596 File 33045/1 "Report on Agriculture in Labuan and Brunei", p 25).

56. Tempany, loc.cit., p 22.

57. Dr Tempany suggested, also, the selection of suitable candidates to serve as penghulus and ketuas, who should receive some training; the improvement of agricultural methods, including seed supply, drainage and irrigation, and control of pests. He warned, however of the danger of

by the Government in the 1930s included the construction of a Government rice mill in the capital (1933), the prohibition of the clearing of virgin jungle for shifting cultivation, the weighting of land tenure terms in favour of those who adopted sedentary farming, as well as schemes for the settlement of Malays from Kampong Ayer on land, the provision of buffaloes on easy terms, and minor drainage and irrigation projects. By 1934 the time had come, if progress was to be made on a sound permanent basis, for the appointment of a specialist Agricultural Officer;[58] but it was not until 1937 that a suitable incumbent was found.[59]

How successful was the Government's policy? It was hardly to be expected that a way of life as customary as shifting cultivation could have been eradicated overnight. The farming of wet padi had been virtually unknown in Brunei in 1906; but, by 1929, which was seen as a turning point, 1,200 acres of wet padi were planted out of a total rice acreage of 5,200.

"At last", the Resident reported, "the Kedayans and Tutongs, who form the bulk of the agricultural population, are beginning to realize the advantages which this form of padi cultivation has over the sporadic and wasteful methods of hill padi so extensively practised by them and their forefathers". 60

The total area under padi increased from 5,200 acres in 1929 to a peak of 12,000 acres in 1932, after which the area fluctuated

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Chinese shopkeepers gaining a stranglehold on surplus rice by inducing indebtedness in producers (hence the 1933 Government rice mill?). Loc. cit., pp 21-5.

58. CO 273/596 (File 33045/1) Acting High Commissioner Mr (later Sir) A Caldecott (1884-1951) to CO, No 464 (SS/FMS), 18 July 1934, paragraph 6.

59. The post was originally offered to one Mr A Frampton (30), then serving in British Guiana (ibid., CO to Frampton, 27 September 1934), but this fell through. Mr GDP Olds was appointed in 1937.

60. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1929, p 6.

approximately between five and eight thousand acres. The area under wet padi rose from 1,200 acres in 1929 to 5,000 acres in 1932, slipping back to 3,487 in 1936 and to only 2,000 acres in 1938. The total output doubled between 1929 and 1933 but did not reach a pre-war maximum until 1936 (1,047,398 gantangs), after which production fell back to only 740,881 gantangs in 1938 (see Table 15, overleaf).

The best year (apparently) was 1936 when almost 40% of rice requirements were home produced. In 1932 the proportion was one-third and in 1934 only one-sixth. In other words increased attention was paid to rice during the Great Depression, but by 1938 the position had slipped back once again. Nevertheless, the area under wet padi in 1938 was two-thirds higher than it had been in 1929. In short, it was principally "the stern force of economic necessity"[61] which had compelled farmers to plant up increased areas of rice in 1929 to 1932. When rubber prices recovered the number and area of wet padi holdings showed "a remarkable falling off".[62]

Although the extension of padi cultivation was "the agricultural question of outstanding importance in Brunei", Dr Tempany pointed out that this did not "preclude attention to other crops".[63] Subsidiary crops were cultivated alongside padi; and wild foods were collected from the jungle. In 1932 Dr Tempany suggested that the planting of coconuts and coffee were capable of marked extension to meet local needs and attention might have been paid also to "the probability of a steadily

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61. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1930, p 7.
62. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 21.
63. Tempany Report, loc.cit., p (n.a.); also in CO 604/17 Sarawak Gazette, 1 December 1932, p 201.

Table 15. Brunei: Rice, Domestic Production versus Imports.

Year	Acreage:- Dry	Wet (acres)	Total	Local Yield (gantangs)	Imports:- Weight (pikuls)	Value ($)
1925	3,333*	1,667*	5,000*	600,000	32,910	242,811
1926	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	c440,000	34,268	273,649
1927	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	c300,000	39,730	298,812
1928	n.a.	n.a.	c4,000	521,000	35,509	232,127
1929	4,000	1,200	c5,200	494,000	27,754	199,697
1930	4,600	2,900	7,500	500,877	54,370	212,772
1931	3,846	3,537	7,383	760,016	30,515	133,410
1932	7,000	5,000	12,000	991,223	26,122	121,753
1933	4,835	3,420	8,255	1,023,960	29,015	106,522
1934	n.a.	n.a.	c5,000	c600,000	43,006	131,805
1935	n.a.	n.a.	c5,000	c600,000	48,472	187,421
1936	4,128	3,487	7,615	1,047,398	47,341	172,777
1937	2,226	2,514	4,740	766,292	42,336	180,911
1938	2,837	2,186	5,023	740,881	47,142	193,772

Notes: (*) 1924-5 harvest, and so on.

The figures for domestic acreages and production may not be very reliable. In 1926, for example, the Resident stated that there was "no reliable record of the area planted, nor can too much reliance be placed on the accuracy of the figures". (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1926, p 8). Similar comments were made in 1933 and 1938.

In 1933 yields per acre were given as follows: wet: 131 gantangs per acre; dry: 118 gantangs per acre; total: 124 gantangs per acre.

Other relevant information includes (a) population figures - see Appendix 6, below; and (b) the rate of rubber release under the International Rubber Regulation Agreement of 1934: c87% of the quota allotted might have been exported in 1934, 67.5% in 1935, 62.5% in 1936, 83¾% in 1937 and 55% in 1938. Cf. also, p 315, fn 2 (below).

Source: compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports.

increasing demand for meat, poultry, eggs, fresh vegetables and fruit as the development of the oilfield proceeds". Groundnuts, oil-palm, tobacco and arecanuts were further possibilities.[64] But such new crops were never exported from Brunei and the acreages under them must have remained small.

Brunei was not a stock-raising country but buffaloes were required in conjunction with the preparation of land for wet padi cultivation. Demand for the animals became greater as this form of agriculture spread and in 1932 Dr Tempany noted a "marked shortage" of buffaloes. The Government had sought for some years to prevent the drain of such animals from the country. In 1925 duties were imposed on the export of buffaloes and buffalo meat, and, in September 1928, the export of buffaloes was prohibited without written permission from the Resident. Despite an increase of 40% in the number of buffaloes between 1930 and 1938,[65] there remained insufficient for use in the padi fields because, in the latter year, the Resident had launched another scheme to entice

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64. Ibid.

65. From 3,669 in 1930 to 5,139 in 1938. Demand increased in 1938 because the Resident had launched one of the recurring campaigns to induce River Villagers to adopt rice cultivation. Mr J Cook (now CBE), State Agricultural Officer in 1940-1, comments: "As regards the settlement scheme, if success is judged in terms of padi planted then there certainly was a modicum of success but in the sense of permanent settlement on the land, then the answer is 'no'. The two main obstacles militating against real progress were, firstly, and the more important, the understandable reluctance of the Kampong Ayer people to undertake, to them, a radical change in lifestyle, and, secondly, the abnormal conditions of the time (1940-1) prevented the Agricultural Department from giving a 100% back-up to the scheme". (Mr J Cook CBE, letter to the author, 23 March 1985, paragraph 2).

River Villagers to start a new life on terra firma. Thus from 1935 cattle began to be imported, particularly from North Borneo.[66]

Sago was the third most important agricultural product of Brunei after rubber and rice. By 1933 there were 5,000 acres of the crop under cultivation, almost entirely in Temburong and Belait districts. Rumbia required little attention and would grow in swampy areas that were useless for anything else. The product was the staple food of the peoples of the interior, especially Tutongs and Dusuns, and in difficult years was used by others as a substitute for, or supplement to, rice. In addition sago leaves provided the best-quality atap and refuse from the manufacture of sago flour was sold as pig-food.

In 1910 it was suggested that, with sago exports from Muka and Oya in Sarawak beginning to decline, Brunei sago should have commanded a remunerative price and rumbia working alone could have brought prosperity to the people of the outdistricts. It was hoped to encourage the export of sago in prepared (rather than raw) form in order to enable the producer to avoid losing profits to the middleman. Indeed, exports of sago were not insignificant, reaching a maximum of $84,512 in 1920. During the Great Depression the low price of this commodity caused owners to pay less attention to their rumbia. Three Chinese-owned factories for the manufacture of sago flour remained in existence in 1938, but principally

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66. Livestock worth $1,622 were imported in 1935, of. 262 head worth $12,022 imported in 1941. Apart from buffaloes, there were (in 1938) 1,300 head of Siamese cattle in Brunei kept either for the supply of milk or for slaughter. Two estates maintained herds. Grazing was usually inadequate; and, because little stall-feeding was carried out, animals were generally in poor condition.

to serve the domestic market.[67]

Craft Industries. The most important indigenous craft industries were brass- and silverware, followed by sarongs and kajang. The manufacture of silver and brass articles was restricted largely to certain family guilds in the capital. These occupations were at their most prosperous in the 1920s in terms of (pre-Japanese occupation) export sales.[68]

The manufacture of silverware[69] was the most important of the craft industries and the Brunei silversmiths were "perhaps the most famous in the Archipelago".[70] The traditional output consisted of articles for the use of the Malay aristocracy; but the demand for blades such as those which carried off most of the prizes at the Kuala Lumpur Show in 1908, was "never likely to make it worthwhile to assist to any great extent those who are engaged in the manufacture of such articles". An arrangement was made in August 1908, whereby the Government undertook

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67. Exports fell to $23,841 in 1925, $21,797 in 1930 and reached a nadir of only $3,594 in 1931, before recovering to $13,542 by 1938. (An extraordinary amount of $102,592 was shipped in 1940: cf. p 315, below). Most sago was exported as flour: of the 1925 total, for example, $22,944 was exported as flour and only $896 in the raw form. Outside the Brunei and Temburong districts peasants were required, in 1938, to take out permanent titles to the various pulau (islands) of sago palms over which they claimed shadowy ancestral rights. In the same year the Government took steps to establish a sago demonstration centre at Kuala Belait in order to disseminate improved methods of extracting starch. See also JS Lim, "A Short Account of Sago Production in Kuala Balai (Belait District)" in BMJ 1974, pp 144-55.

68. See note 72 (below).

69. The method employed was "first to beat the silver to the required shape, then to run a mixture consisting mostly of resin round it, either outside or inside as the case may be, to prevent its buckling while the pattern is being punched out". (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1908, p 10).

70. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1931, p 10.

to advance money to the silversmiths and in return to receive their ware for sale to the public. In the 1920s and 1930s an effort was made, with considerable success, to persuade silversmiths to produce items for which there would be a demand among Europeans, such as cigarette cases, ashtrays and finger bowls. Thanks to the assistance of the Malayan Arts and Crafts Society a ready market was found in Singapore and there was a steady demand for the silverware. Although there was a large decrease in exports during the Great Depression, smiths suffered little because, with the increase of European population, local sales increased. Visitors to Brunei were also more numerous; and few left without a souvenir.

Similarly, many River Villagers were very talented brassworkers.[71] Their output at first comprised mainly gongs (for which Brunei was famous), sireh boxes, kettles and other household vessels. The artisans became skilful at copying accurately such items as replicas of motor engine parts, propellors and other pieces of machinery. During the 1920s North Borneo and Sarawak were good markets, but exports fell greatly after that time and revived only in 1940-1.[72] In the 1930s the products of

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71. The method of brass-making was as follows: "A mould is made in clay in the size and shape of the interior space of the vessel desired. This is laid over with a mixture of wax and resin which is shaped to form an exact replica of the article to be cast. This again is covered with clay, a hole being left in some convenient place as an outlet for the wax. When the clay is dry the wax is burnt over a fire and the moulten brass is poured in to take its place. The clay is then removed with hammer and chisel, leaving the article complete and ready for sale. The great advantage of the system above described is that articles of very elaborate shape and design can be turned out in one casting" (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1908, p 10).

72. Exports of brassware were valued at $15,734 in 1925, $546 in 1933 and $5,795 in 1940. Exports of silverware peaked at $16,500 in 1928, falling to $4,346 in 1933, maintaining a level above $7,000 annually

the smiths were mainly sold locally.

The cotton sarongs woven by Brunei women compared well in quality with those produced in Malaya. Once again, weaving was centred in the River Village, but after 1930 the market was captured by cheap machine textiles from Japan.[73] An effort had been made in 1908, however, to stimulate the sarong-weaving industry by taking off the import duty on raw materials required for the work.

The making of kajang - a kind of waterproof matting made from the leaves of nipah palm - was quite an important industry and large numbers of bundles were exported annually.

"The inhabitants" - thus Sir John Anderson after visiting Brunei Town in 1906 - "appeared to be keen traders as the launch was surrounded by boats full of brasswork...and of the special gold thread woven sarongs and beds mats which are peculiar to that country. These they were all eager to sell, of course at prices which they considered suitable to our dignity rather than according to the real value of the articles". 74

6. Labour

There were few large-scale employers of labour during the Residential Era. In 1906 the principal enterprises were the Island Trading Syndicate's cutch factory and the Rajah's two coal mines. The

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from 1935 to 1938, but dipping to only $4,019 in 1940. Exports of kajang reached a maximum of $9,636 in 1941 (cf. $4,882 in 1927 and $1,792 in 1931) whilst sarong exports declined from $9,905 in 1926 to a mere $319 in 1933, before recovering to $3,242 in 1941.

73. During the years 1926-41 (excluding 1939) sarongs worth $60,081 were exported from Brunei, compared with imports of $0.4 million. A further $1.5 million of dyed cotton goods came into Brunei during the same timespan.

74. CO 144/80 (5578) Sir J Anderson to CO, No 1 (Labuan), 25 January 1906, paragraph 18.

ITS, Mr McArthur reported in 1904,

"employs either directly as workmen or indirectly as bark collectors and boatmen under contractors upwards of 400 Malays, and pays locally in wages about 4,000 dollars a month. What the people did before this factory was started four years ago I do not know. There was one sago factory at work then which no doubt gave employment to some; but...the population of the town decreased considerably on the loss of the Limbang, and...it is only recently, since the opening of the cutch works, that the people have begun to return to their homes from Sandakan, Labuan and other places along the coast". 75

In 1908 the Rajah employed 250 people at Brooketon and 72 at Buang Tawar. Subsequently, the principal employers, as indicated in Table 18 (overleaf), also included rubber estates, the Government (PWD) and the British Malayan Petroleum Company (BMPC).

There was great flexibility in the labour market. In 1919, for example, many of those who would normally have worked on estates found more remunerative occupations because of the high prices obtainable for sago, jungle produce and fish.[76] Similarly, it was noticed in 1926 that "the more energetic and progressive workers" at the cutch factory were "realizing the advantages of taking up land and forsaking the river life".[77] In the previous year the profitability of jelutong

"complicated the labour problem in the (Belait) district, since the ordinary coolie could make so much more by tapping jelutong that he could not be induced to undertake other work, even of an easier kind, except at the most extravagant rates of pay". 78

There was a large turnover of personnel because Malays preferred to remain their own masters. The Resident commented in 1938:

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75. McArthur, "Report", paragraph 34.
76. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1919, p 4.
77. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1926, p 7.
78. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1925, p 7.

Table 16. Principal Employers in Brunei, 1921-32

Year	Brooketon	Cutch Factory	Rubber Estates	PWD	BMPC	Total
1921	384	450	777	n.a.	nil	1,615
1922	400	450	495	n.a.	n.a.	1,345
1923	364	485	791	n.a.	494	2,134
1924	not available		not available			n.a.
1925	-	470	683	n.a.	520	1,673
1926	-	500	954	n.a.	418	1,872
1927	-	500	1,392	156	683	2,575
1928	-	500	867	n.a.	610	1,977
1929	-	550	1,002	155	633	2,185
1930	-	700	778	117	937	2,532
1931	-	780	696	c150	859	2,485
1932	-	755	609	c200	1,791	3,355

Notes: (1) The total population of Brunei in census years was 25,451 in 1921 and 30,135 in 1931. (For full details, see Appendix 6).

(2) Employment statistics for the years 1906-20 are incomplete. In 1915, however, 252 people were employed on two rubber estates in Temburong district; in 1916, 524 on three estates; and, in 1917, 531 on three estates.

In 1915 about 150 men were employed in the ITC's cutch factory in the capital and a further 700 were engaged upon the collection of mangrove bark and firewood.

(3) By 1938 the ITC cutch factory employed 145 (307 in 1939), rubber estates 561, the PWD 394, the BMPC 1,165 amounting to a total of 2,265.

(4) In 1933 the Resident commented: "It must be remembered that the above figures represent permanent labour forces only. Many more labourers are employed on contract and casual labour" (CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1933, p 22).

Source: compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports (CO 824/1-2).

"There is a large volume of casual labour. A considerable proportion of the indigenous population consists of peasant proprietors who seek... wage-earning employment only as a seasonal occupation to supplement the means of livelihood obtainable from their smallholdings". 79

The wages received frequently did not represent the sole source of income.[80] Mr JL Noakes MBE, writing in 1947, explained that the majority of people in Brunei had two, or more, occupations:

"For example, a man might be engaged in fishing at certain periods of the year, yet he may also have a small rubber garden from which he derives some profit by the labours of himself and his family, and he may cultivate padi in season from which he obtains a considerable proportion of the food required for the year; furthermore he may work jungle produce on occasion, thus supplementing his cash income". 81

After the first rubber estates reached the tapping stage in 1914-15, managers complained of a shortage of labour. This difficulty had to be solved if the rubber industry was to be a success. In Brunei district, planters were faced with the problem of "turning fishermen, jungle workers and gypsies into agricultural labourers". In Temburong district, where three estates were established, the position was more serious because the scant local population provided no field for recruitment of labour unless managers were prepared "to suffer or correct the deficiencies of Brunei Malays from the capital.[82] The "real crux" of the problem was the "lack of population", which could be overcome

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79. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 30.
80. Ibid., pp 31-2.
81. JL Noakes MBE, Sarawak and Brunei: A Report on the 1947 Population Census (Kuching 1950), p 61. Note. Exports of forest produce fell from $26,502 in 1927 to only $9,540 in 1931 and remained below $3,000 annually from 1932 to 1938, except 1935 ($11,406).
82. For such alleged failings, see P Blundell (pen-name), The City of Many Waters (London 1923), pp 142-3.

only "by encouraging immigration in every way".[83]

In 1920 one rubber company complained that

"(a) the labour obtained locally is totally unsuited to rubber plantations;
(b) indentured Chinese labour or Netherlands Indies labour is not allowed;
(c) under the terms of the lease, Tamil labour could not be employed except with the permission of the Government of Brunei;
(d) the system of 'free labour' is unsatisfactory: absconding is rife and difficult to check". 84

"This means they want indentured (Indian) labour", one CO clerk commented.[85]

The High Commissioner explained that before Indian labourers could be allowed to proceed to Brunei it would be necessary to assure the Indian Government that a medical officer and an official of the Labour Department of the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States would be employed. Because of shortage of staff, he was unable to give that assurance, but hoped that by the time the necessary legislation had been passed in Brunei and the sanction of the Indian Government obtained, the position with regard to staff might have improved.[86]

During the rubber depression of late 1920 to 1922 the demand for labour slackened, but revived sharply thereafter. Planters again found difficulty in recruiting sufficient workers, despite the closure (in 1924) of the Rajah's coal mine at Brooketon, which left almost 400

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83. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1918, pp 3-4.
84. CO 531/14 (14030) Rubber Growers' Association to Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 16 March 1920, paragraph 2.
85. Ibid., minute by Beckett, 23 March 1920.
86. CO 531/14 (42295) Sir LN Guillemard (1862-1951) to CO, No 4 (Brunei), 24 July 1920, paragraphs 3-4.

people without work. From 1924, therefore, Indian labourers were recruited. By the end of 1927 there were 427 Tamils (out of an estate labour force of 1,392) working in Brunei. This experiment failed, however, and by 1931 only five Indians were employed by the rubber companies. There were three main reasons for this. First, the slump in the rubber market after 1929 left estates with excess labour. Secondly, companies found difficulty in paying the minimum wages prescribed for Indians whilst rubber prices were at rock bottom. Finally, the Indians themselves were characterized as "unsatisfactory"[87] workers, though no reason for this was given. By contrast, Indians continued to be employed by the BMPC.

Throughout the Residential Era indigenous Malays and Kedayans comprised the bulk of the estate labour force. The balance was made up of Chinese and Javanese (and Indians during the period 1924-31). In 1926 the Resident regretted

"to see some estates still relying on casually-recruited Javanese labour of unknown antecedents. These estates have had continual trouble in consequence". 88

Legislation. A Labour Code, based on that in the FMS (1912),[89] was passed in 1913. This law showed "many of the signs of a transition between indentured labour with its system of penal sanctions and free labour with its civil liberties". Immigrants were examined

"as to their physical capacities and as to the nature of their engage-

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87. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1928, pp 23-4.
88. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1926, p 9.
89. KG Tregonning, A History of Modern Malaya (London 1964), pp 199-201; and Chai Hon Chan, The Development of British Malaya 1896-1909 (Kuala Lumpur 1964), pp 122-130.

ments. Agreements of employment may not exceed one month. The employer is under an obligation to provide proper accommodation, rations and medical services under the general direction of the Controller of Labour. Provision is made for maternity benefits, nurseries for infants and estates' schools. The minimum age for employment is ten years of age. An Indian Fund administered by an Indian Immigration Committee is established on the financial foundation of fees paid by the employers". 90

Labourers entered into either "agreements" or "contracts" with their employers. An "agreement" was a verbal agreement to labour, valid for a maximum of thirty days, or, if a "continuing agreement", until the expiration of a term of notice not exceeding one month. A "contract", on the other hand, was an engagement to labour in writing valid for not more than eighteen months or for not more than 300 days' work. Such contracts were not legal in the cases of Indian and Chinese immigrants after the passage, in 1918, of an amendment to the 1913 Labour Code. For both sets of workers, the employer

"if wishing to complain of 'disobedience to lawful orders, neglect of duty, carelessness in regard to property, wrongful determination of an agreement of service, or neglect or refusal to fulfill or to enter on or commence service', may apprehend such labourer, if he is at the place of work and take him before a magistrate. If the magistrate considers that there was no sufficient ground for such action by the employer and that the labourer was detained an unnecessary length of time, he may order the employer to pay compensation up to ten dollars. The employer may also apprehend on his own responsibility any labourer whom he has reason to believe...is absconding from his service". 91

If an employee broke any agreement or contract knowing that the consequence of so doing would be to cause a stoppage of work and serious loss to the employer, he was liable, on conviction, to a fine not exceeding $100 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six

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90. CO 717/58 (File 29226); draft report of International Labour Office on Labour Conditions in British Malaya 1927, Appendix 1.
91. Ibid.

months.[92]

The Labour Enactment also prescribed the maintenance of house accommodation as ordered by a magistrate and of a sanitary and adequate water supply. Labourers requiring medical treatment had to be sent by their employer to the nearest hospital. Further, "the Resident may require the place of employment to construct and maintain an estate hospital".[93] (See above, p 196, and below, p 290).

In 1923 the jurisdiction of the Controller of Labour (Malaya) was extended to Brunei; and the Brunei State Medical Officer ex-officio became Assistant Controller.[94] Contract service for Chinese labourers was abolished in 1918; and Indians were freed from the provisions of the Labour Code in 1924.

Under a revised law passed in 1932 all labour became free and contract or indentured labour was forbidden. There were to be no penal sanctions for breach of agreement by the labourer. The employer was bound to provide at least 24 days' work in each month for every labourer employed by him and no labourer could be required to work for more than six days in one week or for more than six hours on end. (In the late 1930s the number of hours worked was invariably less than the statutory maximum). The employment of women and young persons on night work or underground was prohibited. Maternity benefit was payable to Indian

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92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
94. Dr OE Fisher recalls that, as the sole doctor in the State (apart from the one employed by the BMPC at Seria), "I never regarded very seriously my duties as Controller of Labour (1937-9)". Letter to the author, 30 September 1984, paragraph 5.

women (all women from 1937) during the period of absence from work of one month before and one month after confinement.[95]

Labour relations in Brunei remained stable before 1941 and strikes were unknown, perhaps because there were no trade unions.[96] The wages paid by the rubber companies, the cutch factory and the Public Works Department were certainly not excessive, but they appear to have covered or exceeded the local cost of living. Minimum monthly income for an unskilled labourer working on rubber estates averaged $14-18 in 1927-30, $9-12 in 1931, and $7.50-12 in 1932-5.[97] A skilled worker was little better remunerated (e.g. $18-24 in 1930, $13-15 in 1931 and $12-15 in 1932-5). On some rubber estates labourers were paid by results, which enabled good tappers to earn more than the rates just mentioned. An extra 50% was received for overtime. Where labour was non-resident, a deliberately low basic wage was paid in conjunction with a relatively high attendance bonus to ensure regularity of attendance at work.[98] Skilled workers employed by the Government and the cutch factory earned much larger sums, of up to $55 a month even in 1931. The highest remuneration was offered by the BMPC: in 1931 an unskilled oil company labourer was

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95. CO 717/58 (File 29226) ILO report, Appendix 1.
96. "There were never any riots or strikes in Brunei during my time (1928-37) there" (Mr HL Fountain, letter to the author, 16 September 1983, paragraph 7). "There were indeed no unions/strikes/or political agitators of whom I ever heard in 1935-7" (Dato PM Linton, letter to the author, 27 March 1984, paragraph 10). "There were no trade unions in Brunei and no political problems came to light" (Mr JG Black, BR 1937-40, letter to the author, 12 April 1983, paragraph 5). "Certainly in my time (1940-1) there was not the hint of a strike or industrial unrest" (Datuk RN Turner, letter to the author, 14 August 1983, paragraph 3J).
97. For purposes of comparison, the Resident's annual salary in 1933 was $8,280 (not including entertainment allowance of $600).
98. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 32.

paid $13 to $33 monthly, whereas an artisan might earn $100.

An adult was reckoned to consume six gantangs of rice a month. The price of second quality rice fell from 48 cents a gantang in 1930 to 23 cents in 1933-4 before creeping back up to 28 cents by 1937. In 1931 the monthly cost of living for an Indian labourer (in the oilfield) was roughly $9 while that of Malays and Chinese "may be put at between $10 and $15 a month".[99] Allotments were set aside to enable employees to grow food. Workers were particularly adept at catching fish, which enabled them to reduce their budget and helped them to subsist.

Presumably, the onset of the Depression, which caused a marked exodus from Brunei, also fostered a quiescent attitude in the labour force. During 1929 the total population of the State was estimated to have fallen from 35,000 in January to about 29,000 at the end of the year. Although 425 Tamil rubber estate workers and associated families were repatriated in 1928-33, employment in the main industries actually held up quite well (see p 238, above). For those remaining in Brunei, many thrown out of work were absorbed by the BMPC or were assisted by Government projects. In 1933 extra provision was made by the latter for public works in the hope that this "will do much to eliminate unemployment in the State".[100]

Apart from wage labourers, the slump also affected the independent entrepreneur and the indigenous smallholders:

"The local Chinese firms" - thus the Resident in 1930 - "found great

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99. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1931, p 13.
100. CO 717/95 (File 13324) statement by Mr TF Carey, 10 October 1932.

difficulty in paying for imported merchandise, and there were one or two bankruptcies. The peasants were forced to realize the hoards of silver dollars, which they had accumulated in the years of plenty when rubber was commanding a good price, although the realization that the intrinsic value of savings in the form of these coins had depreciated owing to the slump in the price of the metal itself, was probably also responsible for the noticeably increased flow of silver dollars into the Treasury". 101

Large numbers of smallholders found that it did not pay to tap their rubber trees and considerable areas went out of tapping. At first they paid more attention to their sago plantations (which had been neglected during the rubber boom). In 1930 exports of sago doubled in weight over the previous year and there was much increased production for local consumption mainly as an insurance against a possible failure of the rice harvest. At year's end, however, the price of sago had also fallen so low that it hardly paid to produce it for export. Similarly, jelutong became uneconomic. Fishing provided a livelihood for a great many people in Brunei district. It was reported in 1931 that, "in addition to fresh fish, which has a ready market locally, a dried prawn industry flourishes...(and) is one of the few which has not been affected by the slump".[102] Dried prawn exports indeed remained comparatively stable ($54,376 in 1929, $46,114 in 1932) in the early 1930s, but thereafter slumped to a nadir of $9,037 in 1937.[103] (No details are

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101. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1930, p 3.
102. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1931, p 11.
103. It was reported in 1919 that the trade in dried prawns "was new and very lucrative both for the fishermen and traders: a start was made in a small way in 1919 by establishing a drying depot on Berbunot Island (in Brunei Bay) and the industry proved so profitable that there is now quite a considerable village (there)". (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1919, p 1). Brunei Bay "certainly offers unparalleled opportunities for development in fishing", it was added.

available concerning how local sales were affected by the slump).

Although there was an increase in arrears of rent, most landholders managed to keep up with their payments.[104] Imports of chandu, tobacco and rice all approximately halved during the years 1927 to 1931.[105] Flour and cocoanut oil showed a slight decrease. Conversely imports of manufactured articles and motor vehicles (brought in mainly by the BMPC) increased sharply. These facts underline the reduced purchasing power of many people because of the depression, on the one hand, and the wealth of the BMPC, on the other.

7. Conclusion

The year 1932 marked the end of an era. Before that time Brunei's economy produced nothing which generated substantial wealth for the country. Apart from the lack of valuable products, developmental handicaps included the extreme isolation of Brunei; the high freight rates charged by the steamship company which monopolized the Singapore-Labuan

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104. The Government rent roll was $19,540 in 1928, $18,705 in 1929 and $19,657 in 1930. Rent arrears at years' end were $112 in 1928, $359 in 1929 and $730 in 1930. In 1933 288 lots involving a sum of $4,257 and an acreage of 2,436 were cancelled for non-payment of rent. Nearly all of these lands were uncultivated (CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1933, p 13). Figures for 1931 and 1932 are not available. By 1938 land rents totalled $28,861. As a relief to those farmers who did not rent land, annual poll tax was reduced in 1933 from $2.00 to 50 cents.

105. Imports of chandu fell from 12,660 tahils in 1926 to only 6,642 in 1931; tobacco imports from 87,528 lbs to 44,638 lbs (of. 108,403 lbs in 1938). Rice imports dropped by half in value ($298,812 in 1927 and $133,410 in 1931) but not in volume (39,730 pikuls in 1927 to 30,515 pikuls in 1931).

line;[106] the additional expense of trans-shipment from Labuan; the lack of population; and the absence of infrastructure (a modern port, roads, skilled labour, professional middle class). The combination of such factors discouraged foreign investment in Brunei and restricted development. Overall, Brunei lacked the money, the people, and the raw materials necessary for economic take-off. From 1932, however, Brunei emerged as a land "flowing with oil and gas",[107] although some twenty years (1932-52) elapsed before the benefits of the new wealth began fully to be felt.

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106. Until 1914 the route was monopolized by the North German Lloyd line. After the outbreak of the Great War, the route was taken over by the Straits Steamship Company (KG Tregonning, Home Port Singapore - Singapore 1967 - pp 45, 103, 104 and 105-6).
107. Mr P Scanlon, letter to the author, 24 August 1983, paragraph 3.

PART III: THE LAND FLOWING WITH OIL AND GAS 1932-1959

CHAPTER SEVEN

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY IN THE 1930s: THE INITIAL IMPACT OF OIL 1932-41

1. Introduction

The first quarter century of the Residential Era had witnessed several substantial achievements including the preservation of the Brunei Sultanate, the prevention of further territorial encroachments by its neighbours (apart from one unfavourable border adjustment), the elimination of Brooke influence within Brunei, the introduction of a more decent administration than had existed before 1906, the rescue of the country's finances, and the introduction of one agricultural product (rubber) which, fluctuating prices notwithstanding, providing many people with unprecedentedly high cash incomes. Overall, the demoralization caused by a prolonged period of decline - political, territorial, economic and demographic - before 1906 was stemmed and a period of consolidation had ensued.

If the year 1906 marked one decisive point of departure, a further watershed was reached in 1932, when the first consignment of petroleum was exported from the Seria field. An isolated and heavily-indebted backwater of little or no political significance before 1932, Brunei has since become one of the richest countries in the world (on a <u>per capita</u> basis) and it is difficult to exaggerate the contrast between Brunei in the days of its poverty and its modern self.

In this chapter, I shall examine the initial impact on social and economic conditions in Brunei of the new wealth derived from petroleum. After treating the exploratory stage (1906-29), I shall examine the economic and social policy adopted in the 1930s, and, in the final section, review the extent of development. But first it is appropriate to take stock of the situation when the oil started to flow (1932).

2. Brunei on the Eve of the Oil Era (1932)

The 1931 census revealed that the total population of Brunei stood at 30,135. The decline in population before 1906 had been turned round into an increase of 38.75% between 1911 and 1931. (At the end of 1927, furthermore, the population may have been as high as 38,378).[1] The proportion of Muslim Malays and Kedayans had declined from 75.9% of the total enumerated in 1911 to 68.7% in 1931. Some of the pagan tribes in outlying areas, such as the Tutongs and Dusuns, were acquiring a "thin veneer" of Muhammadanism.[2] The number of Chinese - mostly traditional Confucians but with a Christian element - had grown considerably (from 736 in 1911 to 2,683 twenty years later); but as a proportion of the total population they remained comparatively insignificant (3.4% in 1911, 8.9% in 1931). This belies their economic importance, for they dominated non-

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1. At the end of 1928 the population was estimated to be 35,000 (BAR 1929, p 18). But during that year (1928), 14,000 people had arrived in Brunei compared with 17,500 who left: in other words there was a net loss of 3,500 people. Hence the population at the beginning of 1928 was 38,500 (35,000 + 3,500), from which must be deducted the natural increase during the year (births 1,074 less deaths 952 = 122). This gives a final population figure of 38,378 (38,500 - 122).
2. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 4.

European business and retailing in Brunei. In 1932, indeed, a loan of $15,000 was made by the Government to "the only local Malay trader of standing" to enable him "to tide over the present crisis and so prevent the Chinese from having a monopoly of Brunei trade".[3] The general rate of natural population increase was not rapid: in 1927, for example, the number of excess births was a mere 22. The average rate of natural increase in the years 1928-32 was just above 1% annually.

The population remained concentrated in Brunei-Muara district, which had increased from 15,910 in 1911 to 18,281 twenty years later; but this represented a fall in its proportion of the total population of the State (73.2% to 60.7%). Much of the gain had been made by Belait district, the least populous in 1911 (1,126 or 5.2%), which stood at 3,897 (12.9%) by 1931. Tutong had also slightly increased its percentage share of the total. The district which had shown the fastest growth in the decade 1911-21, i.e. Temburong, had since experienced a fall in population from 2,912 in 1921 to only 2,306 in 1931. (One possible explanation is the slump in the rubber industry in 1931; but 1921 was also a depression year).

Brunei Town, with 10,453 inhabitants, remained the only significant settlement in the country. More than one in every three people in Brunei still lived in the capital. Its nearest competitor - Kuala Belait - had only 1,193 inhabitants, whilst Seria was not yet significant enough to be recorded in the census returns. Since the

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3. CO 717/95 (File 13324): statement by Mr TF Carey, 10 October 1932, covering the Brunei Estimates for 1933.

beginning of the Residential Era the colliery settlement at Brooketon (Muara Damit) had dwindled after the closure of the Rajah's coal mine in 1924. Conversely, villages such as Kuala Tutong, Labi and Berbunot were gaining in population and commercial activity.

Other features of the Brunei populace included the rarity of polygamy; overcrowding in houses (ten per dwelling in the capital, eight in Kuala Belait); the low literacy rate (14% of indigenous men, 2.6% of women); and the imbalance in the Chinese population (three women to every ten men). Certainly in comparison with what followed, the structure and distribution of population had not altered radically since the beginning of the Residential Era. The 1931 census of Brunei, Mr JL Noakes MBE commented in 1947,

"covered a population almost wholly indigenous, comparatively secluded and unaffected by the economic disturbances of the modern world because the oilfields had scarcely been opened at that date". 4

Of 12,576 "economically active" people in 1931, three quarters were engaged in "agriculture, forestry and fishing" and 1,680 in "mining and manufacturing", compared with only 141 in public service and 58 in the professions.[5]

Following the development of the oil industry, however, the demography of Brunei underwent substantial changes, as will be seen in due course.

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4. JL Noakes MBE, Sarawak and Brunei: A Report on the 1947 Population Census (Kuching 1950), p 10 (paragraph 65).
5. CA Vlieland, A Report on the 1931 Census and on Certain Problems of Vital Statistics (Crown Agents, n.d.), paragraph 363.

3. Background to the Oil Industry (1906-32)

(a) Exploration 1906-29. Any company wishing to search for minerals in Brunei was required to obtain a short-term "prospecting licence" from the Government. Before beginning long-term extraction of crude oil from the ground, a further "mining lease" was necessary. Such licences and leases were issued by the Resident, subject to the sanction of the High Commissioner when the area exceeded five square miles.

In 1909 a mining lease, originally applied for in early 1907,[6] was granted to Mr CE Gadelius, a Danish general merchant based in Singapore, who sub-leased his rights to the Shanghai-Langkat Company.[7] This concern conducted desultory operations in the Jerudong district (about ten miles from the capital) until 1916. For a brief period (1915-17) they also acquired a licence in their own name in Tutong district, where their efforts were equally unsuccessful. To little local regret, they withdrew from Brunei in 1917.

Oil had been discovered in the Baram district of Sarawak as early as 1895, but it was not until 1909 that the Rajah finally granted permission to the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company (ASPC) - a subsidiary of the Shell Group - to exploit the field. This company immediately sought a concession in Brunei, but found the Government's terms unacceptable. In 1911 the ASPC wished to lay a pipeline from their Miri field and through Brunei's territory to the deep water harbour at Brooketon, where they hoped to site an oil refinery. The Rajah appealed to the Colonial

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6. CO 531/1 (1331, 2127 & 33147); CO 531/2 (30498); & CO 273/388 (41486).
7. In full: "Maatschappij Mijn-Bosh-en Landbouwexploitatie in Langkat".

Office for sovereignty over Muara Damit to be transferred to Sarawak so that he might supervise the development of the refinery.[8] This was refused; but no objection was raised to the building of the refinery itself. The ASPC also applied for a licence in Brunei but continued to find the terms too onerous and again withdrew.

In 1913 the ASPC was granted a licence to prospect in Tutong. They continued operations there until 1922, but not very energetically because of the difficulties created by the First World War and the need to concentrate on the Miri field, which was already in production.

Exploration in Belait commenced in March 1911, when a licence to prospect for oil was granted to the British Borneo Petroleum Syndicate (BBPS),[9] which also held exclusive oil prospecting rights in North Borneo. This concern explored energetically in Brunei in 1912-13, but, failing to discover oil, rapidly ran out of capital. After this time it ceased to be a <u>bona fide</u> mining company and became a mere speculator. Towards the end of 1913, therefore, the BBPS opened negotiations with the ASPC for the formation of a new company to search for oil. Whilst these talks were proceeding the Rajah (in the name of his youngest son) advanced a claim to exclusive mineral rights in Brunei by virtue of (defunct) concessions originally granted in 1883 and 1890. This claim was demonstrably spurious; but two years passed before the Rajah would accept the fact.[10] On 11

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8. CO 531/7 (1868) Rajah to Anderson, 14 January 1914; Anderson to Rajah, 26 January 1914.
9. The BBPS was registered on 4 May 1912. Beforehand, it was called the British Borneo and Burma Petroleum Syndicate.
10. See above, pp 94-6.

November 1914 the ASPC withdrew from the proposed arrangement with the BBPS because of an unfavourable report by their geologist and because the BBPS had failed to present a prospecting licence and mining lease by their deadline. The Brooke claim contributed to this delay.

Lacking the capacity after 1914 to carry out exploration or mining on their own account, the BBPS entered similar negotiations with a succession of other companies, but again without success. First, the Nederlandsche Koloniale Petroleum Maatschappij (NKPM), a subsidiary of Standard Oil of California; then, in 1918, with the D'Arcy Exploration Company for the formation of a new firm which would finance mining operations in Brunei. In 1919 the D'Arcy company conducted a preliminary geological survey but decided not to proceed further with the proposed arrangement with the BBPS. The latter then sought capital from the Japanese Kuhara Company, but this also failed. Finally, renewed talks between the BBPS and the ASPC resulted (in 1922) in the creation of the British Malayan Petroleum Company with an initial capital of £100,000. Negotiations on the terms of the leases and licences lasted from 1922 to 1924. The BMPC also took over the ASPC's licence in Tutong. Vigorous mining operations were now inaugurated; oil was discovered in commercial quantities in 1929, the first consignment being exported in 1932.

(b) British Policy 1906-24. In pre-Residential Brunei a number of speculators had been interested in the possibility of discovering oill there.[11] Taking advantage of the financial plight of Sultan Hashim, they

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11. According to Mr GC Harper the first well to be drilled in Brunei

hoped to gain valuable concessions very cheaply to resell later for substantial profits. The Foreign Office brought pressure to bear on the Sultan to prevent him granting such "improper" concessions (e.g. to Inche Taha in 1904) in order to forestall the prejudice of the future revenue of a possible Residency. Sultan Hashim denounced such interference as meaning, practically, the loss of Brunei's independence.[12]

Heavy mineral oil was discovered in Brunei during March 1903 at the Rajah's coal mine at Buang Tawar on Berembang Island. What influence did this have upon the decision to appoint a Resident? It is true that when first reports were received Mr Stubbs had suggested that, if the oil proved a paying property, it would "help to solve the problem of how to provide funds for a decent administration of what is left of Brunei".[13] By the time Mr McArthur's "Report" was received, however, the optimistic hopes of two years earlier had evaporated. The oil, which slowly oozed out just as it had done since first being struck by the accidental blow of a pick, could not be described as

> "a valuable resource and I believe the Rajah and his officers consider it a matter for regret that its discovery should have interfered with the working of coal on Pulau Berembang". 14

The oil was still issuing gently as late as 1928,[15] but it brought little

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with the specific purpose of producing oil was located at Ayer Bekunchi in 1899. The well was dry. (The Discovery and Development of the Seria Oilfield - Bandar Seri Begawan 1975 - p 1).

12. FO 12/126 p 109, MSH McArthur to Secretary to High Commissioner, No 19, 15 July 1904, paragraph 1.
13. CO 144/77 (16635) minute by Mr RE Stubbs, 8 May 1903.
14. FO 572/39 MSH McArthur, "Report on Brunei in 1904", paragraph 89.
15. CO 604/13 Sarawak Gazette, 1 October 1928, p 218.

or no profit to the Rajah. An analysis of its commercial qualities in 1912 produced disappointing results.[16]

After the introduction of a Resident in 1906 the British Government was anxious to encourage bona fide mining companies to invest in Brunei, in the hope that, if oil were to be found, its exploitation would bring revenue to the administration and prosperity to the country. In 1906-7 it was suggested, further, that the presence of Europeans in the Sultanate would "tend to check Sir Charles Brooke's intrigues".[17]

The Brunei Mining Enactment of 1908 sought to balance a number of interests. On the one hand, provisions were made to ensure honest mining operations, by giving the Government the right of re-entry if it was dissatisfied with the rate of working, and by laying down other conditions, such as maximum limits for the area and duration of mining leases. On the other hand, a British character clause was included. This meant that 60% of the capital of any company involved in mining (as opposed to prospecting) in Brunei should be held by British subjects, that a majority of directors should be British, and that the company should be registered in British territory. Provision was made, also, for securing an adequate supply of oil for the Royal Navy and for the refining in Brunei or in British territory of all oil which might be won.[18]

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16. CO 531/4 (506) Mr H Chevallier to Secretary to High Commissioner, 30 November 1912. (This oil, mixed with sand, was used in Labuan to form road surfaces suitable for light - bullock cart - traffic). Dato WH Doughty (1886-1971), interviewed by Professor DE Brown (late 1960s) - tape recording courtesy of Professor Brown.
17. CO 531/1 (1331) minute by Stubbs, 10 January 1907.
18. A copy of the 1908 Mining Enactment is not available. Its provisions may be gleaned from scattered sources, such as CO 531/2 (39830).

In practice such conditions were not always insisted upon. It proved impossible to demand complete compliance with the British character clause; considerable leniency was shown towards the BBPS, which was incapable, after 1914, of prospecting; the BMPC was permitted to refine its oil in Sarawak, which did not become British territory until 1946; and the terms concerning the duration and area of a lease were evaded, when it became necessary, by the simple expedient of passing a new enactment (1920)[19] which allowed more favourable terms demanded by the capitalists with whom the Crown Agents had been in negotiation (in this case, the D'Arcy Exploration Company) to be conceded.

Whitehall's attitude - it was Whitehall which controlled the negotiations[20] - towards non-British petroleum companies wishing to operate in Brunei fluctuated. The Shanghai-Langkat company, for example, was registered in Batavia, and British subjects held less than 60% of its capital. No objection was raised, nevertheless, to the sub-lease of Mr Gadelius's rights to this company. It was thought that HM Government's interests were protected by the Mining Enactment (1908)

"and having regard to the pressing...need for attracting capital to Brunei...no attempt should be made to oppose the transfer of the concession to a company which is not of British nationality". 21

Similarly, in 1911 Sir William Treacher, chairman of the 'British Borneo' Syndicate, protested to Whitehall that a licence had been granted to the Shell Group (i.e. the ASPC), 70% of whose capital was in non-

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19. CO 852/140 (File 8).
20. I am assured that this was true even in the 1950s (Mr ER Bevington CMG CEng, letter to the author, 2 September 1983, paragraph 5).
21. CO 531/3 (22867) Admiralty to Colonial Office, 11 July 1911.

British hands.[22] Mr Stubbs shared Sir William's views concerning the "objectionability" of foreigners, but added:

"Brunei was not quite like other places: its main need was capital and for my part I didn't mind where the capital came from so long as it came". 23

It transpired that Sir William himself had been in undisclosed negotiation with the Shell Group for the transfer of the 'British Borneo' Syndicate's leases.

In the period 1911-13 the Brunei Resident believed that the British Borneo syndicate was adopting energetic measures and incurring heavy expenditure in the search for oil whereas the alleged objective of the ASPC was

"(a) to exclude all other prospectors from Brunei if possible until (b) the company had fully exploited and tested its Miri oilfield in a south-westerly direction...and (c) until the situation is clear whether the BBPS strikes a paying field in Belait and/or the Shanghai-Langkat win oil at Jerudong - when the ASPC will decide whether its pipeline shall run to Kedurong in Sarawak or Muara Island in Brunei...I need not point out again the vital importance to Brunei of expeditiously obtaining...a paying field. Brunei has no other hope of revenue. The ASPC have no desire to exploit Brunei: delay is their object". 24

The Colonial Office had adopted precisely the opposite view. In September 1911 Mr Collins found the representative of the ASPC "businesslike and very reasonable" and thought that

"it would be a more paying thing for Brunei to put the whole of their oil industry...into the hands of a substantial company, like the ASPC, which intends to run the industry and is not merely hunting a concession". 25

Whatever may have been the case before 1914, it is clear that

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22. CO 531/3 (10403) Treacher to Stubbs, 30 March 1911.
23. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 3 May 1911.
24. CO 531/5 (311 13/14) memorandum by Lee-Warner, 10 November 1913.
25. CO 531/3 (28853) minute by Collins, 9 September 1911.

thereafter the BBPS lacked capital resources to prospect for oil and became a mere speculator. Ironically, the Colonial Office now switched its backing to this syndicate (because it was British), whereas successive High Commissioners and Residents, who had previously viewed it favourably, were anxious to exclude it from Brunei so that they could deal with people who would develop any oilfield which might exist, thus providing the country with a revenue, and, hence, a better administration.

In 1914 and again in 1916 neither the Admiralty nor the Colonial Office objected to the BBPS coming to terms with the predominantly Dutch ASPC or, subsequently, the NKPM, so long as the British character clause was retained in any new company which was to be set up, i.e. that the company should be nominally British. Thereafter HM Government adopted a harder line, as recounted by Mr GEA Grindle:

"Before the war - and early in the war - both we (CO) and the Admiralty were disposed to allow foreign capital in a British oil company in a protectorate...Since the war, and especially since the development of the policy of controlling shipping by withholding bunker coal, the Admiralty's views on the subject have altered. They are now, we gather, going to insist on strict British control of all oil companies (i.e. mining companies)...

Before the war we were inclined to allow them (the BBPS) to get their capital from the Standard Oil when the Shell people broke with them. If the Admiralty policy is to be adopted and carried out strictly, the Syndicate will have to raise at least 51% of their capital from British subjects". 26

In 1916 the NKPM was endeavouring to secure a relaxation of the British character clause. The Admiralty, however, would have regarded it as unfortunate

"if, at a time when British enterprise is much pre-occupied in other directions, oil-bearing territory under British influence were permanently

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26. CO 531/8 (53506) minute by Mr G Grindle, 3 March 1916.

placed under control which, though perhaps nominally British, would be actually foreign and located in foreign territory...My Lords see no reason why the exploitation of oil lands within the Empire should not be retained in British hands". 27

Mr Grindle was not convinced that enough British capital would be forthcoming, "but we are bound to try".[28] Hence the BBPS (and the Shanghai-Langkat, which was also applying for a lease at this time) were informed that they must comply with the British character clause. Shortly afterwards the NKPM withdrew from its arrangement with the BBPS. With regard to the Shanghai-Langkat's application, Mr Grindle commented:

"The question of registration in Batavia is more important than the proportion of British capital as it gives the company a foreign nationality with the right to diplomatic intervention when we treat it in a high-handed manner". 29

He recommended, therefore, that the Shanghai-Langkat should be ruled out as not complying at all with the model and that, if they wanted a mining lease, they would have to form a new company.

The BBPS, having failed to come to terms, first with the ASPC and then the NKPM, next (1917) requested relief until one year after the conclusion of the war. HM Government agreed to waive minimum royalty and to reduce rent per acre from fifty cents to ten. The CO was well aware that the syndicate did not have the capacity to do any work; but the Admiralty favoured "marking time" in oil development in the hope that British capital would be forthcoming after the war.[30]

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27. CO 531/10 (29448) Admiralty to CO, 22 June 1916.
28. As note 26.
29. CO 531/8 (53506) minute by Grindle, 1 December 1915.
30. CO 531/11 (9748) minute by Grindle, 6 March 1917. It would be "an advantage", he added, "to have a syndicate whose British sympathies are above suspicion in possession of this area".

Meanwhile Sir Arthur Young, the High Commissioner in Singapore, was urging that the BBPS should be obliged either to prospect or to give up their licences so that arrangements could be made with a company that would. The Colonial Office resisted this pressure because the BBPS had settled terms with the D'Arcy Company, which conducted a cursory geological survey, before deciding that the results were not sufficiently encouraging to warrant further interest in Brunei. The BBPS then turned to the Japanese Kuhara Company for capital.[31] HM Government raise no objection to Japanese prospecting in Brunei but insisted that any newly-created mining company would have to comply with the British character clause. The Admiralty's attitude was coloured by the belief that, hitherto, the unsuccessful search for oil indicated that there was not a commercial field in Brunei and that, if the Japanese were "prepared to sink capital in further exploration of this apparently unpromising area, the benefit of any such development would partly accrue to HM Government".[32] For this reason, the extension of Japanese activities in this region was permitted. The Kuhara company quickly lost interest, however, whereupon the BBPS resumed talks with the ASPC, reaching agreement in April 1922.

How far did HM Government's backing of the BBPS delay the discovery of oil in Brunei? On 20 January 1917 Sir Arthur Young invited attention to the fact that the capital of the BBPS amounted to a mere

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31. CO 531/15 (33761) minute by Grindle, 14 July 1922. Mr Grindle added: "It is true that the Petroleum Department (of the Board of Trade) are agitating for a withdrawal of the British character restrictions, but I take it even they would draw the line at the Kuhara Company".
32. CO 531/16 (475) Admiralty to CO, 3 January 1922, paragraph 2.

£9,446. With these "limited resources", he pointed out,

"this syndicate is not in a position to develop any concession, and must, by force of circumstances, confine its activities to sub-leasing or otherwise disposing of its concessions". 33

In the following March, Sir Arthur added that the syndicate had failed to comply even with the relief terms offered in 1917. Despite this, he noted, the syndicate had expected in 1914 to receive shares worth £400,000 in a new company which it was proposed to set up with the ASPC for the exploitation of oil in Brunei. In short, Sir Arthur had been "reluctantly forced to the conclusion that this syndicate is not a bona fide mining company but merely a pauper with a valuable property for sale". The syndicate possessed a property which it could not persuade others to work and which it was incapable of working itself. Hence the BBPS was really a detriment to the interests of Brunei, for, if it could be ousted, the Brunei Government would be in a position to deal directly with capitalists. Sir Arthur recommended that, if the company now failed to pay its arrears of rent, "its application for a (new) prospecting licence should ...be definitely and finally refused".[34]

No such action was taken by the Colonial Office because, unknown to the High Commissioner, the BBPS was near to completing an arrangement with the D'Arcy Syndicate. The latter applied, also, for a prospecting licence covering all Brunei, with the exception of those areas already granted to the BBPS in Belait and to the ASPC in Tutong.

On 14 December 1920 a new High Commissioner, Sir Laurence

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33. CO 531/11 (44997) Young to CO, Brunei (confidential), 20 July 1917, paragraph 1.
34. CO 531/12 (25302) Young to CO, Brunei (confidential), 28 March 1918, paragraph 39.

Guillemard, considered the situation to be most unsatisfactory because the BBPS/D'Arcy people were not attempting to work, were paying the Government nothing, and were blocking applications from other companies. Whitehall was unwilling to force out the BBPS in the hope that Brunei's oil could be developed by a British concern. First, the syndicate itself was backed by some influential people and companies.[35] Secondly, before the Great War, it had done honest work and expended a large amount of capital (£40,000). The Colonial Office felt strongly that the syndicate deserved a chance to get some return on this investment.[36] Further, in 1917, it was felt that the BBPS had been so open in its dealings with the Colonial Office that "it would almost be sharp practice to insist on our rights" (i.e. of re-entry, under the terms of mining legislation, on the grounds of the company's failure to comply with the continuous working clause). At that time the Colonial Office waived this right and let the BBPS stay on if they paid rent until one year after the war. When agreement was reached between the BBPS and ASPC in 1922 Mr Grindle recommended that

"whatever the strict legal position may be we are bound to let this agreement go through as a matter of equity and all round fair dealing. And it is distinctly to the public advantage that the State of Brunei should have the Shell to deal with instead of the syndicate. Brunei badly wants oil revenue, but will never get any except from some powerful corporation,

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35. Directors included Sir William Treacher (Chairman until 1916); Sir John Anderson (1852-1924) of the Guthrie Company (not to be confused with the eponymous Governor of the Straits Settlements, 1904-11); the Hon A Stafford Northcote; and Mr W Keswick MP. Corporate investors included Guthrie and Company, Erlich and Company, and Ricardo and Posten.
36. CO 531/16 (19390) minute by Sir G Grindle, 6 May 1922.

such as the Shell".[37]

When considering the delay caused by the BBPS, the situation within Brunei itself must be borne in mind. First, the ports of Belait and Tutong were closed for several months each year because of the monsoon. Secondly, the effect of the Great War must not be under-estimated. In 1920 the Petroleum Department noted that, despite seven years' working, the ASPC appeared to have achieved little in Tutong. Sir Laurence Gillemard considered, however, that the company had done reasonable work "in view of the paramount necessity for concentrating on production at Miri during the War".[38] Hence even the ASPC may not have been able to expedite matters in Belait. Thirdly, extremely heavy expenditure had to be incurred before even prospecting could begin: the Belait district was inaccessible, rendering extremely difficult the transport of staff and equipment; climatic conditions were adverse; the district was entirely unexplored and consequently no adequate maps were in existence; the BBPS therefore had to carry out a large amount of topographical surveying work in conjunction with geological examination "which was thereby very materially retarded".[39] It seems, moreover, that both the NKPM and the D'Arcy withdrew from their agreements with the BBPS primarily because they had concluded that there was not a commercial oilfield in Brunei.

With regard to the ASPC, it had been suggested before the war that

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37. Ibid.
38. CO 531/14 (52522) Guillemard to CO, No 8 (Brunei), 25 September 1920, paragraph 2.
39. CO 531/5 (12777) BBPS to CO, 16 April 1913, paragraph 5.

"procrastination" was their aim: it may be that, even if they had been in possession of the BBPS's rights in 1914-22, especially in view of unavoidable delays caused by war, matters would not have advanced quicker.[40] Efforts were not helped by the constant delays caused by correspondence passing between Brunei, Singapore and London. The terms of the 150 square miles licence and mining lease first applied for by the BBPS in late 1913 were not finally settled until 1924.

Did HM Government secure the best terms for the Government and people of Brunei? The Colonial Office faced a dilemma: on the one hand, they wanted maximum revenue for the Brunei Government; on the other, they did not wish to impose conditions so prohibitive as to discourage potential investors. Capitalists, by presenting a 'take it or leave it' attitude, tended to have the upper hand. Time and again the Colonial Office was obliged to make concessions demanded by one company or another. There were two outside influences. First, the extremely favourable terms granted by the Rajah to the ASPC for the Miri field, which meant that Shell would tend to concentrate on Sarawak if comparatively unfavourable

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40. In 1914, on the other hand, Mr Douglas (the Resident in Brunei) believed that the ASPC were almost certain that there was an oilfield in Belait because of the similarity of the geological formation with that of Miri district. The Resident reported that "good heavy oil may be considered proved. It would certainly have been proved earlier if the company had not been endeavouring to obtain better terms from the Colonial Office". (CO 531/6: 2344, Quarterly Report by FW Douglas, 3 December 1914). Three weeks after the ASPC withdrew, indeed, a show of oil was discovered by the BBPS at Labi in November 1914: but not in commercial quantities.

It appears that the ASPC pulled out in 1914 in the belief that the BBPS had nowhere else to turn for capital. This might have been a costly mistake for Shell, had not their rivals deemed Brunei unworthy of further investment after preliminary investigation.

terms were demanded by the Brunei Government; this, indeed, contributed to the ASPC's decision to withdraw from its proposed arrangement with the BBPS in 1914. Secondly, companies made comparisons between terms offered in other parts of the Commonwealth, e.g. Trinidad and Burma, and those being asked for by Brunei: this, too, sometimes led to concessions having to be made by the Colonial Office.

In 1924 the BMPC won terms of royalty of 2/- a ton of oil (with the Government retaining the option of taking 10% in kind).[41] In 1923 the Petroleum Department pointed out to the Colonial Office that two shillings had come to be regarded as an inadequate rate. The Trinidad Government, for example, was attempting to devise a means of securing from the oil industry a larger contribution to revenue. Mr Gent, at the Colonial Office, however, took the view that negotiations with the BMPC were so far advanced that no alteration could be made. Mr Beckett agreed: "Besides, Malaya is a gamble and we shall be lucky to get anything".[42]

By this time disappointment with regard to Brunei had become so routine that a frame of mind had arisen in the Colonial Office which did not expect a commercial oilfield to be found in Brunei. This contributed to a willingness to grant generous concessionary terms. It was only after the existence of oil had been proved and began to be exported in

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41. Cf. 1913 when the rate in Burma was four shillings per ton. At that time, indeed, the Colonial Office was considering a reduction of the royalty to only 1/6 per ton on any production above 100,000 tons annually. But this idea was dropped.

42. CO 531/17 (10477) minute by Mr GEJ Gent (1895-1948), 6 March 1923, with marginal comment by Mr H Beckett (1891-1952). The Colonial Office, loosely, regarded Brunei as part of 'Malaya'; cf. p 119 (above).

large quantities that dissatisfaction arose. Nevertheless the 10% option in kind (at six months' notice) was retained, the oil to be delivered at any place in the territory nominated by the Government.

To sum up, the British policy was to encourage bona fide mining operations in Brunei, on the one hand, and to keep the oilfields in the control of a British company, on the other. During the years 1913-22 these two aims were mutually exclusive. The British-owned BBPS had insufficient capital; whereas the Shell Group had adequate capital but was owned largely by foreigners. This dichotomy was not resolved until 1922, when a new Shell subsidiary, the BMPC, was formed to take over the rights of the ASPC and the BBPS in Brunei. Shell agreed, further, to pay the BBPS one shilling for every ton of oil produced at Seria. Given the difficulties created by the Great War and the lack of infrastructure in Brunei, the discovery of the oilfield was probably not much delayed by the BBPS's inability to prospect after 1913. The local authorities were anxious to exclude the BBPS; but the Colonial Office noted that the company had spent much money with no return in 1911-13, and felt that the syndicate deserved a chance to get some return on this investment "if only to encourage other people to spend their money on oil prospecting".[43] With regard to the terms offered to the companies, they were reasonable, given the apparently unpromising nature of Brunei.

(c) The Operations of the BMPC. In late 1922 the ASPC's prospecting licence in Tutong was renewed under the name of the British Malayan Petroleum Company. On 28 July 1923 agreement was reached whereby

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43. CO 531/16 (19390) minute by Grindle, 6 May 1922.

the BMPC took over the interests of the BBPS in Belait district. Operations were commenced on such a scale - not just drilling, but also the construction of infrastructure (roads, a railway, bungalows, wharves and offices) - that the BMPC must have been in little doubt that there was oil to be found in Belait. In Tutong, by contrast, the company did very little work. In 1924 European staff (in Belait) was increased: twelve geologists alone were employed. Towards the end of 1927, favourable indications of oil were discovered along the seashore between the Belait and Tutong Rivers:

"It is early to prophesy" - thus Mr Pretty in 1927 - "but high hopes are entertained that one day there will be a big oilfield here". 44

In April 1929 oil was struck about ten miles north-west of Kuala Belait close to the Seria River, and the well was producing, though with a somewhat reduced flow, by the end of the year. It was not until the middle of 1930, however, that it became clear that a commercial oilfield had been found at Seria. But for contemporary world over-production, export of petroleum might have begun that year. Nevertheless the company proceeded with a "thorough investigation" of the extent of the field and it was "very gratifying" to the Government

"that, at a time when the oil industry throughout the world is restricting its production, the steady development of the Brunei field is being proceeded with". 45

A pipeline was constructed from Seria to the oil refinery across the border at Lutong in Sarawak and oil production for export commenced in the first quarter of 1932.

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44. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1927, p 7.
45. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1930, p 9.

By 1935 Brunei had become the third largest producer of oil in the British Commonwealth, its annual production of 90 million gallons being exceeded only by Trinidad (335 million) and Burma (249 million). It was, moreover, a very high quality petrol

"and the whole of the aviation spirit used overseas by the Royal Air Force and the bulk of the spirit they use in the United Kingdom is drawn from Brunei. With the expansion of the Royal Air Force we may reckon on the maintenance of the output from Brunei". 46

Within three more years, when 111 wells had been completed or were in the course of drilling in the Seria field, the BMPC had become the largest single oil producer in the Colonial Empire.[47]

3. Economic and Social Policy in the 1930s

(a) The Financial Position in 1932. The Straits Times suggested in 1934 that "few parts of the world suffered as little as...Brunei during the slump".[48] As far as the Government was concerned, this may well have been true. Certain projects, such as the establishment of a Forestry Department, had to be deferred, whilst medical and educational programmes were slowed down. But, by dint of strict control of expenditure and increases in certain taxes (such as higher import duties, from 1929, on tobacco, petroleum and matches), expenditure remained within bounds. Although the Depression delayed growth, it had not resulted in retrenchment.

The financial position of the Government had not altered

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46. CO 717/110 (File 51535) minute by Gent, 19 March 1935. "So long as the wells last", added Mr HR Cowell (1877-1967).
47. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 16. Net oil production amounted to 695,904 long tons, plus 3,195m cubic feet of gas.
48. CO 604/19 Sarawak Gazette, 2 July 1934, p 75 (quoting the Straits Times).

significantly for the worse. At the end of 1928 the Brunei Public Debt stood at $413,000 (or the equivalent of substantially more than one year's total revenue). Excluding this debt from the account, Brunei had surplus assets of $242,000 including an ORRF of $45,791. By September 1932 the surplus assets had decreased, but only to $191,334 (because of an appropriation, in 1930, of $50,000 to pay for the construction of a wharf in the capital), while the ORRF had almost doubled and the National Debt had been reduced by a further $24,000.

The table (below) shows that, despite the slump in exports, Brunei's revenue was little affected during the Depression - it was actually higher in 1932 than it had been in 1929 - thanks to the duties imposed on the vast amount of machinery and other manufactures brought in by the oil company.

Table 17. The Financial Position of Brunei During the Great Depression ($ Straits).

Year	Income	Expenditure	Trade:- Imports	Exports	Total
1929	345,290	344,092	1,484,293	1,251,335	2,735,628
1930	333,069	373,604*	2,536,422	807,449	3,343,871
1931	342,011	322,791	2,193,511	501,494	2,695,005
1932	362,403	334,328	2,430,247	1,505,738	3,935,985

Note: * includes $50,000 for the Brunei Town wharf.

Source: Brunei Annual Reports.

(b) <u>The 1935 Policy.</u> In late 1932 the General Manager of the BMPC assured the Resident, Mr TF Carey, that oil royalties of not less than $200,000 could be anticipated during the coming year. Mr Carey expected a revenue surplus of about $50,000, with which he proposed to launch a Reserve Fund. It was hoped that this would ultimately reach the amount of a normal year's revenue.[49]

"It is good to see" - thus Mr NE Costar at the Colonial Office - "that they are not going to spend up to the hilt during their years of prosperity and that they are creating a reserve fund...Experience of the slump in all the territories has shown the advisability of forming such a reserve fund to be drawn upon during times of economic stress, and, in the case of a wasting asset like oil, this is all the more desirable". 50

Despite burgeoning oil revenues a cautious financial policy was adopted because of the uncertainty of future income from oil. The "apparently prosperous financial condition of the State", the new Resident, Mr RE Turnbull, commented at the beginning of 1935

"is somewhat falsified by the uncertainty attaching to the future of oil revenues, but it is probable that the revenue from this source is approaching its maximum and will remain comparatively stabilized over a period of years". 51

Later in 1935 an estimate of the oil resources of the State was attempted and on the basis of these findings a financial and social policy for Brunei was prepared.

The BMPC considered that "a reasonably conservative estimate" of the total royalties payable on oil and gas after 1 July 1935 was £400,000 ($3.4 million) - equivalent to a production of four million tons

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49. CO 717/95 (File 13324) memorandum by Carey, 10 October 1932.
50. CO 717/102 (File 33313) minute by Mr (later Sir) NE Costar (b 1909), 5 March 1934.
51. CO 717/110 (File 51535) memo' by Turnbull, 22 January 1935, para' 4.

of oil.[52] This estimate covered only the proven reserves. The Resident considered, therefore, that $5 million was not an unduly optimistic calculation.[53] The General Manager of the BMPC described his own figure as "an intelligent guess" and supposed that a life of at least thirty years could be expected for the oilfield. After these reserves were exhausted, the country would revert to its former poverty. Meanwhile, oil royalties of about $200,000 annually might be expected.[54]

It was decided to redeem the FMS loan as quickly as possible. Since 1920 a fixed sum of $20,000 had been set aside annually for repayment of interest (charged at 4%) and principal. This rate of interest was higher than current rates on Brunei's investments, so arrangements were made to wipe out the debt before the end of the following year (1936).

In 1935 Sir Shenton Thomas, the High Commissioner, visited the Sultanate in order to discuss a future financial policy with the Resident, Mr RE Turnbull. He was warned by the latter that, at the present rate of working, known reserves of oil would be exhausted within ten years (i.e. by 1945). Mr Turnbull, making allowances for probable new discoveries, proposed, therefore, to base the State's financial policy on the estimated position fifteen years hence (1950), which was considered likely to be the crucial time with regard to the oil industry:

"A too conservative policy", he argued, "will cramp development; moreover, wise spending now will increase our revenues apart from oil royalties and enable us better to face the bugbear of increasing annually recurrent expenditure". 55

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52. Ibid., Sir TSW Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) No 88, 10 September 1935, paragraphs 3-4.
53. Ibid., memorandum by RE Turnbull, 4 June 1935, paragraph 2.
54. Ibid., Thomas to CO, 10 September 1935, paragraph 4.
55. Ibid., memorandum by Turnbull, 4 June 1935, paragraph 4.

'Annually recurrent' expenditure meant that which was "strictly unavoidable". It would be inadvisable, he cautioned,

"to adopt in Brunei the comparative distribution of expenditure between the several departments which obtains in similar states possessing more stable revenue. It will be necessary...to pay more attention to revenue-producing departments, and less to financially unremunerative public services, such as medical and health services and education". 56

The State was already spending 9% of its budget on health care, most of which was annually recurrent. There was an adequate hospital in the capital and another "built on very ambitious lines" by the oil company in Kuala Belait; in addition there were smaller 'hospitals' in Tutong and Temburong, which were "often vacant and never full". The dispensary services were "by no means (?used) to the limit of their potentialities". It was "difficult to encourage the use of the new medical services; once established and accepted, however, their withdrawal would be disastrous". But any further increases in medical expenditure ought to be approached with "the greatest caution".

A long term forestry policy was in the course of consideration by the new Director of that department. The Agricultural Department, which it was hoped would ultimately be revenue-producing, demanded special attention. Its activities, it was feared, would necessarily be limited by the paucity (in numbers) of the State's agricultural population.

Sir Shenton Thomas, when endorsing this policy, commented:

"It is difficult at present to forsee future sources of revenue. Brunei is remote, has a small agricultural population, and no harbour where a ship of any size can enter. Anything that the State can produce (except oil) is already produced just as cheaply and in greater

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56. Ibid., paragraph 8.

quantities in Malaya and other Far East countries.

It seems to me, therefore, that for the next few years at any rate, the policy should be:-

(a) to stimulate the cultivation of food supplies and other agricultural products...;

(b) to demarcate forest reserves and to examine the timber resources of the country in case they may prove commercially exploitable;

(c) to build up a substantial reserve by annual contributions from revenue so that the ordinary activities of Government shall not be too severely hampered if the oilfield is worked out in 30-35 years' time;

(d) to provide no more in the way of recurrent expenditure than is reasonably necessary to meet the needs of the people". 57

Mr Gent at the Colonial Office felt that the High Commissioner's views were "of all the greater value as a result of his personal knowledge of the country". The four points (outlined above) were satisfactory but they did not "touch upon many services which must to some extent be admitted to benefit from an expanding revenue".[58]

When the Estimates for 1936 were submitted a few months later, Mr C Rankin - a junior clerk at the Colonial Office - felt that greater resources ought to be devoted to social services.[59] This view would appear to have echoed that of Mr Gent, just quoted; but the latter now argued that

"...the chief risk to the Brunei administration is the risk of interruption of the oil royalty and for that reason it will be a sounder state of things when there is a general reserve fund of a substantial character which the Government can fall back on in case of emergency to ease the (?change) from its present affluence to its old time poverty". 60

(c) <u>The 1938 Policy.</u> It soon became clear that the basis of the approved 1935 policy - future oil production and the size of reserves -

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57. <u>Ibid.</u>, Thomas to CO, 10 September 1935, paragraph 7.
58. <u>Ibid.</u>, minute by Gent, 16 October 1935.
59. CO 717/117 (File 51535) minute by Mr C Rankin, 13 March 1936. For the actual expenditure, see p 184 (above) and pp 297 and 448 (below).
60. <u>Ibid.</u>, minute by Gent, 16 March 1936.

had been seriously under-estimated. By 1937 Mr Gent felt that there was no need for the existing policy to be "regarded as a Bible for an indefinite period in the future". Nor was there "any particular merit in piling up surplus balances now that the public debt has been paid off". Hence he suggested that the High Commissioner

"be asked to review, in the light of the new information available, particularly in the matter of the State's oil resources, the financial and developmental policy explained in...1935, with a view to ensuring progress is made with such development projects as will increase the (?capital) resources of the State and improve the condition of the people; and such projects of this character as will themselves promise a yield to revenue in future years should be particularly considered". 61

In reply the High Commissioner submitted a new policy, prepared by the British Resident (Mr JG Black) at the beginning of 1938, which aimed

"to limit recurrent expenditure to a figure not greater than the revenue which is derived from all sources other than oil, to use as much of the oil revenue as may be required on works of development and, after seeing that the working balances are adequate, to place any unspent balance of oil revenue each year to a reserve fund which will be kept intact against the day when the oil resources have been exhausted. The interest from the reserve fund would go to revenue. The fund will be instituted by transferring to it all the present invested reserves, amounting approximately to $704,428. The case for an oil reserve fund (Sir Shenton continued) is even stronger than the case for an opium revenue reserve fund; for the money now used to buy opium may be expected to yield a revenue return by being spent on other taxed articles, whereas when the oil is exhausted there will be no money...The amount to be added each year will depend on the developmental programme which will be the matter of first importance". 62

The Colonial Office accepted the proposal to establish an oil fund "as a broad aim of financial policy, though not one which could or

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61. CO 717/123 (File 51535) minute by Gent, 6 March 1937.
62. CO 717/129 (File 51535) Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) No 27, 30 April 1938, paragraph 3.

should be too rigidly applied". The proposal was approved, therefore, on the understanding that this reserve would be earmarked as a "General Reserve Fund which it is desirable to maintain against the shrinkage of revenue from oil and other sources, which might be expected to follow the working out of the State's oilfield".[63]

Mr Black had prepared a comprehensive policy[64] for agriculture, forestry, health, education, communications, surveys and harbours. He took it

"as axiomatic that agriculture should be encouraged to develop side by side and concomitantly with the exploitation of the oil resources of the State and that the interests of the one should not be permitted to obtrude unduly to the disadvantage of the latter".

The Tempany Plan (to expand wet rice cultivation) of 1932 would be continued. An important role in the development of agriculture would be played by road construction because experience had shown that land occupation and permanent cultivation followed closely on any extension or improvement of the road system. The Colonial Office's adviser agreed that the emphasis upon rice was correct:

"First consideration should always be given to food supplies...and when adequate provision has been made...attention should be given to the possibility of the development of economic crops for export". 65

Mr Black suggested measures to nurture a local timber industry and to improve the jelutong output and he outlined plans, to be considered in a moment, for the extension of medicine and education.

Mr NJS Andrews, in Whitehall, got the impression in 1939

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63. Ibid., CO to High Commissioner, No 41 (UMS), 19 July 1938, para. 2.
64. Ibid., memorandum by Mr JG Black, 31 January 1938.
65. Ibid., minute by Sir Frank Stockdale (b 1883), 16 June 1938.

"that Brunei might well spend a bit more; the financial policy it has set itself is very conservative and it has a long way to go. Nevertheless 'progress' made in too much of a hurry is far worse than none at all". 66

Sir Shenton Thomas, although unaware (presumably) of this opinion in the Colonial Office, provided his answer to the charge in 1940:

"It may be suggested that the pace of development in Brunei could be very considerably accelerated by spending more of the revenue accruing from the production of oil. In my opinion that would be a mistake. Faster development cannot take place without the importation of a large alien population. It is better policy by the gradual expansion of the social services, education and infant welfare and by agricultural assistance to build up a healthy and progressive indigenous population, administered and officered by men of their own race. Development on these lines may be slower, but in the long run it will produce a more homogenous and happier State". 67

London "entirely concurred" in this analysis.[68]

4. Results

Instead of spending all the new oil revenue at once, the administration preferred to build up a reserve fund in preparation for the day when oil revenue ceased. Rapid development was seen as undesirable because it could not have been achieved without importing "a large alien population" which might disrupt the homogeneity of the State. In this final section, I shall review the developments which actually took place in the 1930s.

Finance. During the years 1932-40 annual State revenue increased from $0.36 million to $1.56 million, i.e. it more than quadrupled. Over the same period annual exports rose from $1.5 million

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66. CO 717/136 (File 51535) minute by Andrews (b 1902), 8 July 1939.
67. CO 717/141 (File 51535) Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) No 19, 13 April 1940, paragraph 6.
68. Ibid., CO to Thomas, UMS (Brunei) No 29, 30 May 1940, paragraph 2.

to $9.6 million (see Tables, overleaf). The National Debt was paid off; and, in its place, Brunei built up a General Reserve Fund standing at $1.5 million at the end of 1940. At the latter date there was also an opium reserve fund of more than $0.2 million. The country possessed surplus assets of $0.825 million. Asked to explain why income tax had not been introduced in the 1930s, Mr JG Black comments:

"I never for a moment considered this possibility...It would have been quite impracticable. At that time there was no income tax in the Straits Settlements or the FMS". 69

The Public Works Department continued to be the highest spending public authority in the 1930s. By 1938 217 buildings with a current value of $482,300 had been constructed.[70] Approximately half had been built since 1932. They included seven police stations, two gaols, six post offices, twenty one Malay schools (seventeen built since 1928), living quarters for Government employees, a hospital (1929) a telephone exchange, and a number of customs houses, court buildings and abattoirs. From 1933 construction was made in brick in order to reduce maintenance costs. At the end of 1941, 273 buildings were maintained and owned by the State to the value of $628,422.[71]

By 1938 more than one hundred miles of (mainly earth) road, of which almost one-third was maintained by the BMPC, had been built in Brunei. Road construction there was not easy because of swampy terrain, heavy rainfall and flooding, the great difficulty of transporting

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69. Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 25 February 1985, paragraph 1.
70. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 38.
71. Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 41.

Table 18. Exports of Oil from Brunei 1932-41 (in $ Straits)

Year	Wells (a)	Oil Exports:- Tons	Value (1)	Total Exports (2)	(1) as %age of (2)
1932	8	176,275	$1,094,663	$1,505,738	72.70
1933	n.a.	276,845b	1,760,861	$2,191,037	80.37
1934	30	371,591	2,371,669	3,439,501	68.96
1935	36	441,744	2,785,037	3,778,655	73.70
1936	53	445,081	2,975,103	4,205,270	70.75
1937	65	550,247	3,873,959	5,595,240	69.24
1938	39	685,257	5,512,549	6,580,482	83.78
1939	n.a.	c	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1940	n.a.	c	7,515,000	9,622,973	78.10
1941	n.a.	c	4,388,000	6,624,835	66.24

Notes: (a) Producing wells only. Cf., for example, 1938 when only 39 out of a total of 111 wells were actually producing oil.

(b) Given elsewhere as 280,523 tons.

(c) Dr Wilford states that production in 1939 was 5.5m barrels (each barrel comprising 42 American gallons); in 1940 6.27m barrels; in 1941 3.95m barrels (Wilford, The Geology and Mineral Resources of Brunei - Brunei 1961 - p 147).

Sources: Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports 1932-46.

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Table 19. The Initial Impact of Oil Revenue 1932-41 (in $ Straits)

Year	Oil Royalty (1)	Non-oil Revenue	Total Revenue (2)	(1) as %age of (2)
1911	nil	109,430	109,430	nil
1921	nil	161,250	161,250	nil
1931	nil	342,011	342,011	nil
1932	67,510	294,893	362,403	18.62
1933	235,756	344,994	580,750	40.95
1934	286,929	358,091	645,020	44.48
1935	383,112	430,420	813,532	47.09
1936	489,172	439,518	928,689	52.67
1937	482,567	566,726	1,049,293	45.98
1938	592,350	587,629	1,179,979	50.20
1939	710,599	563,645	1,274,644	55.71
1940	792,537	763,817	1,556,354	50.92
1941	548,711	777,201	1,325,912	41.38

Sources: Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports 1911-46 and Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories (London 1955), p 107.

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materials and the dearth of good road metal in the State. Road surfaces, consequently, were suitable only for light traffic and often had to be closed for a day or two after heavy rain to allow them to dry out and to prevent serious damage. Road maintenance was expensive (almost $500 per mile in 1938). This was despite a $67,000 road improvement scheme in 1936-7 under which practically the whole of the earth roads in the State were resurfaced, cambered and raised above the flood level when necessary; and a number of diversions were built to avoid flood areas or to smooth out bends. This led to some improvement; but roads still had to be closed to reduce possible damage. It was felt, however, that the enormous cost of concrete roads was not justified at the existing stage of the country's development.

The Government was keen to encourage the construction of roads. In 1932, for example, Mr Carey commented:

"It has been found that the construction of roads is having the effect of causing agricultural people to concentrate in one area rather than to wander all over the district as was formerly the case. Kilanas on the Tutong road; Lumapas on the Limbang road, and signs of activity on the new Berakas road all bear out this contention.

I have in mind two roads for 1933: one to the coast near Jerudong from 10th Mile on the Tutong road and one to Kuala Abang in the Tutong District from about 18th Mile on the Tutong road. Both roads will open up scattered kampong agricultural areas". 72

Roads also facilitated the provision of health and education services. If people were concentrated and settled, instead of scattered

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72. CO 717/95 (File 13323): statement by Mr TF Carey, 10 October 1932. He added: "Experiments in concrete surfaces for the main roads are to be tried. This method has been calculated to be less expensive than other methods of metalling and more durable. A small experimental strip has been put down on Residency Road and seems very satisfactory. It is proposed to aim at the gradual metalling of the whole Tutong Road". This scheme does not appear to have been implemented before 1941.

and nomadic, schools (for example) became more viable; and the people were more readily accessible to travelling medical staff. It was hoped that such indications of a better life in settled communities would encourage shifting cultivators to abandon what was considered to be a wasteful practice.[73]

In 1934 the Resident commented:

"The State has enjoyed a most prosperous year in spite of the slump in all commodities. This prosperity is due almost entirely to the development of the oilfield and it must be confessed that the poor peasants in the more remote districts have not shared to the same extent in the general welfare.

They have benefited indirectly, however, in that it has been possible to spend more on opening up the country and medical and education services have been brought nearer their doors. Increased sums have also been spent on the encouragement of husbandry and the nucleus of an Agricultural Department has been started. With a rise in the price of rubber, the peasant, too, may look forward to better times as many have trees on their smallholdings". 74

In his statement of policy in 1938 the Resident warned that if the economic - and particularly agricultural - development of the Sultanate was to be advanced a good system of roads and paths was "one of the primary essentials". The first aim should be the provision of bridle paths at some distance inland from the coast between the river systems, and linking up potentially important agricultural and industrial areas with each other and with the markets and points of export. He argued, further, that bridle paths should be sited and graded in such a way as to be easily capable of conversion into a road system later, if need be, when development had progressed beyond the initial stages. A

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73. CO 852/249 (File 15, item 7) CO Flemmich and CDP Olds, "Soil Erosion in Brunei", 6 August 1938.
74. CO 717/102 (File 33313) statement by British Resident, 9 January 1934, paragraph 8.

number of bridle paths were planned for construction in 1938, including one which might become the genesis of an inland route between the capital and the Seria oilfield.[75] In 1939 $243,000 was voted for "special services, especially roads and bridle paths" which were "essential for the State's development".[76] A further $50,000 was voted in 1941 for main roads.[77]

Water supplies were improved so that by 1938 twenty-one million gallons of water were supplied to about 1,600 consumers in the land capital. The River Villagers, by contrast, collected an average of only one gallon a day from the standpipes overhanging the edge of the river. Although the water from Tasek was not filtered, it was originally pronounced "very pure".[78] Later it was found to be unsatisfactory and a purification scheme was planned for 1939.[79] By 1938 various smaller water schemes were in operation in Brunei Town, Tutong, Kilanas and Labi.

The British Residency building was supplied with electricity not later than 1927;[80] and two years later the post office in the capital

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75. CO 717/129 (File 51535) memorandum by Mr Black, 31 January 1938, paragraphs 54-55.
76. CO 717/136 (File 51535) Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) No 50, 21 April 1939, paragraphs 2-3.
77. CO 717/145 (File 51535) Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) No 16, 25 March 1941, paragraph 3.
78. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1933, p 21.
79. In the Brunei Estimates for 1939 a sum of $13,500 was set aside for "a filtration plant for the waterworks at Brunei" (CO 717/136 File 51535).
80. AC Watson, "Notes on the History of Bubongan Dua-Belas. The British High Commissioner's Residence in Brunei" in BMJ 1982, p 55. NB: In 1959, after the post of British Resident in Brunei was abolished, a British High Commissioner (under the Foreign Office, rather than the Colonial Office) was accredited to Brunei. He continued to live in what had been the British Residency building.

was also "electrically lit".[81] In 1932 "plans in course of preparation" included "electric light scheme, Brunei".[82] During the following year a small "additional" electrical generator costing $5,000 was installed "with a view to lighting senior officers' quarters and providing power for a rice mill which was set up for the benefit of the agricultural population".[83] At the end of 1933 a sum of $30,000 was set aside for the installation of an electric scheme in Brunei Town.[84]

An Electrical Department was established under the State Engineer in 1935: two years later 91,000 units of electricity were generated in the capital, of which 74,332 were sold to 182 consumers (mainly street lighting, Government quarters and members of the public).[85]

In Belait district the BMPC supplied both water and electricity to the Government, which effected distribution to the public through its own reticulation networks.[86]

The telephone link between Tutong and Kuala Belait proved "most unsatisfactory" and was dismantled in 1934. The BMPC operated an installation at Kuala Belait which was linked up with the Government's system at Kuala Tutong during 1938, thus rendering possible telephonic communication between Brunei and Miri.[87]

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81. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1929, p 12.
82. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1932, p 24.
83. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1933, p 31; and BAR 1934, p 19.
84. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1933, p 29.
85. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1936, p 23 and BAR 1937, p 38. During the following year (1938) there was an increase of 9.8% in the number of electrical units sold.
86. In 1938 annual water consumption in (a) Seria and (b) Kuala Belait was 0.56m and 6.5m gallons respectively. Cf. pp 436-7 (below).
87. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 37.

"It often took ages to get through to Brunei (from Kuala Belait)", Datuk Turner recalls, "and the call was usually inaudible anyway. (By contrast), I got through to (Miri) at once". 88

Health and Education. Following the establishment of a Medical Department in 1929 "the biggest single problem" to be confronted was infant mortality: in 1927 almost 42% of babies born in the capital failed to survive their first year. Brunei women were still practically purdah and midwifery was practised by untrained bidans. Dietary errors were responsible for even more infant deaths than bad midwifery.[89]

Action was delayed by the Great Depression and the consequent decrease in revenue (1929-31) because "the State cannot undertake schemes involving large sums of money".[90] Eventually, in 1933, a Chinese lady was appointed maternity nurse[91] and her success was beyond all expectations, partly because of a rumour (which the Government did nothing to contradict) that attendance by the nurse was compulsory and that, if she were not called, a fine would be levied. Thus, no less than 90% of births in the capital were attended by the midwife in her first year. In addition many bidans came forward for voluntary training.

Soon a local woman was appointed as probationer midwife, her training supervised by the nurse, and a child welfare clinic was established in a room in Brunei Town hospital. It was not until 1938 that a separate and large clinic was built. That year the midwife and her six assistants

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88. Datuk Turner, letter to the author, 16 February 1983 (enclosing chapter of autobiography, p 16). NB: Apart from telephones, 63 wirelesses were registered in 1937, 89 in 1938.
89. Dr OE Fisher, letter to the author, 16 October 1984, paragraph 1.
90. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1931, p 5.
91. The "excellent" (Dr Fisher, loc.cit., paragraph 2) Mrs Lee, who probably retired in 1958.

attended 540 births (in the mothers' own homes) and dealt with 7,500 appearances at the clinic. Their work was confined to the capital, which contained, however, about 30% of the total population. Arrangements were made in 1938 to send a local nurse to Singapore for training so that an infant welfare centre could be set up in Kuala Belait.

The enormous fluctuations in the infant mortality rate (21% in 1935, 35.6% in 1936 and 22% in 1937) make it difficult to assess the results of these efforts. The swings were blamed upon the smallness of the sample rather than the incompleteness of registration, as had been supposed earlier. The general trend, however, was certainly downwards. The rate of infant mortality during the six years from 1927 to 1932 averaged 31% annually compared with only 26% during the following sexennial period (1933-8). Further, infant mortality was halved from 42% in 1927 and 36% in 1928 to only 22% in 1937 and 21% in 1938; and by 1947-8 the rate had declined to less than 14%.[92]

In his 1938 programme, Mr Black aimed at the eventual establishment in each of the four districts of the State of an infant welfare and maternity centre with a trained nurse and one or more locally-trained midwives, until, at length, a complete midwifery and child welfare service would be available throughout the country.[93]

In any plan for the extension of welfare services, "not the least difficulty" was the recruitment of the necessary trained staff: "The success of such a scheme", the Resident warned, "will be largely

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92. Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports.
93. CO 717/129 (File 51535) memorandum by Mr Black, 31 January 1938, paragraph 44.

dependent upon the supply of suitably-trained local girls, for, even if it were possible to import all the nurses, their usefulness would be considerably impaired if they had no intelligent subordinates to make contacts with the people in the villages. It is hoped that when the new centre is opened in Brunei Town it may be possible to attract local girls to be trained". 94

The Colonial Office argued that the recruitment of personnel for welfare was more important than the building of centres because well-trained nurses could do very useful work with only simple centres to work in and by visiting mothers in their homes.[95]

In September 1938 a fully-trained nurse, formerly in the employ of the FMS, was appointed staff nurse, Brunei, in charge of the maternity wards in the hospital. This enabled the health nurse (Mrs Lee) to devote all her time to maternity and child welfare services. In December 1938 a new infant welfare clinic adjoining the hospital was opened at Brunei Town. There was a great increase in attendance during 1939.[96]

Three probationer nurses were in training by this time. They spent one-third of the time in the clinic assisting the health nurse. The latter devoted her afternoons to home visiting. A second clinic was opened on 3 April 1939 at Kuala Belait where the work was carried out by a qualified midwife who had worked in Singapore. The attendance of mothers and babies was "most encouraging".[97] A local Chinese lady was sent to Singapore in January 1939 to undergo a 4½ year course of training in maternity and child welfare. When she had completed this, it was

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94. Ibid., paragraph 45.
95. Ibid., CO to High Commissioner, UMS (Brunei) No 82, 16 August 1938, paragraph 3.
96. CO 717/141 (File 51535) statement by Mr Pengilley on education and health in Brunei, 13 March 1940.
97. Ibid.

intended to appoint her as health nurse, Kuala Belait.[98] The Colonial Office was satisfied that the Brunei Medical Department was "being run and is being expanded on sound lines".[99] For 1941 $10,500 was voted for a further infant welfare centre.[100]

Extensions had also been made to the Government hospital in the capital, which had been opened in 1929. A development scheme provided for the addition of new wards at the rate of one a year, in the hope that Brunei would have a well-equipped and up-to-date hospital. By 1936 thirty beds were available and, at the close of 1937, two second class wards of eight beds each were under construction. Dr OE Fisher, State Medical Officer from 1937 to 1939, comments that there was "no shortage of hospital beds" though there probably would have been if communications within the country had been better.[101]

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98. Ibid. This student was the daughter of the Treasurer, Mr Thian Thi. "Her name", Dr Fisher recalls, "was Suzannah and she was so good that I arranged for her to go to Singapore General Hospital for training to be a fully-qualified nurse...(She) was a very capable, highly-intelligent nurse" (letter to the author, 16 October 1984).
99. CO 717/141 (File 51535) minute by Dr AGH Smart, 17 June 1940.
100. CO 717/145 (File 51535) Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) No 16, 25 March 1941, paragraph 3.
101. Letter to the author, 24 January 1985, paragraph 4. Dr Fisher adds that the reluctance of Brunei Malays to go into hospital when sick was due to "their fear of dying in hospital. They did not usually object to admission to hospital for relatively minor complaints but they were terrified of dying outside the family circle. This fear was based partly on Muslim religious scruples, but probably chiefly on the intense prejudices of the old women in the kampongs". There might have been a shortage of hospital beds, Dr Fisher continues, "if communications had been better, as there was not the same difficulty with up-country tribes such as the Dusuns and Kedayans...(The) suggestion that people could not afford to take time off work was not true, as it was chiefly the very ill Malay who refused admission to hospital, and he would have been too ill to work. In any case, the average Brunei Malay was only too pleased to have any excuse not to work" (ibid.).

Before the Japanese occupation there were outdoor dispensaries at Brunei Town (attached to the hospital), Temburong (1934) and Tutong (built after 1938, bombed during the War). There were also plans to build a dispensary at Kuala Belait. Travelling dressers, working along rivers, roads and paths, penetrated to almost every part of the State, so that practically the whole of the population could receive "medical service of a sort".[102] The number of inpatients rose from 199 in 1932 to 614 in 1938, the number of outpatients from 11,060 to 19,345 over the same period.[103]

During the 1930s there was a BMPC hospital at Kuala Belait which contained two small wards, a laboratory and a minor operating theatre. The company's hospital was made available to Government patients. By 1934 there were unqualified dressers at two rubber estates and another possessed a dispensary.

Allowing for the high infant mortality rate, it was felt that the remainder of the population was relatively healthy:

"The two common causes of invalidism - malaria and ankylostomiasis - are uncommon in the large centres of population and other grave diseases are also rare". 104

Malaria was not regarded as an immediate problem. The disease was relatively unusual in the larger centres of population and rubber estates, where anti-malarial measures were taken, but it was fairly common in the outlying, rice-growing districts. One reason for the

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102. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1937, p 12.
103. Of the 614 inpatients in 1938, 82 were admitted for malaria, 49 for beri-beri and 19 for tuberculosis. (The hospital was destroyed by Allied bombing near the end of the war).
104. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1932, p 4.

comparatively low incidence of malaria, especially in relation to neighbouring countries, was that Brunei had avoided mistakes, such as clearing hills and ravines near the towns, made elsewhere. Regular anti-malarial measures - draining, oiling and clearing - were practicable only in and around Brunei Town and, later, Kuala Belait. School-children throughout the country were examined for enlarged spleens and treated when necessary.[105]

The poor diet of the majority of the population was reported to be "the most important single cause of ill-health in the State".[106] In 1938 49 patients were treated for beri-beri (compared with 60 in 1936 and 24 in 1937). Tuberculosis was "extremely prevalent", especially among the Chinese, but only 19 people were treated for the disease in hospital. The major cause of registered deaths (only about 10% of the total) was old age, followed by convulsions, diarrhoea and other digestive diseases, tuberculosis and malaria.

Simultaneously with the foundation of the Medical Department (1929) was the inauguration of a programme of public health and sanitation measures. The settlements of Tutong and Belait, plus the capital, were constituted as Sanitary Board areas, and systems of sanitation control introduced. The boards dealt with all municipal questions, such as buildings, markets, street lighting and hawkers' licensing. In 1930

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105. The highest incidence was in rural areas, where the free distribution of quinine was the only measure that could be carried out. The number of malaria cases treated in 1938 was 763 (including 82 in hospital).
106. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 9.

inspection services were improved. Sanitary latrines were installed in all Government buildings in the State. Some houses in Brunei had their own water-borne systems. In a few places, where suitable, bore holes were provided by the Government.

All houses in Board areas were liable to scrutiny and plans for all proposed new buildings, as well as improvements to existing ones, had to be submitted for approval. There remained a tendency to overcrowding in Malay homes, and sanitation in them was not very modern. Chinese shophouses were closely regulated: certain minimum requirements in the way of open spaces and partitioning were insisted upon. During the 1930s, however, there was a tendency among the more affluent Chinese to forsake the shophouse in favour of private dwellings, ranging from the substantial self-contained house standing in its own grounds to the much less pretentious wooden structure erected on a small plot of land. Government housing, built of brick after 1933, remained the most healthy and comfortable. Originally occupied by senior Government officers (both European and indigenous), the lower ranking staff appear to have benefited as the 1930s progressed. Estates and the BMPC accommodated their own workers, but labour lines were subject to inspection by the Boards. (A large proportion of rubber estates' labourers lived in their own homes elsewhere). The Dusun, Murut and Iban settlers in the interior had longhouses, up to 150 feet in length, for dwellings. Sanitation was primitive and farm animals frequently were kept on the ground under the rooms.

Progress had begun to be made in the field of education. In

1928 only 12% of boys and no girls at all attended school, even in Brunei Town. A law of 1929 made attendance compulsory for every boy aged 7-14 who lived within two miles of a school where free education in the child's own language was provided by the Government. This measure was applied only in Brunei Town at first but was extended to Kuala Belait in 1933. It was lightly enforced, however, "as it is considered better to encourage education by example rather than penal measures".[107] The unavailability of teachers was given as the main reason preventing the extension of compulsory attendance to the outstations.

The results of the new law were soon apparent. In 1929 an additional school for 455 pupils was constructed in the capital, thereby trebling the total number of pupils at a stroke. In 1930 the Resident commented:

"For financial reasons...further expansion in the provision of education facilities will have to be gradual but it is the policy of the Government to endeavour to open at least one new school a year". 108

A total of 17 Malay schools were constructed in the decade 1929-38, which took the total up from 4 to 21 and the number of pupils from 189 to 1,810. A further three schools had been opened by 1941; but pupils had fallen to 1,746. The initial impetus for a school came from village councils, which presented to the Government a request for a school. If granted, villagers provided the materials and erected the buildings (including accommodation for a teacher) with the assistance of a small grant from the Government. Should the school then prove viable, the

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107. Source now n.a. (Partly CO 824/2 BAR 1932, p 22).
108. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1930, p 20.

Government constructed permanent buildings. In short, the demand had to be demonstrated before the State would furnish full financial backing. Once the school had been built, education was free, although pupils had to buy their own exercise books and pencils.

Nothing was taught in the schools which would tend to drive pupils away from their agricultural pursuits. The curriculum, based upon that introduced in Malaya by RO Winstedt in 1917, included literacy in both Jawi and Romanized script, composition, arithmetic, geography, history, hygiene, drawing and physical exercise. Instruction in basketry was available in some schools. Football was popular; and in 1937 badminton and hookey were introduced in Brunei Town. Attendance at extra-curricular Muhammadan religious classes was optional.

Outside the main centres, organized education was rendered very difficult because of the scattered nature of the population and the poor communications. In addition, the practice of shifting cultivation meant that children were not long in one place and this caused one or two schools to lose viability (in the 1920s).

Non-Malay indigenous people showed interest in education. In 1926, for example, the Kedayans of Kilanas opened a school, which surprised the administration since the pupils were children of farmers, few of whom were literate. A further step was taken in 1938 when the Resident proposed to extend the Compulsory Attendance Enactment to the 25% of the indigenous population whose mother tongue was not Malay. It was argued that education in their several vernaculars was not feasible and that linguistically the other indigenous groups would have to be assimilated

to the Malay (which was the lingua franca). The Resident suggested, indeed, that non-Malay indigenes

"appear to show much more keenness for education and greater receptivity than the Malays, who are inclined to be apathetic, which suggests that the latter may, in the course of time, find themselves being ousted from positions in the Government service and in other spheres of life, not by Chinese or Indians or other aliens, but by their own compatriots". 109

The first attempt to establish a vernacular school for Malay girls ended in failure. The school was opened in 1930, with an enrolment of 24, mainly daughters of Government servants, but closed during the following year because of the departure of the school-mistress. Re-opened in 1932 under an unqualified teacher, the school finally closed in 1934. The grip of purdah, it was argued, had made the effort premature. The fact that 189 girls attended boys' vernacular schools in 1938 suggests, however, that this view was erroneous.

In 1938 Mr Black commented that no real progress in female education would be made until separate instruction was available. The difficulty lay in the recruitment of suitable women teachers. The efforts of the Government to obtain the services even of one had proved unavailing.[110] Mr Gent at the Colonial Office agreed that the provision of free schooling for boys "must remain largely ineffective in diffusing any educational standards so long as no progress is made with this question of girls' education". 111

A specialist commented that the training of women teachers was "a fundamental condition of social progress". A necessary first step, in

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109. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 34.
110. CO 717/129 (File 51535) memo by Black, 31 January 1938, para. 49.
111. Ibid., minute by Gent, 13 June 1938.

his view, was the establishment of a residential training college (with general educational classes) for Malay women under a competent European with experience of work in Malaya. This advice was forwarded to the High Commissioner for consideration.[112]

"Outside the Brunei district", the Resident noted in 1938, "girls in small numbers have attended boys' schools, but...there can be little hope of overcoming the prejudice of conservative Muslim opinion against the attendance of girls at school until separate instruction under women teachers should be available". 113

In 1938 two local women teachers were recruited and a girls' section was started in a school in the capital. It was proposed to establish a separate school early in 1939. At Kuala Belait 48 girls were attending school. By 1941 there were 24 Malay vernacular schools with 1,746 pupils (1,434 boys, 312 girls) taught by 68 teachers, of whom only 12 were trained and only five were women. (By 1941 the total population was of the order of 40,000, of whom perhaps 6,000 were children aged 7-14).

Even in 1938 the Resident judged that the time was not yet ripe for English (i.e. secondary) schools in Brunei. Suitable candidates continued to be sent to the school in Labuan, however. A proposal from a visiting expert to begin English education soon afterwards was not implemented because of the Japanese occupation.

It was arranged in 1929 that two places annually would be reserved for Bruneis at the Sultan Idris Training College (SITC) at Tanjong Malim in Malaya. The first students returned in late 1932 and

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112. Ibid., minute by Mr A Mayhew, 26 July 1938; and ibid., CO to High Commissioner, UMS No 82 (Brunei), 16 August 1938, paragraph 2.
113. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 34.

began as teachers in 1933. The number of candidates, selected by competitive examination, who were sent to the SITC was increased to a quota of four annually from 1938. They were selected from the ranks of probationary and pupil teachers, i.e. boys who had passed the fifth standard and had been appointed to temporary posts in the Education Department pending their training at Tanjong Malim. At the beginning of 1940 Brunei had seven SITC-trained teachers: two more would graduate before the end of the year, and there were eight other students from Brunei training there. Four more were due to arrive in Malaya in November 1940.[114]

Brunei students were also sent to the Agricultural School at Serdang and the Forestry School at Kepong, both in Malaya. Finally, the younger brother of the Sultan (now, 1985, the Seri Begawan Sultan) and the two sons of the Pengiran Bendahara were sent to the Malay College at Kuala Kangsar. This was perceived as "a step forward in the administration of the State as it is the first time that Brunei princes have received an education in the English sense of the word".[115]

Taking account of seven private fee-paying schools - 4 Chinese (with 245 pupils), two Roman Catholic schools (with 105 pupils) and an SPG (Anglican) school (with 71 pupils) - Brunei had in 1938 a grand total of 28 schools with 2,231 pupils.

Expenditure on education increased from $7,310 in 1929 to $41,562 in 1941. (Expenditure on buildings was included under public

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114. CO 717/141 (File 51535) statement by Mr Pengilley on education and health, 13 March 1940.
115. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1932, p 15.

works). Sir J Campbell, at the Colonial Office, noted that much of the expenditure classified as 'special' appeared in fact to be 'normal' and there was consequently some danger of over-estimating the soundness of the position with regard to the annually-recurrent expenditure relative to the "revenue derived from sources other than oil".[116] The High Commissioner was notified to this effect.

The Sultan of Brunei participated in the new prosperity. In 1934 his allowance was increased from $1,000 to $1,500 a month and in 1938 $500 a month was added. He also received extra allowances for the cost of services and so on; and, in 1939, a sum was voted to enable the monarch to provide himself with a motor car. Although the Sultan was far more costly to Brunei than the Resident - in 1940 Civil List expenditure amounted to $37,438 compared with only $12,610 for the British Resident's Office - His Highness constantly petitioned for yet more funds; and often had to be denied by the Resident.[117]

Administration. In 1936 Mr AS Small, the Acting High Commissioner, decided that a more senior officer was needed to fill the post of Resident in Brunei because the revenue there was rising rapidly thanks

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116. CO 717/145 (File 51535) minute by Sir J Campbell, 8 June 1941.
117. Mr JG Black, letters to the author: 12 April 1983, paragraph 6; and 8 September 1983, paragraph 2. For purposes of comparison, the Sultan of Perak's annual allowance was increased in 1929 from $120,000 to $150,000 and that of the Sultan of Pahang from $78,000 to $96,000. The annual income of the Rajah Muda of Perak was increased in 1929 from $18,000 to $22,500; that of the Bendahara from $12,600 to $16,380. Even in 1948, as recalled by Mr LHN Davis CMG (BR Brunei 1948), Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin bore a grudge against the Resident because he, Mr Davis, refused to loosen the purse strings. (Mr LHN Davis CMG: letters to the author: 28 February 1983, Part I, paragraph 6; and 22 January 1985, paragraph 5).

to the oil industry, placing extra burdens on the shoulders of the Resident as the country began to assume an unprecedented importance. Despite this, the latter officer was completely isolated at eight hundred miles from Singapore "and in case of emergency must act entirely on his own initiative". The European heads of department (see below) were often senior in service to the Resident "and the position is apt to be embarrassing to him". In the past, a young, fit officer had been essential because of the difficulties of communication in Brunei (cf. pp 123-4, above). Since the Great War, however, the country had been opened up to some extent and communications had improved to such a degree that it had become feasible for an older civil servant to be appointed. Mr Small recommended, therefore, that the post of Resident should be upgraded from Class IV to Class II of the MCS scale.[118]

A final factor of "paramount importance" underlying this decision, which was approved by the Colonial Office, lay in the "character and conduct" of the Brunei monarch. Sultan Muhammad Jemalul Alam, who died in 1924, was succeeded by his son, Ahmad Tajuddin (b 1913). Since the latter was an eleven year old minor on accession, a Regency of the two wazirs again came into operation, this time from 1924 to 1931. By 1936 His Highness was

"proving rather troublesome now that he is now growing up and has acquired a taste for power. There have been several clashes between His Highness and the British Resident, and I recently found it necessary to send Mr EEF Pretty, the Secretary to the High Commissioner, to Brunei in order to smooth matters down. Mr Pretty...is convinced that His Highness, who

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118. CO 717/121 (File 51756) Mr, later Sir, AS Small (1887-1944) to CO, UMS (Brunei) confidential, 30 June 1936, paragraph 5.

has a vastly exaggerated idea of his own importance, will only accept advice readily from someone considerably older than himself and the recent trouble is the fault of the present system where a very junior officer of Class IV is sent to a post, of which the responsibilities are far greater than he should, in fairness, be called upon to bear". 119

Mr Small regarded it as "most important that, at this stage of his life,

His Highness should have as his adviser an officer of ripe years and experience".[120] Mr JG Black, the first Grade II Resident, recalls:

"I suppose I must have read the Treaty, but the existence of such a provision (requiring acceptance of 'advice') never entered my mind. There was certainly never an occasion when recourse might have been had to it. Differences with the Sultan were about private and personal matters, such as borrowing money and getting into debt". 121

It was not until 1940 that Sultan Ahmad was installed as Yang Dipertuan. The High Commissioner, Sir Shenton Thomas, recommended that the opportunity should be taken to bestow the CMG upon His Highness. This would be "politically wise" and would give "added pleasure" to the monarch because it would "remove the reproach...of being the only ruler of a Malay State who has not been privileged to receive a mark of HM's favour".[122] In a message to the Sultan on the occasion of his coronation, 17 March 1940, Sir Shenton affirmed his confidence that "under the guidance of Your Highness...and supported by the advice of the British Resident, the State will make continued and rapid progress along sound lines".[123]

In fact, Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin was a most unfortunate monarch who died as early as 1950 (aged c36). Consistent reports leave little

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119. Ibid., paragraph 4.
120. Ibid.
121. Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 8 September 1983, paragraphs 1-2.
122. CO 717/143 (File 51908) Sir TSW Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) confidential, 13 January 1940, paragraphs 2-3.
123. Ibid., item 10, R Irvine MC to High Commissioner, 30 March 1940.

doubt that His Highness enjoyed the good life and that his excesses, particularly alcoholism, contributed largely to his early demise (and also had unfortunate political consequences for Brunei, as shown in Chapter 10).[124] His mother prevented him from being sent to Malaya for schooling, so that he lacked formal education. His British tutor, Mr HF Stalley, once manager of the cutch factory, was apparently an equally colourful character.[125] On the more positive side, Sir Ahmad (the knighthood was a courtesy bestowed in 1949 on the occasion of the silver jubilee of his accession) could boast the treading of some new ground. In 1931 he visited Malaya[126] and, having married a Selangorese princess in 1934, he made a number of return visits there. In 1932, a year after he attained his majority, he became the first Brunei monarch to visit the United Kingdom, where he remained for about a year. On the occasion of a visit to Kuala Belait, the Sultan left with Datuk Turner

> "twenty four copies of a little booklet of proverbs, which he claimed to have written personally, like a modern Solomon, for the purpose of exhorting his subjects to tread the path of virtue". 127

Sir Shenton Thomas, when making out a case for His Highness to be awarded the CMG, commented that, although the Sultan's conduct during his early years of sovereignty was not always "correct", and he had had to be warned severely more than once, he (the Sultan) had "done nothing

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124. Several sources (cf. p 352, below). One or two British Residents, also, were said to imbibe rather more alcohol than was entirely good for themselves.
125. Dato WH Doughty (1886-1971), interviewed by Professor DE Brown in the late 1960s (tape recording courtesy of Professor Brown); and Mr A Gilmour CMG, letter to the author, 18 January 1984.
126. For details, see British Malaya (December 1931), p 211.
127. Datuk RN Turner, letter to the author, 16 February 1983, p 10.

scandalous"; and, in considering the past, his upbringing

"must not be forgotten. It is not easy for a young boy (His Highness was c27 years old in 1940), brought up in a remote State and in the atmosphere of a small and sycophantic court, to withstand the temptations to which, as a member of the royal house, he must be subjected. On the other hand, he has many good points. He is essentially loyal (to HM Government)... He may be irresponsible but he has no vices and he tries to understand the art of Government and to help in the advancement of his people. It is not his fault that many of his proposals are impracticable". 128

Mr JG Black looks back upon his service in Brunei as perhaps the most rewarding tour of his MCS career:

"There was great scope for development and no lack of funds. The budget proposals and estimates had, of course, to be approved by the High Commissioner but otherwise one had generally a free hand. One could sense one's plans coming to fruition...and feel a sense of personal responsibility. Singapore was a thousand miles away". 129

How did Mr Black, as Resident, spend an ordinary office day?:

"I find it rather difficult now to outline a routine day in the life of the BR Brunei. He did everything! Tuesday was a busy day finishing off correspondence for the mail to Singapore and beyond and on Thursday dealing with the mail from Singapore etc. The Government launch, Muara, left on Wednesday to connect with the inward and outward services from Singapore. From time to time visits were made to Kuala Belait and up-country stations. When I first went to Brunei I was constantly being summoned to the Istana, sometimes twice a day. I managed to convince the Sultan that it would be more businesslike to fix one day a week, when we would discuss all matters". 130

The number of European administrators in Brunei was increased. In 1931, just before the first oil was exported, the post of Assistant Resident was revived and the incumbent stationed in Kuala Belait to supervise the development of the oilfield area and exercise a "general oversight" of Tutong district.[131] Following the expansion of schools during

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128. CO 717/143 (File 51908) Sir TSW Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) confidential (Honours), 13 January 1940, paragraph 2.
129. Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 12 April 1983, paragraph 1.
130. Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 28 February 1984, paras' 1-2.
131. Datuk Turner, letter to the author, 16 February 1983, p 5.

the 1930s, the Assistant Resident became ex-officio State Education Officer from 1938.[132] In addition, the Assistant Resident deputised for the Resident when the latter went on 'local' leave. Mr DA Somerville (1908-74), Assistant Resident in 1934-5, recalled in 1970:

> "In contradistinction to Kuala Kangsar (where he had been stationed) there was little land office work in Kuala Belait as the native inhabitants, mainly of Dusun or kindred tribes, had not really reached the stage of settled cultivation. The object of Government in the district was to temper the 'wind of change' which had started to blow with the advent of the oil company. Although there was a Brunei district officer stationed in Kuala Belait, the Assistant Resident's job was largely that of a DO and he exercised his authority directly and not on the basis of advising the existing Malay officials, as was the practice in the UMS of the Malayan mainland.
>
> The position in Brunei itself (i.e. the capital) was rather different. Under the Treaty, the British Resident exercised many administrative functions directly, particularly in matters of land administration, but the framework of a Malay State still existed and the views of local notables had considerable weight. The Sultan at that time was still a minor (sic), which limited his personal influence.
>
> My relations with the Malay DO in Kuala Belait were uniformly friendly and tours of inspection to the few Dusun settlements upriver were a welcome change from office routine. The presence of the oil company meant the provision of electricity, water and natural gas for cooking and also a wider social circle than existed in most other stations in Borneo at that time". 133

Did the Assistant Resident hold executive powers?

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132. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 35.

133. Memorandum by Mr DA Somerville, March 1970 (photocopy courtesy of the late Professor RW Heussler, letter to the author, 16 May 1983). Mr Somerville's statement that the "local notables had considerable weight" is rather unusual: most other informants state that the wazirs took little interest in administrative affairs. Concerning the "wider social circle", Mr HL Fountain, a member of the BMPC's staff from 1929 to 1937, recalls that, in those days, "Government officials kept very much to themselves and only mixed with the upper echelons of the oil business. (Mr) Somerville was the only exception I knew" (letter to the author, 11 October 1983, paragraph 3). Datuk Turner adds: "...although I made it my business to get along well in my daily relationship with the Oil Company personnel, there were none except the Doctor...and the Labour Superintendent...with whom I felt any close rapport" (letter to the author, 16 February 1983, p 5).

"There was no clear dividing line" - thus Datuk Turner - "between administrative and executive duties. The Assistant Resident was a Johannes Factotum, dealing with anything that cropped up, and, in Kuala Belait district, tended to do what a District Officer would have done in Malaya, with the (existing Malay) DO rather in the role of an Assistant DO in Malaya". 134

The Assistant Resident, of course, was completely unarmed. There was no battalion of Gurkhas in the Seria oilfield or anywhere else in Brunei either during the 1930s or at any other time of the British Residential Era. Only in 1941 were small detachments of 'Indian' troops and Sikh police stationed briefly in the Miri-Seria area with the specific purpose of supervising the oilfield destruction scheme (cf. pp 316-19, below). On the contrary, the situation was so safe that it did not matter (Datuk Turner recalls) that his sliding door into the garden would not shut: "There was next to no crime in Kuala Belait - people just did not go in for murders, battery and the like, and theft was virtually unheard of. To that extent, Kuala Belait was a Shangri-la...". 135

On the other hand, Datuk Turner found himself "under-stretched so far as work was concerned".[136]

Apart from the re-instated Assistant Resident, separate Departments of Medical and Health (1929), Forestry (1933) and Agriculture (1937) under European officers were created. They joined the existing Director of Public Works and the Chief Police Officer, so that, even in 1941, the full complement of European officers in Brunei comprised only the Resident and six subordinates. Dr OE Fisher, State Medical Officer 1937-9, had "pretty well complete powers to do as I thought fit. Theoretically, I

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134. Datuk RN Turner, 28 January 1985, paragraph 1 (3).
135. Datuk RN Turner, letter to the author, 16 February 1983, p 7.
136. Ibid., p 5.

was under the authority of the Director of Medical Services in Singapore but for practical purposes his only power was that he could transfer me to another post or send me on long leave at any time. All day to day decisions were my sole responsibility, but, of course, major decisions of policy, such as the building of two new hospital wards and an infant welfare centre were referred to the Resident for approval, as were the annual estimates of expenditure of the Medical Department. The Resident invariably gave approval as there was no shortage of money". 137

Dr Fisher adds a further insight:

"Of course, my real powers should be seen within the context of a primitive State with vestigial communications and in which I was sole medical officer. These factors were the real limitations on my powers to act". 138

Departmental heads did not operate on a 'cabinet' basis, presumably because there was not enough to discuss: "No meetings of Heads of Department ever took place at the Residency or anywhere else, as far as I can remember", Dr Fisher comments.[139] The working relationship was much more direct. Sir John Peel Kt., referring to the years 1946-8, states:

"Departmental Heads were responsible to the British Resident and through him to the Sultan for the running of their departments". 140

Unlike the other technical staff, the Forestry Officer had his headquarters in Kuala Belait.

As the scope of Government expanded, more Government employees were recruited. The Brunei establishment doubled from about 232 staff in 1930 to about 466 in 1941. This gave a stimulus to local education,

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137. Dr OE Fisher, letter to the author, 24 January 1985, paragraph 2.
138. Ibid.
139. Ibid.
140. Dato Sir WJ Peel Kt, DSLJ, DSNB, letter to the author, 19 January 1985, paragraph 2.

which was necessary if trained personnel were to be acquired. The BMPC also required increasing numbers of literate staff, the Government found, indeed, that the company, by paying higher salaries, was able to attract the cream of the local talent.

The growth of Kuala Belait (and Tutong) had necessitated the creation (in 1929) of Sanitary Boards to supervise municipal matters.

There was also more work for district officers,[141] who

"collected taxes, heard minor cases, including those relating to inheritance of property, and (were responsible for) land work. (They) also helped to run the Sanitary Boards of the townships (e.g. seeing that bye-laws and regulations were observed and various licences issued)". 142

Mr LHN Davis CMG recalls that, in 1948, the duties of DOs included

"receiving, inspecting and dealing with applications for land, dealing with transfers of land and inheritance matters, checking that crops, e.g. rubber, were not prohibited by a title, supervising expenditure of any sums approved for local improvements such as bridle paths or minor drainage or irrigation works. The list would surely be much longer and, in general, embrace administration of a district or area and co-ordination with specialist arms of Government, e.g. the Agricultural Department". 143

In 1935, indeed, the post of the most senior district officer - the DO Brunei and Muara - was abolished for the time being. The former incumbent then became 'Secretary to Resident', a new post with a salary ranging from

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141. Borneo Bulletin, 21 October 1972. Pengiran Dato Paduka Othman bin Pengiran Anak Muhammad Salleh (b 1918) remembered that his work in the Temburong district office from 1937 varied from "selling opium to acting as sub-treasurer, land officer, and court, postal and religious clerk". He had to walk twelve miles each month handing out wages to teachers, ketuas and imams. "I also used to canoe at times", he added. "I learned a lot in Temburong as there were only three of us under the District Officer". During the Japanese occupation he was also "rations clerk for food, clothing and everything else in short supply".

142. Datuk RN Turner, letter to the author, 28 January 1985, paragraph 1.2.

143. Mr LHN Davis, letter to the author, 22 January 1985, paragraph 4.

$3,120 to $3,600 annually, and his previous duties were taken over by an 'Assistant Controller of Land Revenue' who was a Grade III officer in the Brunei Administrative Service (BAS; not to be confused with the Malayan Civil Service), with a salary of $840 to $1,200.[144]

This expansion of the bureaucracy was not entirely welcomed: "While attention has been concentrated upon the large departments of new growth", the Resident commented in 1935, "the actual administrative organization has been neglected. Its work, however, has increased enormously and an increase in the establishment is inevitable". 145

The staff of the Land and District Offices, for example, increased from 29 in 1930 to 42 in 1941. The 1930 figures also included forest guards; in 1941 the new Forestry Department had a staff of 18. The Police Force grew from 48 in 1931 to 81 in 1935 and 92 by 1941. The new Assistant Resident's Office in Kuala Belait had a subordinate staff of four by 1941. New Treasury and Courts Departments (formerly branches of the British Resident's Office) had been created before 1941.

One of the features of the 1930s was the growing importance of Belait district, which earlier had carried little weight in the Sultanate. It had been remote, inaccessible, of little economic importance and scantily populated. In short, it was dismissed as the most "backward"[146] of the 'rivers' in Brunei, with only 1,126 inhabitants in 1911.[147] By 1931, Belait still comprised only 13% (3,897) of Brunei's total population of 30,135. By 1938, however, when the Sultanate's

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144. CO 717/117 (File 51535/1936) Brunei Estimates 1936.
145. CO 717/110 (File 51535/1935) memorandum by Mr RE Turnbull, 4 June 1935, paragraph 12.
146. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1912, p 5; and BAR 1913, p 6.
147. CO 531/3 (34002) WH Lee-Warner to Sir A Young, No 254, 17 May 1911, paragraph 1.

population was estimated to be 37,868, Belait may have accounted for approaching one-quarter. This relative gain was made partly by internal migration, but principally by immigrants from outside the State.[148] By then crude oil comprised 84% of Brunei's exports in terms of value.

The operations of the BMPC were originally centred some miles up the Belait at Labi, where a "fair-sized village" had sprung up by 1924, proving a great magnet to Chinese from other parts of Borneo. Although the BMPC finally withdrew from the village in November 1931,[149] the Chinese market gardeners serving the oilfield remained there.

The settlement at Kuala Belait, at first a transit camp for people and materials going to and coming from the drilling sites upriver, began to expand rapidly after the establishment, in 1928, of a depot with a wharf and wireless stage. A rest house and club was opened in 1929. Earlier in the same year the BMPC had transferred its headquarters to the village from Labi. The Government, similarly, moved its district office from Kuala Balai, an inconvenient distance upriver, to Kuala Belait, which was more accessible to a traveller (such as the Resident) arriving by sea from the capital. In 1929 a "preliminary lay-out" of Kuala Belait village area was completed, twenty shophouses were constructed and the principal street was named after the British Resident, Mr McKerron. Thereafter growth was rapid. The township, which had only 1,193 inhabitants in 1931, was estimated to have a population approaching

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148. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 5.
149. CO 717/77 (File 82320) Sir C Clementi (1875-1951) to CO, UMS (Brunei) confidential, 1 March 1932, enclosing the oil report for the fourth quarter of 1931.

5,000 by 1938.[150]

The settlement at Seria had originated as a drilling camp. Too insignificant to be even recorded in the 1931 census, a township sprang up thereafter, and a road to Kuala Belait had been completed by 1938, as well as a bridge over the River Seria.

"Seria was some eight miles distant from Kuala Belait in the direction of Brunei Town", Datuk Turner recalls, referring to 1940-1. "There were all the wells,...and there lived most of the senior staff and labour force...Coming towards Kuala Belait along the road, there was a stretch of about four miles of coastal jungle until one came to Panaga ...and then four miles more with land being opened up rapidly for the cultivation of vegetables on either side of the road, until one came to Kuala Belait, first through a Chinese section, then through a Malay one and finally to a cluster of bungalows stretching along the beach as far as the river mouth, where the offices of the Brunei part of the oilfield were situated, and beyond, a short way up the river, was a little port for the handling of cargo and the Government customs house...". 151

In short, these townships were gradually developing as rivals to the capital, where the population had been concentrated formerly. But, more than this, the newcomers were mainly non-Muslim immigrants - especially Chinese and, to a lesser extent, Indians - employed by the oil company. They were often educated, skilled workers whose lifestyle was industrial rather than agricultural.[152] In order to service them there was an expansion in the tertiary sector of the economy.

Even more noticeable was the influence of the British Malayan Petroleum Company. The crude oil which they produced dominated Brunei's export trade after 1932; and the company accounted directly for half the country's revenue in the form of oil royalties alone and indirectly (e.g.

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150. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 5.
151. Datuk Turner, letter to the author, 16 February 1983, p 3.
152. In 1933 Borneans (including Malays and Ibans) accounted for 34% of the BMPC's labour force; in 1938, 37%.

customs duties) contributed further significant sums. By 1931 the company was already running its own roads, railway (from Seria to Badas, built in 1924-5), hospital (1925),[153] electricity and water supplies, fire station and telephone exchange. In addition the company had wharves, offices and, for its staff, bungalows and houses. During the following decade, these services were expanded. In 1935 a new, well-equipped hospital, with modern X-Ray installations and full medical and surgical equipment, was built at Kuala Belait.[154] In addition dispensaries and first aid points were set up throughout the oilfield. These were coupled with an emergency medical and ambulance service. The company also sponsored a maternity clinic. In the 1930s anti-malarial measures, such as draining and oiling, were taken in conjunction with the Government. The company furnished recreational facilities, such as a football field and tennis court (1931), a "first rate" golf course at Panaga, and a social club. The company also retailed petrol and cold storage meat; and the Government found it cheaper and quicker to sub-contract jobs, such as road extensions, to the BMPC. In short, by 1941, the Government was very much the "poor relation" in Belait district.[155]

A further important point is that the company's head offices were in Miri (Sarawak) and there was a constant traffic between the Miri and Seria wings of the oilfield. As a result, Belait district tended to

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153. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1925, p 6 (paragraph 27); and ibid., and Brunei Medical Department Annual Report 1927, p 7.
154. GC Harper, op.cit., p 37. Mr Harper appears to have been unaware of the earlier hospital, set up in 1925.
155. Datuk Turner, letter to the author, 16 February 1983, p 8.

have more in common and closer links with Baram district across the border in Sarawak than with the capital of the Sultanate. The whole oilfield, indeed, was treated as a unit by defence and law and order planners as well as by the Shell Group. In addition the poor communications within Brunei meant that people in the oilfield and the capital passed their lives in isolation from the other. This contributed to a polarization in the State which was already becoming apparent by 1941.

If the BMPC resembled in some respects a State within the State, MCS officers who served in Brunei were not dissatisfied with this situation. Relations with the oil company, Mr Black comments,

"were good and there was no attempt to interfere with the administration of the Government. In fact the Government was much indebted to the company for the various services provided in the town of Kuala Belait". 156

Datuk Turner agrees:

"The company never tried to set itself up as a rival or to challenge the functions of the Government. It was just a very big fish in a small pool! One couldn't get away from it!". 157

6. Conclusion

In comparison with the period 1906-31, the 1930s appeared to be a time of quite rapid change; but in the context of Brunei's post-1945 achievements, those of the first decade of the oil era (1932-41) appear somewhat less impressive, partly because of Government fiscal caution. There is no doubt, however, that in some respects the 1930s marked a clear departure from the past. In 1936 Mr Gent at the Colonial Office

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156. Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 16 May 1983, paragraph 5.
157. Datuk Turner, letter to the author, 14 August 1983, paragraph 3 (B).

noted that "from being perhaps the most remote and backward of all the territories under the High Commissioner's control, Brunei has acquired a rapid importance and wealth from the discovery of its oil resources".[158] By 1937 oil production was recognized in the Colonial Office as having opened up "the prospect of a new standard of administration and development for this small State".[159] From 1932 to 1941 annual Government revenue quadrupled, the National Debt was liquidated and substantial credit balances were amassed in preparation for the day when oil ran out. The scope of administration was expanded and greater attention was given to the improvement of infrastructure and social services. Symbolically, public buildings began to be constructed of brick from 1933 (instead of the temporary or semi-permanent materials used previously). Equally important was the rising influence of the BMPC, the shifting of the State's economic centre of gravity from the capital to the oilfield, and the evidence of a polarization between Brunei and Belait district. As early as 1940-1 the Government could be characterized as very much the "poor relation" of the BMPC in Belait district. In short, there was a break with the pre-oil past; and the retention of political authority enabled the Government to make increased demands on the oil sector after the Pacific War.

The early benefits of the new oil wealth were enjoyed principally by the BMPC, which paid not more than 10% in oil royalties.

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158. CO 717/129 (File 51535) minute by Mr Gent, 13 June 1938.
159. CO 717/123 (File 51535) minute by Mr Gent, 6 March 1937.

Government servants, oilfield personnel and Chinese shopkeepers, merchants and market gardeners, were the sections of the population who had brick houses supplied with running water and electricity, sent their children to local schools, took advantage of the new hospitals, and enjoyed the recreational facilities provided by the oil company. For the River Villagers and rural dwellers, on the other hand, there was no electricity, water had to be collected from a distance, they were less likely to send their children to school, and remained suspicious of the new health services. Their economic well-being, moreover, had to some extent become tied to the vicissitudes of the world market and particularly to the price of rubber.

Brunei remained a comparatively uncomplicated country in 1941. It still could not boast a single secondary school, a single locally-trained doctor, lawyer or engineer. The country lacked even a commercial bank (unless the Post Office Savings Bank, founded in 1935, is thus characterized). The country had little unemployment, only insignificant crime, and since 1904 there had been no further epidemic of a killer disease such as smallpox. Trade unions, political parties and a strident nationalist movement were conspicuous by their absence. The country was "idyllic"[160] in the recollection of one British officer who served there in the late 1930s. But Brunei's "steady progress to modern statehood"[161] was then disrupted by the Japanese occupation.

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160. Dr OE Fisher, letter to the author, 24 March 1984, paragraph 4.
161. ER Bevington CMG CEng, The Economy and Development of the State of Brunei (June 1956), p 5. Copy courtesy of Mr Bevington.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE 1940s: A DECADE WASTED? (WAR, JAPANESE OCCUPATION & RECONSTRUCTION)

1. Introduction

If Brunei had been comparatively unaffected by the Great War (1914-18)[1] a tragically-different situation obtained during the Pacific War of 1941-5, when the country suffered from illegal Japanese occupation. In the previous decade a platform for the future growth of the Sultanate had been established. During the years 1941-5, on the other hand, the Japanese Military Administration not only failed to build upon these foundations, but allowed existing gains to be frittered away. The administration was neglected, trading came to a standstill, rubber exports ceased, the health and education systems ran down, and the Japanese policy was to subordinate all else to their war effort. Given their rapidly deteriorating war situation, which eventually resulted in the

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1. Although fiscal recovery and trading growth had been retarded by wartime conditions and shipping restrictions, life in the Sultanate had not been drastically affected. The report by Mr Cator for inclusion in the official history, The Empire At War, by Sir CP Lucas, ran as follows: "Brunei. As was to be expected from its position and circumstances the part played by...Brunei in the War was neither prominent nor exciting: but throughout...the Sultan was a most faithful...supporter of the British cause and lost no opportunity of impressing on his subjects their duties and obligations. The generosity with which the War Funds and Charities were supported and the attitude of unswerving loyalty adopted by all classes showed that the efforts of the State were limited, not by want of goodwill, but by want of power" (CO 273/501: 52339). The few Europeans in Brunei paid a voluntary income tax varying from 1% to 6%, the proceeds of which - £123.12 in 1917 (CO 531/11: 10762) and £163.31 in 1918 (CO 531/13: 3922) - were remitted to HM Treasury.

Sultanate being virtually cut off from the outside world - the Japanese can hardly have been expected to add significantly to the progress of Brunei, even if it had been one of their priorities. When the Allies returned in June 1945 the reconstruction of the Sultanate had to begin almost from scratch; and it was not until 1953 that a new phase in the country's development commenced.

2. "The State is indefensible"

The outbreak of the Second World War on 3 September 1939 originally gave a considerable boost to Brunei's economy, stimulating especially the production of oil, rubber and sago.[2] Conversely, there was a sharp rise in the cost of living, for which labourers were paid compensatory allowances. The revival of rubber, in particular, increased the general prosperity and purchasing power.[3]

The Sultan ordered two gifts of $100,000 each to be paid from State funds to the imperial exchequer;[4] but these may not be regarded as voluntary contributions. In 1940 special war taxation was introduced, in the form of an export duty on rubber of 2½% ad.val., doubled in 1941 to 5%, and increased duties on liquor and tobacco imports. The proceeds

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2. The quota for rubber release for the fourth quarter of 1941 was 120% compared with 60% in the third quarter of 1939. Exports of rubber from Brunei increased from 2.78 million pounds (lbs) in 1938 to 4.43 million lbs in 1940 and 4.64 million in 1941. Oil exports rose from 5 million barrels in 1938 to 5.53 million in 1939 and 6.27 million in 1940 (before falling to just under 4 million barrels in 1941). Sago exports rocketed from $13,542 in 1938 to $102,592 in 1940.
3. CO 717/136 (File 51535) statement by Mr JG Black, n.d., encl. in Sir TSW Thomas to CO, UMS (Brunei) No 50, 21 April 1939; and CO 717/141 (File 51535) statement by Mr Pengilley, 13 March 1940.
4. CO 717/139 (File 51888/4) and CO 717/143 (File 51888/4).

($51,310 in 1940) were remitted to the United Kingdom. The increase in tension with Japan resulted in provision being made in March 1941 so as to enable local expenditure incurred in connection with the war to be defrayed from special taxation. The Resident retained discretion to decide what proportion should be paid over to HM Government.[5]

The United Kingdom lacked the resources adequately to defend Brunei. Minor measures only were possible. These included the accumulation of food stocks,[6] passage of an Official Secrets Enactment (February 1941) to deter spies,[7] and the recruitment of extra police. In addition, provision was made for the establishment of a Brunei Volunteer Force,[8] which was not expected to resist an enemy landing. A vote was made for air raid precautions.in the oilfield area.[9]

On 10 and 11 May 1941 the 2/15 Punjab Regiment left Singapore for Borneo. One company was stationed in the Miri-Seria oilfield, the majority in Kuching (Sarawak). HM Government was concerned about the defenceless state of British Borneo. Air, naval and man-power were deficient and concentrated elsewhere in the Far East:

"The task of the existing small garrison in North Borneo (meaning, here, Sarawak and Brunei) is to defend the airfields and oilfields as far as

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5. CO 717/146 (File 51656) statement by Mr Pengilley, 24 March 1941.
6. By September 1941 stocks in Brunei amounted to 180 days' supply of rice, 42 of flour, 14 of milk, 42 of sugar and 60 of salt.(CO852/494 File 2, item 75: Sir TSW Thomas to CO, No 492 (telegram), 30 September 1941). Second-grade Thai rice rose in price from 30 cents a gantang in September 1939 to 49 cents a gantang by March 1941. Cheaper rice (36 cents) was available from Burma at the latter date (ibid., item 55).
7. CO 323/1848 (File 7307/1).
8. CO 820/50 (File 36516/6); and CO 531/32 (File 1, item 1).
9. The total supplementary expenditure on emergency measures in 1941 amounted to $86,537 compared with $66,876 derived from 'war taxation: rubber export'. (Brunei Annual Report 1946, pp 69-70).

possible, gaining sufficient time, in the event of any major attack, for their denial to the enemy". 10

It was supposed that Japan lacked the capacity simultaneously to strike in Malaya and Borneo. For this reason British Borneo was not defended:

"Surely the answer" - thus Mr Gent - "is that the state is indefensible against a major attack by Japan so long as our military, air and naval strength is only sufficient to ensure the defence of more vital points such as Malaya and to fight at least a delaying action at points, e.g. Hong Kong, which are more significant than North Borneo". 11

The United Kingdom had been slow to appreciate the potential threat from Japan, as indicated by the intermittent fashion in which the naval base at Singapore was constructed. Further, the Allied powers failed to present a united front to Japan (in the sense of making it clear an attack on one would be regarded as an attack on all).[12] After the fall of France, moreover, British naval strength had to be diverted to the Mediterranean, where, formerly, the French Navy had balanced the Italian.[13] Finally, the Japanese always held the initiative:

"The enemy can strike when and where he pleases", Sir JE Shuckbergh reflected on the eve of the Pacific War; "we (the Allies) can do nothing, cannot even decide whether we will hit back or not, until the blow has fallen. And even then we shall apparently have to waste days, if not weeks, sending long telegrams to one another and discussing technical questions of international law. By the time we are ready (if ever) the enemy will presumably have reached its objective unopposed". 14

Oilfield Denial Scheme. On the morning of 8 December 1941, following the Japanese attack on British Malaya, the telegram ordering the

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10. CO 968/15 (File 2, item 172) Mr RH Scott to Mr JC Sterndale-Bennett, most secret, 31 August 1941.
11. Ibid., item 174, Gent to Sterndale-Bennett (FO), 6 September 1941.
12. This correspondence is in CO 968/8 (Files 10 and 11).
13. Point owed to Dr DK Bassett.
14. CO 968/8 (File 11) minute by Sir JE Shuckbergh (1877-1953), 27 November 1941.

implementation of the oil denial scheme was received in Miri-Seria. This plan had been drawn up by 1938, if not earlier.[15] The aim was to deny the enemy the oil wells absolutely for an indefinite period: the scheme was not "compromised by any desire to retain them intact in the hope that we should eventually reoccupy the territories". The task of the Punjab Regiment was to protect the demolition parties until the destruction of the installations had been completed and to cover the withdrawal to Singapore of skilled technicians and essential machine parts.[16]

In September 1941 all "naturally flowing" oil wells had been cemented off, effectively rendering them useless as producers of oil; production also ceased at Miri and part of the Lutong refinery was dismantled and the equipment shipped to Singapore. On 8 December, therefore, the only wells remaining to be incapacitated were a few "gas-lift" wells at Seria, i.e. those wells where gas had to be used to pump the oil up to the surface. The compressor station was destroyed and the well heads were then blown off. All oil equipment, installations, secondary workshops and the electricity-generating station, even stocks of whisky and gin, were destroyed. In short, "the whole emergency scheme was effectively carried out".[17] A Japanese source agrees that "the enemy had destroyed the key installations in the oilfields and much time was necessary to

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15. The files in the CO 323 series, numbered 6214/16, for 1935, 1936 and 1938 are closed for 50 years; the file for 1937 is "missing"; and the file for 1939 is "destroyed under statute". Cf. CO 717/123 (File 51535), minute by Mr Gent, 6 March 1937: "We (the CO) have also made proposals for the inauguration of a form of defence force for the oilfield in Brunei in association with Sarawak".
16. CO 968/15 (File 5) minute by Mr AR Thomas, 2 January 1942.
17. CO 968/15 (File 6, item 4) report by Messrs AO Buchan and RN Connock, 22 December 1941.

repair (them)".[18]

On 16 December 1941 a coastal look-out reported thirteen large Japanese warships and one large oil tanker north of Miri. The soldiers of the Punjab Regiment having been withdrawn on the 13th after the successful completion of the oil destruction scheme, and the volunteer force being mostly disbanded, the landing took place unopposed (by ground forces). From Kuala Belait the Japanese moved quickly overland to Tutong and on the 22nd they had reached the capital. The British government officials (including the Resident)[19] and rubber planters were seized and interned for the remainder of the conflict, briefly in Miri and then in Kuching.[20] A party of Europeans (including the general manager of the BMPC, Mr Parry), who had escaped into the interior, were massacred by the Japanese at Long Nawang, along with the local Dutch garrison.[21]

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18. Imperial War Museum (hereafter IWM): Box 6, AL 1099, Col. Itsu Ogawa and Lt. Col. Ino Sei, "Borneo Operations 1941-2" (Japanese Studies in World War II, No 22), p 252.
19. In early 1942 the British Residents of Brunei (Mr Pengilley) and Labuan (Mr Humphrey) were invited by the Japanese to work under them. Both refused. (Mr Pengilley ED, letter to the author, 10 May 1983; Tan Sri Datuk AHP Humphrey PMN CMG OBE, letter to the author, 5 April 1983, paragraph 5). The Brunei State Medical Officer, Dr Graham, was not finally interned until 1943.
20. CO 604/30 Sarawak Gazette, 10 August 1950, pp 205-212 ("Guests of the Japanese"); (RHO) Mss BE s454: Datuk RN Turner, "From the Depths of My Memory" (3 vols, 1976), Chapter IX (pp 62-82); (IWM) A6024/08 "Enemy Internment of British Civilians, 1941-5" (typescript of an interview with Datuk Humphrey, 1983).
21. "As horrible as anything ever perpetrated in history" (including the bayoneting of children). Major GS Carter DSO, "Extract of a Report on the Long Nawang Massacre" (1950), typescript in the possession of the author, courtesy of Major Carter. Cf. Lieutenant Okino, a novel by Mr RH Hickling (London 1968). According to Major Carter's report 45 of the 68 victims were Dutch.

The Japanese were not entirely unopposed, however. Their transports were bombed at least once a day whilst landing at the oilfield, resulting in forty "casualties" (Ogawa and Sei, loc.cit., p 256). British

It was reported that there were "no secret societies or (pro-Japanese) fifth column"; but the people could do nothing practical to resist the invader. Chinese shopkeepers in Brunei, however, had boycotted Japanese goods since 1937.[22]

3. The New Leader of the East

Japanese determination to create a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere to support their own 'inner zone' (Japan, Korea and 'Manchukuo') economy is well-known, as are the various stages by which they moved inexorably towards an invasion of South-East Asia in 1938-41.[23] The

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sources agree that on 17-20 and 28 December Dutch planes (two of which were lost) attacked Japanese shipping off Miri "and are believed to have sunk at least one destroyer" (CO 604/29 Sarawak Gazette, 7 October 1949, p 266 and 7 November 1949, p 291). Post-war Japanese accounts concede that on 22 December 1941, three ships, including one destroyer, were "torpedoed" by "enemy submarines", causing heavy damage to all three. (IWM) Box 22, AL 5256, Itsu Ogawa and Lt.Col. Masash Ino, "Borneo Operations, 1941-5" - Japanese monograph No 26, HQ US Army, Japan, 1957 - p 12.

Kuching airfield, guarded by the Punjab Regiment because it afforded access to Dutch Borneo, was denied to the enemy, who was resisted for five months across Borneo (WO 203/2869). The retreat was disastrous for the Punjab Regiment, who lost 524 killed or missing (of whom 473 were Indians), whilst the remaining 579 were interned, after capture on 3 April 1942, in Java. An enemy source admits the loss of 100 Japanese dead and 100 injured during this campaign.

22. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 28. The Japanese had an obvious 'sleeping agent' in Kuala Belait, a fancy goods dealer called Mr Suzuki (Datuk RN Turner SPDK CMG, letter to the author, 16 February 1983).

23. JC Lebra (ed), The Japanese Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II (Kuala Lumpur 1975); J Livingston, J Moore & F Oldfather, The Japan Reader 1: Imperial Japan 1800-1945 (Harmondsworth 1976); Marius B Jansen, "Japan" in Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago 1972), Vol 12 No 12, p 913; G Kanahele, The Japanese Occupation of Indonesia: Prelude to Independence (Cornell PhD, 1967); and R Storry, A History of Modern Japan (Harmondsworth 1976).

role of SE Asia was to supply the raw materials for the 'inner zone' and to provide the necessary foodstuffs for the Japanese armies stationed in the respective southern countries. The Greater East Asia Sphere had "the primary aim of securing benefits to Japan rather than to the member nations of the bloc".[24] The "natives", for their part, were to be brought to a "complete recognition...of Japan's real power". Even Japan's puppet wartime leader in Burma, Dr Ba Maw, complained that for Japanese militarists

> "there was only one way to do a thing, the Japanese way; only one goal and interest, the Japanese interest; only one destiny for the East Asian countries, to become so many Manchukuos or Koreas tied forever to Japan". 25

The Japanese appeared to have little respect for Malays - "the new order in Asia", the Japan Times thundered, "requires virile peoples" - whilst the Chinese immigrants were "superfluous".[26]

The Kawaguchi Detachment, the Japanese task force detailed for NW Borneo, proceeded from Canton via Camranh Bay in the first part of December 1941. General Seiken (or Kiyotaki) Kawaguchi decided that

> "a landing would be made at Miri and Seria to capture and secure the oilfield district and airfields in that area. A part of the force would then re-establish the Miri oilfield while the main body was to capture the Kuching airbase as soon as possible". 27

When Japanese troops, under Captain Koyama, entered Brunei Town, they were allegedly "enthusiastically welcomed by the inhabitants".[28] Pending the arrival of permanent Japanese administrative staff, General Kawaguchi,

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24. H Benda, et al., in Lebra (ed), op.cit., p 101; cf. Jansen, loc.cit).
25. Quoted in Lebra (ed), op.cit., p 157.
26. Japan Times and Advertiser, 17 February 1942.
27. (IWM) AL 1099 Col. Itsu Ogawa and Lt. Col. Ino Sei, "Borneo Operations, 1941-2", p 254.
28. (RHO) Mss Pac s55: Inoue Raus, "Stories of Brunei" (1942), translated by Mr P Scanlon (1951), p 29; and Osaka Mainichi, 18 January 1942, p 6.

with the consent of the Sultan,[29] handed the administration of the country to Inche Ibrahim, formerly 'Secretary to Resident'.[30]

In March 1942 the Kawaguchi Detachment left Borneo for the Philippines and was later annihilated on Guadalcanal.[31] The 4th Independent Mixed Regiment, directly attached to the Southern Army, took over the duties of the Kawaguchi Detachment in Borneo and was responsible for peace and order, the establishment of a military government, the development of natural resources and the mopping up of the remaining enemy in the mountain ranges of west Borneo. In April, in order to expand Japanese military government, Tokyo ordered the activation of the Borneo Garrison Army (BGA), commanded by Goichi Nakahata, who established his headquarters in Kuching. In July 1942 the 4th Independent Mixed Regiment was re-organized into the 40th and 41st Independent Garrison Infantry Battalions with about four hundred soldiers each.

Borneo was divided into two zones by the Japanese: 'North Borneo' (formerly British Borneo), which was controlled by the Army; and 'South

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29. Fr P de Wit (1914-83), who had not been arrested at first because the Japanese thought he was a German, recalled that the Sultan had "no qualms about signing the capitulation" because the British had let him down. "He was not pleased with the Japanese soldiers", Fr de Wit added. "His peace was disturbed and they ordered dinners all the time. He hoped the Americans would come to help get them (the Japanese) out, but the news was not good". (Fr P de Wit, "Van Sultans en Sultans Dochters" in Maanblad van Mill Hill, No 7, December 1951, pp 185-6. Translation from the Dutch by courtesy of Miss Tonn Aelbers).

30. Inche Raus, loc.cit. On 1 April 1942 clocks were advanced one hour all over Brunei so as to conform with Tokyo time. The year was also calculated in Japanese style from 4 July 1942 (1942AD = 2602 JS).

31. Henry I Shaw, "Guadalcanal: A Triumph" in World War II (Orbis, London, 1971-3), pp 1249-50. Of 6,000 Japanese, 90% fell on one day, 13 September 1942.

Borneo' (formerly Dutch Borneo) under the Navy. The former political divisions of British Borneo were disregarded by the Japanese. The whole area was governed as one by a military commander. The first governor of 'North Borneo' was General Maeda,[32] who hailed from a family with a long warrior tradition. With his appointment, Tokyo radio declared, "the old order had been completely done away with and New Borneo will emerge as a valuable member of the Far East Co-Prosperity Region".[33] On 12 April 1942 he confided to Domei newsagency his conviction that, with the necessary capital and labour, the resources of 'North Borneo' could be speedily developed "to bolster Japan's prosecution of the war".[34] He added that "action without words" would be his policy. He was "no possessor of any pet economic theory".[35] After only four months in office, however, General Maeda was killed in an aircraft accident (5 September 1942). On the premise that research work must precede construction undertakings, the general had busied himself with inspection trips. With his "incisive judgement and extraordinary diligence", he laid "the foundations of the

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32. Lieutenant-General Toshinari Maeda (1885-1942), son of Viscount Toshiaki Maeda. 1905: graduated from Military Staff College, subsequently continuing his studies in Europe. 1927: military attache, London. Afterwards he served successively as a regimental commander, a sectional chief of the Army General Staff, and as an instructor at the Military Staff College, of which he became president in 1936. He then commanded a unit in 'Manchukuo', before assuming his final post as C-in-C, Borneo Garrison Army. His service was "unostentatious yet brilliant". Also president of the Bunka Hoko Kai (Society for Public Service through Culture). Hobby: chess. Japan Times and Advertiser, 29 October 1942.

33. (BBC Written Archives Centre, hereafter BBCWAC), Daily Digest of Foreign Broadcasts (hereafter DDFB) No 1,000, Italian language broadcast from Tokyo, 12 April 1942.

34. Cf similar statements by General Tojo on 20 February 1943 and 11 March 1943 (DDFB 1315 and 1332).

35. DDFB No 1000, Domei report, 12 April 1942.

military administration in Borneo which was about to embark upon the construction stage when he met his untimely death".[36] It remained "a matter for congratulation" (to the Japanese), however, that "peace and order in Borneo is perfect".[37]

The late governor was succeeded by General Yamawaki,[38] an authority on military education and considered to be "the fittest leader of construction work in Borneo, which is now taking a definite shape".[39] General Yamawaki was still in office in mid-1944 but not at the time of the Japanese surrender. At his military headquarters in Kuching were the administrative departments, such as general affairs, finance and conveyance.[40] Local government consisted of prefectural and district offices. There were five prefectures in 'North Borneo' and either

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36. Japan Times and Advertiser, 29 October 1942.
37. Ibid.
38. Lieutenant-General Nasataka Yamawaki. Graduate of Military Staff College. Later he served as a member of the Inspectorate General of military education, as a military attache to the Japanese legation in Poland, as a member of the Army General Staff and as an instructor at the Military Staff College. 1932: participated in Woosung landing. 1934: military attache to Japanese legations in Poland and Roumania. Subsequently Director of Ordnance Bureau of War Ministry and Vice Inspector-General of Military Education. Dec 1938: Vice Minister of War. 1940: appointed commander of an outpost unit, after which he became President of the Military Staff College. cOct 1942: appointed C-in-C, Borneo Garrison Army (ibid.; and DDFB No 1772, German language broadcast from Tokyo, 10.15 hours, 23 May 1944).
39. Japan Times and Advertiser, 29 October 1942.
40. According to information supplied to the author by courtesy of Prof. DE Brown, the general affairs department dealt with administration, race, personnel, education and religion, and information and propaganda; the finance department with the control of exchange prices and distribution, research of important resources, acquisition of goods for civilian use, finance and monetary circulation, and the management of factories; and the conveyance department with the transport of goods and mail. Subsequently new departments, such as police and industry, were established.

fifteen or twenty districts.[41] Brunei was abolished as a separate entity and replaced by the prefecture of 'Miri Shih', which encompassed Brunei, Labuan, and the Fourth and Fifth Divisions of Sarawak.[42] The Japanese made no attempt to depose the Sultan, however; on the contrary, he was granted a pension and twice decorated.

In late May 1942 over five hundred Japanese officials arrived in Borneo.[43] Japanese martial law had been imposed; but Islamic and adat law were to be upheld. The maintenance of peace and public order were "basic" to Japanese policy. Police were re-trained in Japanese methods. Crime remained uncommon, the most frequent offence being larceny. Internal passports were issued to control river traffic.

Dr RHW Reece states that generally-speaking the Japanese were content to control coastal areas and riverine settlements and, apart from occasional patrols, made no attempt to bring the whole of the interior under their close influence.[44] An effort was made to inculcate anti-European feeling; and in the later stages of the war, the teaching of Japanese was introduced into the school curriculum and all Government servants were required to attend night classes so that they might master the language. Expeditions were made by Japanese officials into the

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41. Japan Times and Advertiser, 2 June 1942; and DDFB No 1055, 7 June 1942 (Domei Report).
42. It was administered "by a governor of high rank (,).....originally stationed at Miri, who moved to Brunei (Town) in April 2602 (1942 AD). The Governor at this time was Mr T Kodama; before the Head Office of Miri Shih moved to Brunei (Town), Mr T Kimura was sub-district commander until 29 June 2602". (Inche Raus, loc.cit., pp 29-30).
43. Japan Times and Advertiser, 2 June 1942; and DDFB No 1049, 1 June 1942; German language broadcast from Tokyo, 09.30 hours, 31 May 1942.
44. RHW Reece, The Name of Brooke (Kuala Lumpur 1982), p 143.

interior of the island, films were shown, radio speeches made, Japanese newspapers issued in Malay, and medical supplies and other items distributed to the public.[45]

The construction programme entrusted to General Yamawaki in 1942-4 soon faltered. It was reported subsequently by Brigadier Macaskie, the Chief Civil Affairs Officer in British Borneo (1945-6), that:

"During the early days of the occupation the Japanese attempted to administer the territory and to collect taxes but soon gave up the task as unprofitable. For the past year (1944-5) their policy has been the seizure of materials and labour for military needs and complete neglect of every other consideration. They continued to pay salaries to Government servants in depreciated Japanese currency, and the native officers and subordinate staff succeeded in maintaining outward order by persuasion, coupled with drastic punishment by the Japanese for any visible sign of disorder". 46

Or again:

"After invasion the Japanese attempted to carry on the former machinery of government, but there was soon a complete breakdown in the methods of administration and the Japanese rule degenerated into mere spoliation enforced by the Army through the medium of the Kempeitai. No attempt was made by the Japanese to carry out or even maintain public works and their attempt to continue the fiscal system was soon abandoned and they relied upon such revenue as they could raise by granting gambling licences and monopolies of trade". 47

Brunei Malays seem to have remained at their posts in the administration, police and schools.[48] Most of these people were to be

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45. "Borneo" in British Survey (Vol VI, No 12), 12 December 1945, p 3.
46. CO 531/31 (File 30) CFC Macaskie (1888-1969) to War Office, 8 September 1945, paragraph 31; also in CO 874/1107.
47. WO 203/2400 Macaskie, "Final Report of the British Military Administration in Borneo, 10 June 1945 to 15 July 1946", n.d., paragraph 3. Mr (later Sir) LD Gammans MP agreed that "a striking fact about the Japanese occupation was their appalling inefficiency. Wherever they went the administrative and economic machine just ran down".
48. For example, Pengiran Ahmad bin Pengiran Anak Lubo (b 1899), who became District Officer in Tutong; Pengiran Muhammad remained as State Wireless Officer; Inche Harun as Superintendent of Education; and Inche Taib as DO Belait.

found later in prominent positions in the Sultanate. The police and teachers who had been indoctrinated by the Japanese, indeed, were among those least well-disposed towards the resumption of the British Residential System in 1946. On 1 October 1943 the Japanese Military Administration issued a declaration respecting "the political rights of 'North Borneo' natives". Provincial councils were to be established in each prefecture on 8 December 1943. Five to fifteen "prominent natives" were to be appointed as "extraordinary members" of the councils by the Japanese Military Administration.[49] On 2 February 1944 it was announced that ten people from 'North Borneo' were to be sent for an inspection tour of Japan to last for one month. Five other youths were to be sent to Japan for one year courses at agricultural, technical and other scientific institutions.[50] The purpose of such training was to enable students "to co-operate more fully with Japan".[51]

The economy. The Japanese complained that the British had left Borneo as undeveloped as possible.[52] The first priority was the rehabilitation of the Miri-Seria oilfield. The destruction of installations did not unduly concern planners in Tokyo. One industrialist thought that the Borneo fields were the shallowest in the world so that new wells could

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49. (BBC WAC) DDFB No 1537, 2 October 1943, German language broadcast from Tokyo, 09.40 hours, 1 October 1943.
50. DDFB No 1660, 2 February 1944 (Domei report).
51. DDFB No 1661, 3 February 1944: Domei report, 1 February 1944.
52. The Osaka Mainichi and Tokyo Nichi Nichi, 18 January 1942, p 6. At one stage Mr Aoki, Minister for Greater East Asia, even declared that the natural resources in Borneo were "deliberately hidden" while the north-west of the island was under British rule (DDFB No 1399, 17 May 1943: Domei report, 15 May 1943, quoting Mr Aoki).

be bored in about two or three months or in a year at the most.[53] Though lack of machinery caused severe inconvenience in reconstruction, experts managed to operate pumps by repairing damaged parts with automobile motors and other mechanical odds and ends.[54] Dr Reece states that the Japanese managed to sink sixteen new wells in Miri-Seria during the occupation.[55] Production remained significantly below pre-war levels;[56] and output in 1947 alone exceeded the total produced during the years 1942-5.[57]

At the end of 1942 the Japanese announced that the "fundamentals" for the development of Borneo were

"the attainment of independence in the matter of food supply and the increased production of oil, coal and minerals, and the economic exploitation of the forests". 58

The first aim was to double rice production in order to eliminate the need for imports. New areas of jungle were to be brought under cultivation

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53. This was the attitude of a Mr Ishihara, President of the Ishihara Industrial Marine Transportation Company, quoted in JC Lebra (ed), op. cit., pp 44-5.
54. (BBC WAC) DDFB No 1000, 13 April 1942, Domei report.
55. RHW Reece, op.cit., p 143.
56. Production from Seria alone in 1939 was 5.53 million barrels, in 1940 6.27m barrels annually. Japanese output during the 3½ years of the occupation totalled only 11.5m barrels from Miri and Seria combined (3.3m barrels annually). (GC Harper, The Discovery and Development of the Seria Oilfield - Bandar Seri Begawan, 1975 - p 21). Cf. DDFB No 929, Tokyo radio, 19.55 hours, 31 January 1942: "Japanese successes in Sarawak and Brunei guarantee an annual supply of 3.5 million tons (c20+ million barrels) of petroleum". During the occupation a large number of BMPC staff were employed by the Japanese in the same job that they had with the company (Harper, op.cit., p 22 fn).
57. The Japanese produced an estimated 1,600,000 tons during the occupation (Brunei Annual Report 1946). Production in 1947 amounted to 1,689,963 tons.
58. CO 874/1104 Gent to Sir N Malcolm (BNBC), 29 January 1943, enclosing World Economic News (Hamburg), 22 January 1943; cf. (BBC WAC) DDFB No 1262, 31 December 1942: Domei report, 30 December 1942.

for the purpose; and because rubber was available in abundance throughout the Co-Prosperity Sphere, plans were made to shift rubber cultivators to other agricultural undertakings, particularly rice and cotton. In fact, however, the Japanese failed to ensure sufficient food supplies. Further light is shed on this matter by Professor AR Maxwell:

"Japanese occupation forces in Brunei (1941-5) attempted to appropriate rice and money from Kedayan villagers. If they had no money the troops wanted their labour, especially to collect wood from the forest. Consequently, many fled into the forest to escape these exactions. Small groups of families established swiddens within walking distance of each other. Houses were built in swiddens. Small groups were living dispersed in the forest east of Kampong Pyasaw-pyasaw. According to informants, the scattered and non-nucleated settlement pattern probably prevented some harsh treatment by avoiding the direct reach of Japanese troops...(Food) supplies during the occupation were unpredictable and often short. Kedayan villagers affirmed that some Barunay (i.e. Brunei Malays) accompanied them into the forest and learned how to cultivate rice for the first time". 59

Timber felled in Borneo to make way for agricultural land was "vital" for the Japanese war effort.[60] Coal was extracted from the seam at Subok near Brunei Town. The cutch industry appears to have been continued. A branch of the Yokohama Specie Bank was opened in Miri.[61] A Maritime Bureau and shipbuilding programme for 'North Borneo' were established in Kuching.[62] Thirty Chinese, representing their compatriots in Borneo, pledged a "donation" in 1942 to the Japanese military authorities of three million yen to be raised in two months and to liquidate all pro-Chiang Kai Shek activities. Chinese residents, it was reported,

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59. AR Maxwell, Urang Darat: An Ethnographic Study of the Kadayan of Labu Valley, Brunei (Ann Arbor, 1981), pp 107-8.
60. BBC WAC: DDFB No 1095, 17 July 1942: Domei report.
61. DDFB No 1115, 6 August 1942: English language broadcast from Batavia, 5 August 1942.
62. DDFB No 1161, 21 September 1942: Domei report; and DDFB No 1267, 5 January 1943.

were doing business under the protection of the Nipponese authorities.[63] The Kwok rebellion of 1943 in Jesselton indicates the real feelings of the Chinese; but, by adding to Japanese feelings of insecurity, it led to greater repression.[64]

Shortages. In March 1943 the Japanese Military Administration officially recognized the establishment of the North Borneo Materials Distribution Association which aimed at establishing the supply and distribution of goods in 'North Borneo' on a well-planned basis. The tasks of the new association was to control goods imported from Japan and the 'southern regions', including daily necessities, foodstuffs, machines and textiles, and commodities produced in 'North Borneo'.[65] If this move was designed to prevent shortages, it failed signally.

Apart from Brunei having been cut off from its traditional export markets (viz. the United Kingdom and the United States), Allied destruction of Japanese shipping[66] brought trade to a standstill and "only certain shopkeepers were allowed to remain as distributors".[67] The Japanese currency declined rapidly in value. Cash crop production ceased. Inevitable hardship followed. As General Tojo accurately observed, the "successful outcome of the war" was a prerequisite for building up

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63. (BBC WAC) DDFB No 1106, 28 July 1942; Domei report, 27 July 1943.
64. J Maxwell-Hall, Kinabalu Guerrillas: An Account of the Double Tenth 1943 (Borneo Literature Bureau 1968); T Harrisson, "The Chinese in Borneo 1942-1946" in International Affairs (1950), pp 354-62; and notes from the Japanese Rikugun (courtesy of Professor DE Brown).
65. (BBC WAC) DDFB No 1331, 10 March 1943; Domei report (March 1943).
66. During the war the Allies sank about 90% of Japanese naval and merchant shipping (R Storry, A History of Modern Japan - Harmondsworth, 1976, Revised Edn - p 228).
67. Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 7.

Greater East Asia.[68] Unfortunately for him, Japanese armies everywhere were in retreat.

For the Brunei people matters started to become harsh at the beginning of 1944, by which time the stores of food and medicine stock-piled before the war had become exhausted. The Japanese themselves lacked food, so they confiscated most of the local harvest in 1944 to remedy the deficiency. The effect of this was that

"a serious state of starvation set in (among the people of Brunei), which grew worse week by week. Together with the lack of food, medicines were in very short supply and almost non-existent, malaria spread, and the resistance of the population to disease was broken down...No anti-malaria work was done...". 69

The lack of means for repairing and replacing equipment made fishing difficult; and even a needle became a rarity. From 1944 Kampong Ayer was progressively emptied of people as the inhabitants went into the interior to cultivate a piece of land.[70]

4. "Strategic areas in Borneo will have to be abandoned to the enemy"[71]

From the end of 1943 the Borneo Garrison Army (BGA), apprehensive of the defensive weakness of Borneo, submitted reports to higher command requesting reinforcements in order to convert its garrison into an operational unit. In April 1944 BGA headquarters was transferred from Kuching to Jesselton, and, at the same time, came under the command of

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68. (BBC WAC) DDFB No 1432, 19 June 1943: General Tojo quoted by Domei.
69. Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 7. Cf. Borneo Bulletin, 6 December 1975, p 15.
70. Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 7; of. p 344-5.
71. This section is based upon: (IWM) Box 22, AL 5256: Col. Itsu Ogawa and Lt. Col. Masash Ino, "Borneo Operations 1941-1945" (Japanese Monograph No 26 - HQ, US Army, Japan, 1957).

the Seventh Area Army. Allied invasion was anticipated in about January 1945. At a meeting of chiefs of staff in Singapore during August 1944, the BGA was ordered to secure key points, such as Tawao, Tawi-Tawi and Sandakan against the advancing enemy. The chief of staff of the BGA requested one and a half divisions for this purpose; but this was rejected and one independent mixed brigade and two infantry battalions had to suffice. In late 1944 the BGA was re-organized into the 37th Army. Although the BGA sacrificed ground defence preparations in order to concentrate on the construction of eleven airbases, this task was extremely difficult in "underdeveloped and barren Borneo" because of the acute shortage of labour and materials. Existing air units were sufficient only for the purpose of escorting coastal shipping and patrolling the coasts of Borneo. In October 8,000 reinforcements for the 37th Army arrived in Jesselton from Japan. An Australian attack was now expected in March 1945:

"Our estimate of the Australian plans for the capture of Borneo is: assisted by elements of the USAF and elements of the British Fleet, the Australian Forces will seize certain airbases in strategic areas on the east coast. Simultaneously, they will execute landings at strategic points on the west coast, especially in the vicinity of Brunei. They will then establish a footing in West Borneo as part of the overall establishment of a strategic pattern for the invasion of Malaya from the east". 72

In January 1945 the west coast of Borneo was given priority for Japanese troop concentration. Crossing from east to west caused many losses but the redeployment had been completed by February.[73] Air raids grew so

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72. Ibid., p 38.

73. This was the occasion of the notorious Sandakan-Ranau death march, survived by only six (out of about 2,400) Allied prisoners-of-war. C Simpson, "Six From Borneo" (Text of a BBC/ABC Radio 'docudrama', courtesy of Major GS Carter DSO).

intense that all communications were cut off not only from the outside world but also between units on the island. An order to withdraw from Labuan could not be conveyed to the troops stationed there. The Southern Army's estimate of the situation was that Borneo would be only a protective advanced position for the more important areas in the southern regions around Singapore, and that strategic areas in Borneo would gradually have to be abandoned to the enemy. The aim was to draw as many Allied forces as possible away from Japan itself.

The 37th Army commander was ordered to strengthen the defences in and around Kuching by withdrawing one infantry battalion from Banjermasin and half a battalion from Miri. As sea transport around Borneo was practically impossible, the battalion was first moved from Banjermasin to Java. But at the end of the war, half the troops were still on Java. In the meantime the half battalion of infantry ordered to evacuate Miri was unable to reach Kuching, because the troops, sick and starving, were compelled to march over barren terrain and were constantly attacked by 'bandits'. The garrison at Kuching consisted only of one and a half infantry battalions and some auxiliary troops. The 10th Independent Air Brigade, which had already lost "all" its planes, was unable to provide air cover. Inter-island sea transport and shipments from overseas came to a standstill by the end of 1944. Most Japanese troops suffered from malnutrition and, because of the lack of medical supplies (except in Kuching sector) and poor sanitation, in addition to the heavy casualties suffered during trans-Borneo movements, were very prone to malaria and other diseases.

Allied Operations[74] The 1945 Borneo Campaign (Operation Oboe)

"was directed towards the capture of certain areas on the north-west and east coasts of Borneo, principally with a view to the establishment of advanced air bases and the resumption of oil and rubber production". 75

This was to be a prelude to operations against Java and Sumatra. At the same time South East Asia Command (SEAC), from bases in India and Burma, would launch Operation 'Zipper', the liberation of Malaya. If these operations succeeded, the scene would be set for the final assault on the Japanese mainland, planned for 1946.

Originally six 'Oboes' were planned but the number was later reduced to three and their order altered as follows:

Oboe 1	Tarakan
Oboe 6	Brunei Bay
Oboe 2	Balikpapan

The target date for Oboe Six was 23 May 1945 but was deferred to 10 June because of the delay in advancing troops and equipment to the Morotai headquarters. Enemy strength on Borneo was estimated at 32,000, including 15,000 combat troops. Evidence accumulated that the NE tip of the island was being evacuated and soldiers shifted towards the Jesselton area. A number of troops had also been withdrawn from Tarakan. The Japanese fleet in Singapore was expected to be too busy on convoy duty or under repair in dock to interfere with planned Allied operations. The enemy was estimated to have 15 aircraft in Borneo, but 63 more in Java.

Oboe One, which lasted from 27 May to 20 June 1945, resulted

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74. This section is based upon WO 203/2690 Lt. Gen. Sir LJ Morshead (1889-1959), "First Australia Corps: Report on Operations during the Borneo Campaign, 1 May to 15 August 1945".
75. Ibid., p 2.

in the liberation of Tarakan and the elimination of the Japanese garrison.

The aim of Oboe Six was "to secure the Brunei Bay area...in order to permit the establishment of an advanced fleet base and to protect existing oil and rubber resources".[76] After preliminary air and naval bombardment a simultaneous landing was effected by the Ninth Australian Division commanded by General Wootten (1893-1970) on Labuan and on the mainland north of Brunei Town on 10 June 1945. The landing on all beaches was made on time and without opposition, except on Labuan. Brunei Town was liberated on 13 June and the Australians accomplished their limited aim of establishing a perimeter cleared of Japanese troops stretching from Papar to Miri. On 14 August 1945 Japan expressed a desire to accede to the Allied peace proposals.[77]

The Services Reconnaissance Detachment (SRD).[78] In March 1945, before the landing by regular Australian forces, a preliminary SRD was dropped by parachute into the interior of Borneo to gather intelligence, deny food supplies to the enemy, and train guerrillas to go into action when regular troops should arrive. In addition the SRD had to prevent fleeing Japanese regrouping inland in order to launch a counter-offensive against the Australians. The SRD officers - forty-nine in all,

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76. Ibid., p 18.
77. Of the 5,400 Japanese troops within the Ninth Australian Division's perimeter, 2,530 were killed and 130 taken prisoner (before 14 August). Australian losses amounted to 79 killed and 209 wounded. In the 1945 Borneo campaign as a whole, 121 Australians were slain (1,825 injured).
78. See T Harrisson, World Within, A Borneo Story (London 1959); GS Carter, A Tragedy of Borneo 1941-45 (Kuala Belait, c1958); GS Carter, "Return to Borneo 1945" (typescript in possession of the author, courtesy of Major Carter); and Sarawak Gazette, 2 June 1947, 2 July 1947 and 12 April 1951. (CO 604/27 and CO 604/31).

led by Majors T Harrisson, G Carter and W Sochon (each DSO) - were welcomed by the people of the interior and soon 2,000 anti-Japanese guerrillas, many well-armed, had been raised. Reasons for the friendly reception of Allied officers included remembrance of pre-war Brooke administration; the disruption of commerce under the Japanese; and the highlanders' traditions as fighting men.

The sector commanded by Major Carter included the Belait and Tutong districts of Brunei. During this time, he recalls,

"I never thought to recruit Brunei Malays as guerrilla forces as they had no stomach for it. All my men were from the...tribes of Sarawak and a few Chinese from around the oilfields". 79

At dawn on 10 June 1945, as the regular Australian forces landed, the guerrillas trained by the SRD in the hinterland

"fell upon the mainland Japanese, their co-operators, installations and communications whenever we could get at them. In strict military terms this was not great shakes. But the wide scatter, the ferocity, and the complete surprise of these attacks had a far greater effect than their simple statistical significance. Our irregular efforts gave to the unlucky enemy the impression of a general synchronized attack". 80

Thus ended the Japanese occupation.

If the Japanese had failed to achieve their broader strategic and economic objectives in Borneo, their occupation of Brunei was wholly disastrous for the Sultanate and disrupted the country's "smooth advance towards modern statehood" (Bevington). It is difficult to suggest a single benefit derived by the people of Brunei from the period of Japanese occupation. Did the Japanese provide good administration? On the

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79. Major GS Carter DSO, letter to the author, 3 August 1983.
80. Harrisson, op.cit., p 259. (In the Lawas-Brunei-Seria sector the guerrillas actually accounted for more enemy fatalities than the Australian forces had done. SRD casualties were negligible).

contrary, their rule degenerated into "mere spoliation enforced by the army through the medium of the kempeitai". Their policy in 1944-5 was "the seizure of materials and labour for military needs, and the complete neglect of every other consideration". Oil production by the Japanese in Brunei was significantly below pre-war levels and nothing was added to the finances of the country which suffered from massive inflation; trading came to a standstill because of Allied success in eliminating Japanese shipping; roads were allowed to become overgrown; the education system and medical service, far from expanding, had ground to a halt, so that a whole generation of school-children was lost and the people generally were reduced to malnutrition and incapacity through disease. Did the Japanese even advance the independence of Brunei? The first popular political party in the Sultanate did not appear until 1956, eleven years after the Japanese had been driven out. If the Allies had lost the war, moreover, Brunei must have remained one of the "Manchukuos or Koreas forever tied to Japan". The Japanese had not even brought greater administrative opportunities to the people of Brunei, because most of the senior civil servants they employed had already held high office under the British. In short, for the remainder of the 1940s the returning British had to clear up the chaos inherited from the Japanese: to restore decent administration, to rehabilitate the economy, to eliminate fear and restore justice, to rebuild the towns, re-establish and expand welfare services, and reconstruct the roads.

5. British Planning for Post-War Borneo

Planning for post-war British Borneo started with a realization that when the Far Eastern territories were liberated, relief measures would be necessary for the civilian population and prisoners of war interned by the Japanese.[81] In about October 1942 Mr GS Wodeman, formerly Chief Secretary in Ceylon, was appointed temporarily to the Colonial Office to investigate Far Eastern relief needs. He concluded that it would be essential to have a skeleton administration in being and ready to go in with the occupying forces.[82] But the very people most suitable for such a task - colonial civil servants in the Far East - were languishing in Japanese camps. It was clear, therefore, that, since the survivors would require prolonged rest and recuperation after release, a wholly new cadre of administrators would have to be recruited. Hence the three principal tasks of the planners were:

1. an estimate of preliminary relief supplies for the civilian population;
2. preparations for the treatment and repatriation of internees; and
3. recruitment of administrative officers who would be ready to take up their tasks immediately upon re-entry of Allied forces into Japanese-occupied territories.

The War Office had two principal concerns. First, that military commanders should not be burdened with administrative worries while battles were in progress; and, secondly, that starving and sick indigenous populations should not hinder operations. Hence the War Office also

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81. CO 865/79 minute by Mr Gent, 1 December 1942.
82. Ibid., memorandum by Mr GS Wodeman CMG (b 1886), 9 November 1942.

oonsidered it essential that the nuoleus of a civil administration should aooompany the re-oooupying Allied forces.[83]

In October 1943 a Borneo Planning Unit was establised, originally at the Colonial Office, under the command of Mr CFC Maoaskie, the most senior civil servant from British Borneo to avoid internment.[84] His task was to prepare a skeleton administration. Long-term policy directives were drafted in oonjunction with regular Colonial Office staff for the guidance of Mr Maoaskie and his future oolleagues in the civil administration.[85] These directives, though primarily oonoerned with the longer term, were to be implemented as far as practioable during the period of military administration. The future oonstitutional order also required re-thinking (see Chapter 10, below).

As ohief planner, Mr Maoaskie was responsible for the general direction and oontrol of planning, for political and oonstitutional affairs, and matters of law. He also recommended the selection of the other members of the unit. The tasks of the deputy head planner, Mr FH Pollard (d o1955) - head of the Sarawak Government's offioes in London - oonoerned personnel, distriot administration and local government, public relations, information services and oensorship, and the oil industry. The financial planner, chosen temporarily, was Mr FW Pinnook (d 1967), who was to be joined by Mr CE Gasooigne, then serving as Sarawak Government agent in Sydney. The police post was oooupied by Mr WL Sochon, who had spent nine years in Sarawak, but was currently deputy governor of

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83. CO 865/14 memorandum by Mr PAB McKerron (WO), 8 Deoember 1942.
84. See CO 865 (Far Eastern Reoonstruotion) and CAB 98/41.
85. CO 531/31 (File 5) minute by Gent, 19 September 1944.

Wormwood Scrubs gaol. The engineer, Mr CF Birt (1903-81), had worked for the PWD in Sarawak, but was currently employed on Admiralty work in Ceylon. The Medical Officer, Dr PA Dingle (b 1881), was retained only as a part-time consultant because he was considered to be too old to return to Borneo upon re-occupation. Both Mr Pollard and Dr Dingle appear to have joined the BPU in November 1943, followed by Mr Pinnock in January 1944 and Mr Birt in about April 1944. Further officers - Messrs Gascoigne, Leach and Newton-Wade - had joined by June 1944.

It was laid down that during the period of military administration 'British Borneo' would be administered as one territory. The formal statement of the BPU's objectives also declared that

"every member of the BPU must keep in close touch with the corresponding member of the Malaya Planning Unit (MPU) in order to obtain guidance and to ensure that the policy to be pursued in Borneo should be as uniform as possible with that to be pursued in Malaya". 86

Mr Macaskie kept "in close touch" with the head of the MPU, General Sir R Hone, but he was not actually under the latter's order.[87]

Borneo's inclusion within an American military sphere - South-West Pacific Command (SWPC) under General MacArthur rather than South-East Asia Command (SEAC) controlled by the British Admiral Mountbatten - created problems because HM Government feared that Washington intended to keep civil affairs policy in its own hands. Australian interference also had to be discouraged. After prolonged discussion a UK-US 'civil affairs charter' was agreed (October 1943), under which HM Government

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86. CO 865/8 (item 2) BPU: statement of objects, paragraph 5.
87. WO 203/3973 (item 3A) Hone to Supreme Allied Commander South-East Asia (SACSEA), 18 July 1944.

was empowered to formulate civil affairs policies for Borneo which the force commander was required to follow.[88]

The BPU experienced a considerable shortage of officers: of a proposed establishment of 121, only 66 could be gathered. The essence was to find personnel competent to carry on under the Colonial Office after the transfer to civil administration.[89] Internees were to be repatriated at once and not be permitted to join the staff of the military administration even if anxious to do so. After a period of recuperation many of these officials might be suitable to return. Some released Government servants were rather bitter about this decision:

"I have seen Macaskie...and others", one commented. "I offered my services for a few months but soon gathered we are not required. I did get one person to admit that we are regarded as semi-mental cases. Everybody is most kind, but we cannot help feeling that they have been told to humour us...". 90

The administrative directive (as revised on 31 March 1944) stated that during the period of military administration British Borneo would be unified under the CCAO. On resumption of civil government, Labuan would be united with North Borneo, but the separate identity of Sarawak and Brunei would be maintained. A Governor-General in Singapore would co-ordinate policy in the three territories as far as possible. It was of great importance that recurrent expenditure on administration should be kept low, and to this end the unification of certain departments was desirable. A customs union, involving joint tariffs leading towards ultimate free trade, was recommended. In such cases the duties on Brunei

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88. This correspondence may be found in CO 968/85 (File 1).
89. CO 865/31 memorandum by General Sir R Hone, 7 October 1943.
90. CO 874/1107 RG Evans to Mr (later Sir) CR Smith, 20 October 1945.

and Sarawak transhipment cargo collected at Labuan would be credited to Brunei or Sarawak respectively. Certain technical services such as medical, vetinerary, agriculture and education departments might be combined in personnel, though each territory would control the expenditure upon such departments within its own sphere. A joint Court of Appeal was planned, as well as the adoption of the principal Malayan Codes as a step towards uniformity of laws of general application.[91]

Until late 1944 the BPU had consisted of 14 officers. In February 1945 it was militarised and became known as "50 CAU" (50th Civil Affairs Unit). The advance party of six officers left for Melbourne in February 1945 and the main body left in March. On arrival it was learned that the Borneo invasion would be staged at an early date and a unit was formed with considerable haste with Australian officers and other ranks. The Australian unit was known as the British Borneo Civil Affairs Unit (BBCAU) and grew up alongside the nucleus of 50 CAU. Officers of 50 CAU were attached to the Australian army and were posted to BBCAU but it was not until June 1945 that the merger was complete and BBCAU as well as 50 CAU, which became a holding unit, came under one command.[92]

6. The British Military Administration (June 1945 to July 1946)

Brigadier Macaskie, the CCAO, who had been given background directives on the longer-term policy of HM Government,[93] had a dual

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91. CO 531/31 (File 4, item 2) Directive on Administration, 11 February 1944, revised on 31 March 1944.
92. WO 203/2400 CFC Macaskie, "Final Report of the BMA", paragraph 4.
93. CO 531/31 (File 5).

responsibility: to the military commander for immediate civil affairs and to the Colonial Office for the progressive re-establishment of civil administration. He was assisted by a central executive staff based on Labuan and by district CAOs (Civil Affairs Officers). During the period of hostilities before the Japanese surrender in August 1945, the Australian commander refused to delegate powers to the CCAO. Matters improved, however, after the original Australian general was replaced.

The headquarters of the BMA after the Australian landing was on Labuan, which rapidly became one vast transit camp. Apart from isolated pockets of resistance, the military stage concluded locally on 10 September 1945 when the Australians accepted the surrender of Lt. Gen. Baba, commanding the 37th Japanese Army, and his colleagues, "an exceptionally evil-looking set of men, the embodiment of cruelty and tyranny".[94] One-third of the Allied prisoners held in Kuching had died and the survivors were "skin and bone". Released internees were brought to Labuan for medical treatment and repatriation.[95] Japanese Surrendered Personnel were collected, disarmed and returned to their homeland.[96]

All Civil Affairs Officers were enjoined to

"administer to the best of their ability with a sense of impartiality and justice and without fear or favour...The principles of good administration are the preservation of law, order and justice, the prevention of disorder and distress, the removal of fear and the creation of economic well-being". 97

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94. (RHO) Mss Pac s71 (File 8): Macaskie, "Notes for an Autobiography of a North Borneo Career" (1964), p 132.
95. Macaskie, "Autobiography", p 132; and WO 203/2367, 3106, 3799, 3800, 4575, 4576, 5620 and 5641.
96. WO 203/2518 and 5535.
97. CO 531/31 (File 14, sub-file 10) Macaskie, General Instructions for Communication to all CAOs, paragraph 4.

Distribution of food supplies. One of the main tasks of the civil affairs unit (CAU) was the distribution of relief supplies, particularly food and clothing, and the administration of medical care to the sick. There had been a "vast increase" in malaria, malnutrition, beri-beri and other diseases.[98] During the occupation many people had deserted good wet padi land and taken to the hills where they were less exposed to Japanese marauders. Of those who remained, many had left their villages and lived by their padi fields. On the Allied return stray Japanese units on the run created uncertainty and the acreage planted under padi was much less than in previous years. The 1945-6 harvest was poor, and was further reduced by the depredations of pests, especially wild pigs. Rifles were loaned to agricultural overseers to deal with this problem.[99] The demonstration and experimental stations in Brunei were quickly re-opened.[100]

Distribution of relief supplies was handicapped by Japanese neglect of roads and the acute shortage of shipping. After a while the BMA began to charge for its supplies in order to encourage domestic production.[101] Although food stocks were perilously close to exhaustion at times, unrest never assumed anything like the proportions it did in Malaya. (In Brunei, moreover, the returning Allies faced none of the political complications caused, for example, by the MPAJA in Malaya or

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98. WO 203/2400 Macaskie, "Final Report of the BMA", paragraph 104.
99. Ibid., paragraph 49.
100. CO 531/31 (File 30, item 13) BMA report for the month ending 25 November 1945, paragraph 34.
101. WO 203/2281 50 CAU to WO, October 1945; and Mr FW Pinnock to Lt. Col. GEM Morgan (WO), 21 September 1945.

by the Vietnamese and Indonesian declarations of independence).

Medical supplies. The advance party of the entire CAU had only three doctors. The establishment of hospitals was undertaken by the Ninth Australian Division until sufficient staff of the CAU arrived to take over all civilian hospitals. Indigenous dressers were re-engaged.[102] There was a shortage of clothing. The accommodation problem was acute because of Allied bombing. Sawn timber for rebuilding was not available and atap was expensive. Medical supplies were insufficient; Admiral Mountbatten warned on 10 September 1945 that unless action was taken quickly there would be a complete lack of relief stores when SEAC took over: "The condition of civilian population Borneo is serious and lack of supplies quite unacceptable",[103] he telegraphed. By October 1945 essential services in Brunei were being restored and there had been a "marked improvement" during the previous two months in the condition of the population. The BMA assumed responsibility for the pre-war hospitals and dispensaries run by the BMPC and rubber companies. Trained midwives and child welfare workers were in action in most areas by the end of 1945. Generally, disease was being controlled, but the volume of work exceeded pre-war levels. Thereafter, the scale of ill-health tended to subside.[104]

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102. WO 203/2400 Macaskie, "Final Report of BMA", paragraph 27.
103. WO 203/4360 (item 5) SACSEA to WO, signal, 10 September 1945, paragraph 3.
104. WO 203/2400 Macaskie, "Final Report of BMA", paragraphs 95-105; Cf. CO 537/1628, Dr Smart's report, January 1946. Nurse Lee had continued, within the limits of drugs and equipment available, to do child welfare work during the occupation, until she contracted typhoid. Prevalent diseases in Brunei in late 1945 included malaria, blackwater fever, yaws and anaemias.

Administrative restoration. Apart from the distribution of relief supplies, the second main task of the civil affairs staff was the restoration of an administration in preparation for the handover to civilian control. When the Australians landed in Brunei, the Sultan had taken refuge in the country.[105] Contact was re-established both with him and with Inche Ibrahim.[106]

The monarch played no role during the BMA. The military commander assumed full jurisdiction temporarily. Property rights, religious liberty and Malay custom were respected. Military administration was seen as essential to maintain order and achieve rapid rehabilitation. Thus the Sultan and his State Council could not immediately resume their status and functions; nor was the Sultan allowed to travel abroad.[107]

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105. (RHO) Mss Pac s71 (File 8) Macaskie, "Autobiography", p 145. (The Sultan, who was not in good health, had taken refuge for some three months at a kampong at the mouth of the Limbang).

106. Ibid., pp 145-6. "Inche Ibrahim had carried on the civil administration under the Japanese, and, no doubt fearing that he might be treated as a collaborator, had retired to a house some miles away...On my first visit to Brunei after the liberation I drove with another officer to his house and he came to the door looking as white as a sheet. I am sure he thought we were the English equivalent of the kempeitai. When I advanced with outstretched hand and asked him if he didn't remember me, the look of relief that came into his face was gratifying to see" (ibid). Mr Kay commented that Inche Ibrahim was "far gone with consumption" (ibid., File 5, Kay to Macaskie, 11 February 1946, confidential, paragraph 3).

107. WO 203/5293 (item 1) directive from SACSEA to ALFSEA, 21 July 1945, Appendix A; of CO 855/56 British Borneo Military Administration Gazette (hereafter BBMAG), 1 September 1945, Proclamation No 1. On 23 April 1946 the Sultan requested permission to travel to India and the United Kingdom. This wish evidently was not granted. (CO 992/1 Register. The actual documents were "destroyed under statute"). Cf CO 531/31 (File 14, sub-file 7, top secret, BS/42, destroyed): "Special instructions regarding the Sultan of Brunei". If proved a 'collaborator', he was to be removed with his wives to Labuan. Wing Commander Kay reported that the monarch was "only too relieved" to see the British return. There was "no question" of collaboration; on the contrary, His Highness and family

The Civil Affairs Officer stationed in Brunei was Wing Commander KEH Kay (b 1904; now deceased), formerly a planter there, whilst a Captain Marshall set up a headquarters at Kuala Belait and continued to administer the district. Most of the former Malay Government servants came to join as soon as they were able and many other "willing helpers" came to assist in any way possible to rehabilitate the country. It was intended ultimately to reinstate all members of the pre-occupation establishment (except for those whose conduct during the occupation was under suspicion). "That almost all the people were overjoyed to see us back was obvious from the great welcome we have had everywhere", Mr Kay reported.[108] (But anyone bearing relief supplies to a sick and starving population was unlikely to have been rebuffed).

The duties of CAOs, instead of diminishing, increased as the military administration expanded to fulfill the functions of government. Magisterial duties played a prominent part in the work of CAOs after the first three months of the BMA (when they had been denied magisterial powers by the Australian commander).[109] Stories of alleged collaboration came pouring in; and Mr Kay was "very disappointed" that a number of Malays and Chinese

"turned against the British and oppressed their fellow countrymen, mulcted them of food or money by selling (commodities), including medicine, at

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"detested" the Japanese. (RHO) Mss Pac s71 (File 2) Kay to Macaskie, 20 June 1945.

108. Ibid., (File 5) Kay, report on the first six months of the BMA in Brunei, 31 December 1945, paragraph 3. "The amount of good hidden money, he added, "bears out the faith the people had in the British".

109. CO 855/56 BBMAG, 1 October 1945, Proclamation No 10, Military Courts Proclamation, 3 September 1945.

wicked prices...(School) teachers...and the police were the most noticeable whose behaviour was neither loyal nor proper". 110

The decision to accord Japanese occupation currency no value whatever "caused very little trouble" (a) because its purchasing power had already diminished to little or nothing; and (b) because "anyone who held quantities of that currency had almost certainly been a collaborator with the Japanese and received no sympathy from the bulk of the population".[111] Those sufficiently astute to have converted their financial gains into landed property, however, emerged as rich men from the occupation. Many other people incurred heavy cash losses merely to survive during the war. A considerable number of shopkeepers had also lost their homes during Allied bombing, much of which appeared - from the safety of a post-war vantage point - to have been "quite unnecessary".[112] The re-opening of shops helped to curb the black market, but the pawn shop remained "all too popular". Many people continued to rely on free relief; but "whatever system one adopts", Mr Kay argued, "a few may wangle more than they deserve".[113] Subsequently, Brunei submitted claims for war damage compensation totalling $3,439,916, of which 47% was Chinese, 32% European and 21% indigenous. Awards paid by HM Government in settlement of these claims totalled $1.15 million.[114]

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110. As note 108 (my modifications in parentheses).
111. Macaskie, "Autobiography", p 128.
112. As note 108. Casualty figures for the bombing are not available. The worst incident was the razing of Brunei Town hospital. Sir John Peel, the first post-war Resident, was not aware of great resentment on the part of the public because of Allied bombing (interview, 4 September 1983).
113. As note 108, paragraph 5.
114. Ibid., (File 7) Macaskie to Palmer, 25 March 1948 and 28 February 1951; and ibid., (File 8) Macaskie, "Autobiography", p 154.

One of the "most serious problems" confronting the administration was the re-establishment of an efficient police force because the constabulary, particularly in Sarawak, was associated in the public mind with Japanese oppression. For the time being a combined British Borneo Police Force was established, a large number being placed in Brunei because of its "military significance".[115] Constabulary morale had been impaired by the demoralizing effect of enemy occupation; the deterioration in discipline and efficiency; the high proportion of raw recruits to replace casualties; the poor conditions of service and the high cost of living.[116] By the end of 1945, however, the force was "beginning to function with a measure of efficiency and considerable progress had been made in suppressing crime and maintaining order".[117] On 26 June 1946 the Police Proclamation 1945 was repealed and another signed re-constituting the Brunei Police Force.[118]

Martial law had been proclaimed on 10 June 1945 for "reason of military necessity and for the prevention and suppression of disorder and the maintenance of public safety". Judicial, administrative, executive and legislative power was vested in the Commander-in-Chief (Morshead) who delegated it to the commander of the Ninth Australian Division (Wootten). The latter issued a General Offences Proclamation. Japanese legislation

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115. CO 855/56 BBMAG, 1 October 1945, Proclamation No 12: (British Borneo) Police Force Proclamation, 12 September 1945. NB: At that time there were still some stray Japanese units in Limbang and Trusan which had not yet surrendered.
116. CO 531/31 (File 30, item 12) BMA report for the month ending 25 October 1945.
117. WO 203/2400 Macaskie, "Final Report of the BMA, paragraph 54.
118. CO 855/56 BBMAG, 5 July 1946, Proclamations Nos 41 and 43, 26 June 1946.

was nullified.[119] Instead of the pre-war courts, jurisdiction was to be exercised by "corresponding courts and tribunals, established by the Commander-in-Chief". There was no appeal (except in the case of a death sentence). A moratorium was placed on civil suits. Apart from the 'Supreme Court', which covered all NW Borneo, the military courts corresponded with the pre-1941 courts in their powers. In October 1945 a large number of cases ended in discharge because of insufficient evidence. Priority was given to trials of alleged collaborators, but progress in prosecuting them was retarded by want of staff and experienced officers. There was "an unusually large number of crimes of violence and murder". During the following month, November 1945, offences against the person and property continued to be above normal, but the disposal of such hearings was both "prompt and efficient". By December all the outstanding superior court cases in Brunei, including those of alleged collaboration, had been completed.[120] At the close of the BMA period indigenous magistrates, not excluding those operating during the occupation, were taking their full share in the administration of justice.

Education. The Japanese closed all the English schools in Brunei and Labuan. During 1944 enrolment in Malay schools declined from day to day because people started to move out into the jungle to grow more food. So great was the exodus that, by December 1944, there were 'more teachers than pupils'. The Brunei Town school closed in 1945

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119. Ibid., BBMAG, 1 September 1945, preamble to Proclamation (No 1), "To Establish A Military Administration", 10 June 1945.
120. WO 203/2405 BMA report for the month ending 25 December 1945, paragraph 46.

because of the intensification of Allied bombing. The Japanese found work for displaced teachers as propaganda officers or padi instructors, but generally morale reached its nadir then.[121] A whole educational generation had been lost because of the Japanese occupation.[122]

The BPU directive stated that "it should be the policy of the Government in the field of education to foster the sense of a common citizenship amongst all communities in British Borneo". Mission schools were to be encouraged. By June 1946 22 Malay schools with 1,091 pupils had also been re-opened in Brunei and there were an additional five non-Government schools (828 pupils taught by 15 teachers).[123]

The Handover. The restoration of the Residential System in Brunei, originally planned for 1 January 1946, was delayed pending (a) a decision about the constitutional future of British Borneo and (b) the provision of adequate civilian staff. In January 1946 Mr Macaskie reported that Brunei could revert to civilian government at the beginning of March, but, since the British Resident in Brunei might in future be responsible to the Government of North Borneo, it would be advisable for

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121. WO 203/2400 BMA report for the month ending 25 December 1945, paragraph 46.

122. According to the 1947 census the highest literacy was in the age group 20-24 years, instead of in the age group 10-14 or 15-19 (as in 1960), LW Jones, Report on the Census of Population Taken on 10 August 1960 (Kuching, c1960), p 49. Total literacy increased from 26.1% in 1947 to 47.9% in 1960 (and 69.4% in 1971). The breakdown according to age group was as follows:-

Age Group:	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	cf. 55+
1947	19.1%	26.5%	33.2%	30.2%	15.3%
1960	74.3%	62.0%	48.2%	45.9%	13.1%
1971	92.4%	91.2%	81.2%	71.9%	24.1%

Source: State of Brunei, Report on the Census of Population 1971 (Bandar Seri Begawan), p 49. See, also, pp 548-9 (below) for further details.

123. WO 203/2400 Macaskie, "Final Report of the BMA", paragraph 64.

Brunei to wait until its neighbour was ready for the handover. By June 1946 the Sultanate was "really in pretty good shape" when compared with other parts of north-west Borneo, except for the delay in re-starting rubber exports. There was "no lack of purchasing power" thanks to the oil company and Brunei had already achieved "reasonable prosperity".[124] A growing wish surfaced, particularly among Chinese traders, for the ending of military administration and a return to the affluence of pre-war years.[125]

The handover ceremony eventually took place on 6 July 1946 at 15.15 hours.[126] The Sultan pledged the Brunei people's "allegiance" to HM King George VI and his own "full co-operation" with the new British Resident, Mr WJ Peel.[127] The Sultan and pengirans, reportedly, were "delighted at the return of British protection and influence".[128]

Slightly earlier, on the first anniversary (13 June) of the "liberation" of his country from the "evil oppression" of the Japanese, the Sultan

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124. CO 537/1613 (item 137) Macaskie to Sir TIK Lloyd, 25 May 1946; and CO 537/1643 (item 18) Macaskie to Lloyd, 16 June 1946.
125. WO 203/2405 BMA report (December 1945), secret, paragraph 2; and CO 537/1613 (item 126) ALFSEA to WO, 15 May 1946.
126. (RHO) Macaskie, "Autobiography", p 146. "Etiquette required me to arrive last at the Court House where the (handover) ceremony was to take place at two o'clock in the afternoon", Mr Macaskie recalled later. "During the morning it was reported to me that the Sultan was drinking hard and probably would not be able to turn up. I posted an observer at a crossroads which the Sultan's car was bound to pass and when I arrived there was told that the Sultan's car had not yet passed. So I drove round and on returning there was still no sign of the Sultan. So I drove round the town again and this time the Sultan had passed, apparently in good order. Actually the Sultan did his part and made his speech very well".
127. CO 537/1613 (item 214A) Sultan to King, 6 July 1946.
128. Ibid., item 227, Governor-General (of Malaya and British Borneo) to CO, No 94 (telegram), 18 June 1946, paragraph 4.

sent his "loyal greeting" to His Majesty.[129] Mr Kay, for his part, was embittered at being passed over by the Colonial Office for the post of British Resident,[130] perhaps because he had been a planter before the war and not an administrator.

7. Reconstruction

If recovery in the oilfields made Brunei seem better placed than other parts of British Borneo, it was nevertheless a shattered country of which Mr Peel inherited control in 1946. War damage was considerable and only four temporary buildings were put up during the period of military administration. Government buildings and commercial premises in the land capital had been destroyed completely,[131] but the residential quarter at Subok had escaped bombing. The bazaars at Tutong and Kuala Belait had been destroyed and oilfield installations, fired by the retreating Japanese, were still operating at below pre-war production levels. Brunei's economy had been disorientated through being cut off from its export markets and its sources of imports. Stretches of roads had become overgrown. The health and education systems had run down during the Japanese interlude and, despite the re-opening of school

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129. Ibid., item 139, BMA to CO, June 1946 (no date given; presumably the 13th but possibly the 10th).
130. (RHO) Mss Pac s71 (File 3), Kay to Macaskie, 22 April 1946. "So after all there is no suitable post for me though for ten months I have done a job more difficult than any previous Resident, except possibly the first, as I feel sure they would admit".
131. Of 273 buildings which the Government maintained in December 1941, 68 (worth $160,000 at original cost) had been destroyed completely and a further 26 were damaged (Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 41).

buildings, fundamental problems remained. Public utilities were out of order. In the remainder of this chapter I shall examine how much of the "wasted years" of Japanese occupation had been retrieved in the later 1940s.

Attempts at reconstruction were hindered by lack of everything. Labour for this purpose was extremely scarce because of the need to concentrate on food production, the higher wages paid by the oil company, and, in 1950-1, the high price of rubber (cf. p 372, below). There was no hard stone in Brunei except at Butir, about four miles from the capital: this deficiency rendered the construction of roads difficult and expensive. The supply of timber could not keep pace with demand; there was a shortage of tools and other equipment, a dearth of qualified town planners and skilled engineers, and, finally, insufficient contractors.

Rebuilding the towns. As late as 1949 it had still not become possible "to commence rebuilding the towns which were destroyed or badly damaged during the war".[132] A new town plan was prepared for the capital in 1947 and it was hoped to make a "serious start" on the work of reconstruction during the following year. Further town plans were approved for Kuala Belait (1949) and Seria (1950). In all these schemes provision was made for roads, buildings, padangs, shophouses and open spaces to be carefully laid out. Meanwhile sea and river walls were repaired and land was reclaimed for further construction. The rehabilitation of towns in Brunei proceeded much more slowly than in Malaya because of a want of rebuilding materials, itself a result of Brunei's

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132. Brunei Annual Report 1949, p 1.

isolated geographical position. More rapid progress commenced in 1950 when building construction was given priority; and by 1954 the capital showed few signs of its ordeal. Funding appears not to have been a limiting factor: PWD expenditure jumped from $0.57 million in 1947 to $2.98 million in 1950 and $7.2 million in 1952.

After the war it was found that existing water installations required urgent overhaul, primarily because of Japanese neglect or misuse. The difficulty of obtaining spare parts delayed reconnection of supply after 1945 but by 1950 consumption in Brunei Town was double the 1938 level. In 1953 the main reservoir serving the capital provided a direct supply to just under five hundred consumers and to twelve standpipes for the people of Kampong Ayer. The only water in the Kuala Belait-Seria district came from two wells. This water was described as of "bad colour, odour and taste". In 1950 the BMPC proposed to carry out a scheme to treat water at Seria and, after prolonged negotiations, an agreement was reached whereby the Government was to purchase filtered and treated water from the BMPC for domestic requirements at Kuala Belait. The estimated cost to the Government was $2 million.

The generators which had supplied electricity before the war had been damaged by Japanese carelessness or Allied bombing so that in the late 1940s only a makeshift supply was possible. In the capital, only two old generators, subject to constant breakdowns, were available for use, and even then only between 18,00 and 23.00 hours. There were 88 consumers (in 1949) who were severely restricted in the number and size of lamps they might use. A separate generator was used to supply

street lighting. By 1950 Government generators in the capital had a total capacity of 17 kilowatts and supplied 130,367 units of electricity to 337 consumers. Before the occupation the BMPC had supplied electricity to the Government for distribution in Seria and Kuala Belait. During the war, however, the company's plant was damaged and they could not revert to the former system. Consequently the Government had to run a ten kilowatts generator for supplying Government quarters and street lighting in those towns. The BMPC's offices and quarters in Seria were supplied from a set of portable plants. In addition a private company in Seria ran a small generator and provided a supply to fifteen shophouses. From 18 February 1949 a bulk supply was purchased by the Government under agreement from the BMPC for distribution to Government quarters and private houses in Seria and Kuala Belait. The total number of consumers there at the end of 1949 was 126, including 66 who had joined during the previous twelve months.

The Japanese neglected the roads, maintaining only the one between Tutong and Muara (<u>via</u> the capital) because that was the route of their proposed oil pipeline. The remaining roads were allowed to revert to jungle. Rehabilitation proceeded slowly after 1945 because of shortages of materials and personnel. Road widening was carried out in certain sections and other improvements made elsewhere. Bridle paths were cleared and re-opened. By 1949 the re-metalling of the Brunei-Tutong road had been completed and attention then turned to the earth roads to Kuala Abang and Muara. At the end of 1950 there were 140 miles of road in Brunei, 34 miles of bridle paths and 1,200 registered vehicles

(2,048 licensed drivers). In the early 1950s further road work was delayed because priority was given to building construction.

In 1946 after the years of Japanese neglect, the Brunei education system was a shambles. Schools had been destroyed by bombing while those left standing were in disrepair; teachers, pupils and parents had "lost interest", nor was there "that determination to make up for lost time which is such a strong feature of schools in Malaya";[133] and books and furniture were lost. An expert from Malaya, Mr AW Frisby, made a number of short-term recommendations for shaking the people out of their apathy and increasing enrolment in schools. He urged that a larger proportion of national income be earmarked for education and the department be placed in professional hands. Ordinary expenditure on education increased from $56,018 in 1947 to $201,041 in 1950 and $319,380 in 1952 (cf. $42,562 in 1941). It proved impossible to obtain a State Education Officer until 1949 because several people refused the post.[134]

Mr Frisby recommended a cautious measure of reform, in particular a limited introduction of English education to satisfy the needs of the civil service and the BMPC as well as to go some way towards meeting nascent nationalist demands for better education. But he believed that widespread English education was unnecessary, expensive and, for political reasons, undesirable. He suggested instead a composite school consisting of three vernacular (Malay, Chinese and English) primary streams, an English secondary school and a trades school open to children from all parts

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133. CO 943/1 (File 2, item 1) Governor-General to CO, No 28 (saving), 18 November 1946, enclosing report by Mr AW Frisby (d 1973), 28 October 1946, paragraph 16.
134. CO 943/1 (File 4).

of the State. This scheme appears not to have been implemented *per se* but in 1949 the BMPC took the first steps to establish a trades school.[135]

With regard to Malay education, the main tasks were to persuade parents to send their children to school and to provide trained teachers.[136]

In 1947 it was estimated that only 30% of indigenous children (50% of boys and 10% of girls) of school age were enrolled. Even these figures were not entirely accurate, however, because there remained in school a number of overage children whose education had been disrupted by the Japanese occupation. As a result pupils of widely differing ages sat in the same classroom. The low enrolment was attributed to a number of factors, including the absence of a tradition of going to school and the reluctance of parents to send their children (especially daughters) to school. It was found that attendance even of those enrolled was poor. At Mr Frisby's suggestion a 'school attendance officer' was appointed to remedy this, and a number of schools were built in *padi* districts so that children of farmers could attend. Immediately after the war, lack of clothing and the absence of women teachers discouraged parents from sending their daughters to school. But by 1952 there were signs of improvement. By then 65% of the 6-12 age group was enrolled. In 1949

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135. Entrants were originally company apprentices but subsequently youngsters were selected from promising pupils throughout British Borneo. By 1959 almost two hundred students were acquiring useful technical skills at the school, but with no obligation to work for the BMPC after the completion of the course. (The company had been interested in the scheme originally as a means of reducing its dependence on imported Chinese artisans, who had gone on strike in September 1946).

136. In addition, the lack of equipment, including desks and textbooks, took a long time to be overcome: as late as 1950 one copy of each book could not be provided to every pupil.

Mr Pearce, the State Education Officer (1949-54), commented that in the ulus there was great enthusiasm for the new schools and teachers were persons respected in the community. He attempted to make vernacular education more attractive by the introduction of craft activities, such as cloth-weaving, net-making and book-binding.[137]

The second issue was the dearth of qualified teachers. A significant breakthrough in this respect occurred in 1949 when the joint Borneo Training College was opened at Kuching. Brunei's quota, initially, was ten students per year (twenty from 1954). As public enthusiasm for education gathered momentum and the teaching situation eased, a new difficulty arose because the rubber boom of 1950-2 created a shortage of labour, which delayed the construction of new schools, especially in Kampong Ayer and the ulus. In addition, contractors proved reluctant to tender for up-country schools because of the trouble involved in transporting men and materials to the interior and of providing accommodation for the former while they were there.

Given these circumstances the achievements of the years 1946 to 1953 were respectable. Eleven new Malay primary schools had been opened (as against 22 existing ones in June 1946), the number of trained teachers rose from 14 to 58, and their pupils from 1,091 to 2,679. In 1949 Mr Pearce had commented that the education system was expanding laterally rather than growing up. The provision of English secondary schools was

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137. "The schools, it is felt, should not only appeal to parents as practical and useful institutions, but should make an irresistible appeal to the child itself".

seen as hazardous so long as it was not possible to see where the next English teacher was coming from. As demand increased in Malaya and Singapore, competition for the services of such teachers was fierce. Government English schools, nevertheless, were started at Brunei Town in 1951 and Kuala Belait during the following year. The demand for admissions exceeded the available resources of building accommodation and teaching staff. Meanwhile the BMPC's trade school was beginning to flourish. Three new Chinese independent schools had been established. The Christian mission schools, while experiencing staff shortages and outdated accommodation, were also expanded. Overall there were 46 schools with 5,917 pupils in 1953.

Health. The directive on long-term medical and health policy[138] drawn up by the Borneo Planning Unit in 1944 accorded priority to anti-malarial measures. A nutritional policy was to be devised for the population. In order to meet the long-term development of the country a survey by qualified persons was to be made at the earliest opportunity of all existing medical institutions with a view to determining what further provision should be planned. Special institutions for the treatment of mental patients and lepers were necessary. Local people needed to be trained to "the highest standard of medical skill so that they may themselves provide the personnel required for the expanding health services of the country".[139]

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138. CO 531/31 (File 4) Draft directive on medical and health policy, 22 January 1944.
139. Ibid.

The legacy of "Japanese negleot and callous policies"[140] towards the indigenous population was still evident upon the restoration of civilian administration in mid-1946. As a result of severe malnutrition the resistance of the people to disease was substantially weakened. Malaria, helminthic diseases, tuberculosis and anaemia were widespread. No anti-malarial work had been done by the enemy. Allied bombing had razed the hospital in Brunei Town and other facilities could not be developed in sufficient quantity for some time; there was a dearth of trained personnel; travelling difficulties (and a lack of supplies) delayed the resumption of the travelling dispensary service until 1949. In short, when demand for medical care was most acute, the means for its provision were deficient.

A Malay house in the capital was converted for use as a temporary hospital, but only basic forms of treatment could be provided. More equipment, including X-ray facilities, became available in 1947, but there were long waiting lists especially for tuberculosis patients. In 1946 there were dispensaries at Temburong, Tutong and Muara, each with facilities for eight short-stay patients. The Tutong dispensary had been damaged by Allied bombing but since repaired. Temporary structures were built at Muara and Kuala Tutong, the latter in 1947. In 1951 a modern spacious hospital with eighty beds was ready in the capital (but serious construction defects soon became evident). During 1950 a new dispensary (with rest beds) and a new maternity clinic were opened in Kuala Belait.

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140. Brunei Annual Report 1946.

Helminthic diseases and tuberculosis replaced malaria in 1952 as the commonest cause for admission to hospital. Before 1950, inpatient accommodation at Kuala Belait had been supplied by the BMPC's hospital on repayment by the Government. The company employed two doctors, one of whom received a retaining fee from the Government and looked after State patients.

The shortage of medical supplies and transport difficulties precluded the resumption of the travelling dispensary service until 1949, although since 1947 dressers at Tutong and Temburong had paid monthly visits upriver. By 1949 four mobile dispensaries had resumed operations. One was in the form of an ambulance which patrolled the road between Tutong and Muara <u>via</u> the capital. The three riverine dispensaries were based at the permanent buildings at Kuala Belait, Tutong and Bangar. (The Muara dispensary was closed in 1949 because of the institution of the road travelling service and the small number of persons treated previously at Muara).

<u>The Economy</u>. The immediate priorities were to rehabilitate the oilfield and to increase food production. Oilfield recovery and expansion - discussed fully in the following chapter - were impressive: output reached 4 million tons worth $200 million in 1950 (cf. less than 1m tons worth $7.5m in 1940) and almost 5 million tons worth just under $263 million in 1951. Government revenue showed a similar explosion, from $1.56 million in 1940 to $13 million in 1950 and $24 million in 1951. (The Malayan - formerly Straits' - dollar had been devalued by 30% against the American dollar in November 1949).

Recovery in other sectors of the economy was less spectacular. Because of the acute food shortage throughout the world in 1946, the Brunei Government rationed commodities such as rice, flour and sugar. In 1947 supplies improved and imports of cloth "met a particularly pressing need of people for clothing". (In 1949 the British Red Cross Society took a census of impoverished persons and distributed clothing, in 1950, to over 3,000 people out of a current population of 45,000).

The increase of domestic food production was an urgent necessity. The rice ration in mid-1946 was only five ounces a day and only imported rice got into the shops at controlled prices. It was not easy to induce domestic producers to put their supplies on to the legitimate market. Other food crops were not in short supply, however, and there was no prospect of the population starving. The enforced necessity of a more varied diet (including vegetables), indeed, helped to diminish the incidence of deficiency diseases. Employers were statutorily required to plant foodstuffs in proportion to the strength of their labour force.

The months after July 1946 - i.e. between harvests - were perhaps the most difficult. An expert was sent to Brunei to suggest ways of increasing food production. Increased attention to vegetables, root crops, fruits, sago, coconuts, and livestock was advised. The latter, whose numbers had been reduced by half during the war, were vital not only as a source of food but for padi production. Fish, at thirty cents a kati, were at an attractive price for the producer, but output was limited by the shortage of net-making materials, hooks and other essential equipment.[141]

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141. CO 852/629 (File 1, item 18) report by Mr South, 4 June 1946.

The insufficiency of rice contributed to labour unrest in the oilfield. Workers there were actually receiving double rations because of clerical error; but this was still not enough.[142] In September 1946 there was a strike of a gravity to require the despatch of a labour adviser from Malaya to settle the dispute. This was achieved fairly quickly.[143] The High Commissioner continued to warn, however, that unless deliveries of rice supplies to Borneo were treated as a special case, there might be serious unrest in the future. (At one stage stocks of cereals in Brunei had fallen to six days' supply and health conditions were deteriorating rapidly, both <u>beri-beri</u> and tuberculosis re-appearing in alarming proportions).[144] The Colonial Office managed to make provision for an immediate shipment of 2,000 tons to Borneo and to increase the quota for British territories there for the first half of 1947. Allocations of rice were controlled by an international committee in Washington. In the second half of 1947 the British Government asked for 39,000 tons for British Borneo and obtained 25,000 tons, which was

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142. For purposes of rice rationing Brunei was included within North Borneo. At the Borneo Governors' Conference held in Jesselton on 31 January 1947, Mr Peel complained that the rice ration in Brunei was only three ounces per person per week. The Governor of North Borneo, the minutes record, "said he was unable to understand why the rice ration was so low since the rice was distributed on a population basis to all territories equally. He always gave Brunei its total allocation and the fault must lie with the distribution system from Labuan. He suggested that the oil company might be getting supplies direct from Labuan which are debited to Brunei's allocation. It was known that the workers on the oilfield were getting an inflated ration which was a legacy of the BMA regime". CO 537/2243 (item 1), minutes, paragraph 13.
143. CO 954/1 (File 58901/1946) report by Mr (later Dr) OW Wolters, October 1946 (no date given).
144. CO 852/629 (File 1, item 22) Governor-General to CO, secret, No 195 (telegram), 9 September 1946.

considered reasonable.[145]

Measures to increase padi production included the establishment of padi test plots. The State agricultural station was situated at Kilanas, nine miles from Brunei Town, in the heart of the main rice-producing district. Subsidiary stations were located at Lumapas, Birau and Mulaut. Many smallholders, penghulus and ketuas visited the stations, which provided a focus of local interest for cultivators. By 1949 a 65-acre wet padi settlement had been established at Mulaut. The aim of the Government was to encourage peasants in the vicinity to take up wet padi land under permanent title instead of temporary occupation licences. The cultivators in this area were fortunate to be able to make use of the concrete dams, drains and irrigation ditches which were constructed by the Government. In the period 1949-51 applications to take up a total of 182 acres in Mulaut were received. An annual State Agricultural Fair, held centrally, and local weekly fairs in the districts were sponsored in an attempt to improve the quality of agricultural produce. Seedlings were distributed (300,000 in 1947). Mechanical ploughs were demonstrated but evoked little interest from smallholders. Assistance was given to control pests and diseases. Finally, the Government established a rice mill in 1949 and purchased padi at the fixed price of 55 cents a gantang. The acreage under cultivation was approximately 8,000 to 9,000 during the years 1947-53. Output of padi totalled three-quarters of domestic requirements in 1948-51, largely because of much increased (but still low)

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145. CO 852/568 (File 9, item 43) Morris report on rice allocations (January to June 1947), 1 January 1947.

Table 20. Rice Yields in Brunei 1946-1952 (gantangs per acre)

Season	Wet Padi Yields: Total	Per Acre	Dry Padi Yields: Total	Per Acre	Total Yields: Total	Per Acre
1937-8	390,603	179	350,278	123	740,881	147
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1946-7	480,179	102	437,139	116	917,318	108
1947-8	1,461,643	314	770,190	174	2,231,833	245
1948-9	1,795,709	370	903,948	240	2,699,657	313
1949-50	1,892,789	374	694,740	240	2,587,529	325
1950-1	1,789,017	327	744,960	240	2,533,977	296
1951-2	1,101,760	243	457,365	120	1,559,125	177

Source: Colonial Office, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, Vol. 5: The Far East (London 1955), p 103.

Note: Acreages planted with rice totalled 8,475 in 1946-7; 9,092 in 1947-8; 8,615 in 1948-9; 7,952 in 1949-50; 8,575 in 1950-1; and 8,796 in 1951-2. During these years, by far the majority of the total rice acreage was under wet padi, e.g. 64% in 1949-50 and 1950-1 and nearly 57% in 1951-2.

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yields per acre, rather than an extension of the acreage planted (cf. 1932, when 12,000 acres were said to have been sown). The experimental stations had initial problems with yields and an attempt to introduce double cropping in 1954 was a failure. Even so, popular yields of rice were around 300 gantangs per acre (see Table 20, above), which represented a vast improvement on earlier levels: e.g. 124 gantangs in 1933 and 108 gantangs in 1947. Three quarters of Brunei's rice requirements were produced domestically in 1948-51, but this proportion was not maintained in the 1950s, when the population approximately doubled.

Apart from rice a second major source of food was fish. Many of the inhabitants of Brunei district and of the coastal villages between Tutong and Kuala Belait obtained their livelihood from fishing, but the financing and marketing as well as the dried prawn industry were in the hands of Chinese merchants. There was a shortage of boats and nets. In 1949 a joint Sarawak-Brunei Fisheries Department under Mr E Banks was formed. Enquiry suggested that European-style deep-sea trawling was not feasible and that greater production could be obtained only by the development of existing methods. Assistance to fishermen, therefore, took the form of loans to purchase outboard motors and more seaworthy prahus to bring the catch more easily and quickly to market. In early 1951 a tugu[146] committee and fishery inspector were appointed to supervise the industry and to prevent both smuggling and interloping by unlicensed fishermen. The appointment resulted in "an immediate increase in the quantity of prawns landed" (by ensuring that the whole of the catch was landed at Baru Baru island rather than smuggled into neighbouring territories).

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146. The main method of fishing was called tugu, a tugu net being a fine mesh net of funnel-shaped design some twenty feet in length and gradually increasing in width from the cod end to the mouth, which was often twenty feet in width. These nets were set in suitable locations by means of round pole stakes and the prawns were carried into the net by the prevailing tide. One location might have as many as 50-150 nets in a continuous line. In 1950 the Fisheries Department made a thorough investigation into this industry, as a result of disputes which had developed about locations and licences, mainly due to a free-for-all policy which resulted from the Japanese occupation. The industry was quite a considerable one, there being 92 licensed tugu fishermen owning 565 tugu nets (which represented a purchase value of $168,000). Most of the prawns caught were dried. All tugu fishermen were indebted to Chinese shopkeepers, who bought the catch and dried the product. It was estimated that the fisherman received barely 25% of the value of his catch from the middleman.

The Government attempted also to aid the bubu fishermen of Tutong, who had formed their own society. A bubu (cage) could be constructed entirely of jungle materials and hence was cheap: its popularity increased rapidly in the early 1950s. Loans were made to the Tutong fishermen for the purchase of better prahus and outboard engines. Similar aid was given to a number of Kuala Belait bubu fishermen in the hope of providing a much-needed increase in the supply of fresh fish to the far end of the State. The Government hoped that by awakening interest in co-operative societies, the fishermen themselves would obtain a more reasonable share of the profits derived from a strenuous day's work.

Other means to maximize food production included increased attention to fruit, vegetables and poultry. Complementary crops such as tapioca, yams, sweet potatoes were planted after the padi crop, before the land was allowed to go back to fallow.[147] Maize was interplanted with rice by some people as a form of insurance. Sago was a useful reserve food crop when rice was scarce. The acreage was 2,046 in 1948 and 2,000-2,500 in 1951-5 (a significant proportion of the total area under cultivation in Brunei).[148] Coconuts remained a smallholders' crop.[149]

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147. In 1948 the acreage under rubber totalled 19,102 acres whilst that under padi was 9,092 acres (wet 4,655; dry 4,437). Subsidiary crops (with acreages) were as follows: sweet potatoes (245), tapioca (523), sago (2,046), maize (171), menjalai (65), sugar cane (485), groundnuts (57), vegetables (403), lesser yams (78), coffee and cocoa (48), pine-apples (590), bananas (575), unspecified fruits (1028), cocoonuts (1066), tobacco (78) and derries (64). Brunei Annual Report 1948, p 12.

148. Some raw sago was exported to Sarawak, but its quality was "crude" and little was done to improve it. By 1958 four sago factories had been opened in Kuala Belait district.

149. An attempt was made by Labu Estate, with Government financial assistance, to plant 300 acres of cocoonuts in 1955-7 for commercial

used chiefly as an ingredient of the diet or manufactured into oil for cooking purposes. No copra was produced. Likewise, fruit cultivation traditionally was not conducted on a very scientific basis. Pure stands of fruit trees were the exception, such crops as cocoanuts and arecanuts usually being found interplanted with a variety of fruit trees under semi-jungle conditions. Fruits were usually of doubtful eating quality. Poultry and ducks were kept because they were hardy and economical to feed. Goats were raised to supplement meat production. Cattle were kept in small numbers throughout the country.

A number of Chinese and indigenes were involved in commercial pig-farming. The swine industry was "very primitive". The Chinese bred their pigs in sties whereas the Dusuns and other non-Muslim peoples kept them on free range. Sties were usually of poor construction and feeding stuff comprised cooked sago pith, which was low in protein, and quantities of prawn refuse, local fish meal and bean cake meal, which were not sufficient to balance the diet. Even the better piggeries took over a year to fatten an animal. But for most Chinese, pig-breeding was mainly carried on as a sideline and source of manure for market gardens.[150] By 1951 564 acres of land was used for such horticulture in Brunei.[151]

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purposes. But in 1958 almost all the seedlings were destroyed by wild boar (CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1958, p 33).

150. In 1958 the Kuala Belait municipal authorities prohibited pig-breeding in their area, so there was a considerable decline in the number of pigs in Brunei. (Cf. A Burgess, Devil of a State - London 1961 - p 76).

151. During the 1950s there was a steady expansion in the industry, especially in the western end of the State, where there was a large demand for fresh vegetables. Most of the trade, both growing and marketing, was in the hands of local Chinese people. Yields were poor at first because of lack of soil fertility. By 1955 Malays were taking increased

These then were the main possible sources of food after 1946. The problem of increasing food production, however, could not be viewed in isolation. A balance had to be struck between food production and cash crop production because, while food was of primary importance in 1946, smallholders were dependent on the sale of their cash crops, principally rubber, to enable them to purchase relief supplies and such items of food as they could not produce for themselves.

In early 1945 the Rubber Growers' Association and the Colonial Office co-operated in the formation of a Borneo Rubber Estates' Owners Guarantee Company (BREOGC), the primary object of which was to promote all measures for the rehabilitation of the rubber-producing industry in Borneo.[152] Unauthorized tapping on Gadong and Berakas estates began almost immediately after the Allied landing in June 1945. The BREOGC protested but the BMA encouraged tapping because it provided employment for a number of people. The BPU had taken the view that unless the rubber industry was quickly revived, the people would have no money to purchase relief supplies. For the most part rubber plantations had been entirely neglected during the Japanese occupation. About 500 acres of rubber estates had been cut out or destroyed, chiefly on European estates. Preliminary investigation in 1945 revealed that properties were overgrown

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interest in this form of cultivation. Market gardeners began to adopt shifting cultivation: they occupied land for up to three years, won a good return on capital and then moved to a new area. Fruit and vegetables commanded high prices but the cultivation required some labour and care. Some growers in more remote areas found themselves at a disadvantage because of the difficulty of marketing the crop: they were forced to sell to middlemen who commanded their own prices.

152. CO 852/671 (File 3, item 23).

and much time and money would be necessary to restore trees to normal condition. Floods had caused heavy damage. Young rubber planted in 1939 was suffocated by cover crops. By October 1945 a Rubber Purchasing Unit, led by Lt. Col. MAM Oakford, had arrived in Borneo. The purchasing unit, appointed by the Ministry of Supply in London, interpreted its duty to be the purchase or rubber and of other commodities when specifically asked for by the Ministry. It was not directly interested in the economic rehabilitation of British Borneo. By April 1946 only one cargo of rubber, from Kuching in Sarawak, had been exported from British Borneo. This caused "grave discontent" among smallholders who had no market for their rubber as a result.[153]

After the resumption of civil government in July 1946, tapping was held up because of shortage of coagulant, but in 1947 production exceeded the 1938 level. Smokehouses were built to help the smallholder to obtain a better return for the end product. In practice, smallholders had little incentive to improve the quality of sheet produced because this was not reflected in the price obtained from the Chinese rubber dealers. Smallholders showed a "lack of care and cleanliness" in its preparation. The quality of rubber was reduced further because a large proportion of trees were old and were planted on sloping land already depleted of its fertility by many years of earlier shifting cultivation. Rubber trees had become unproductive because of unskilled tapping in the past. Bark consumption was "nearly always excessive" especially

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153. WO 203/2281 Col. ML Bernacchi (1911-83), for Brigadier Macaskie, to WO, 27 March 1946.

Table 21. Rubber Output in Brunei 1946-52

Year	Rubber Exports:- Weight (lbs)	Value ($ Malayan)
1938	2,778,351	623,565
1941	4,635,835	1,758,824
	*	
1946 (a)	1,952,862	781,145
1947	4,030,034	1,282,214
1948	4,563,147	1,594,635
1949	3,669,393	1,220,892
1950	5,730,034	6,154,169
1951	5,161,694	8,036,992
1952	3,298,928	3,785,050

Notes: (a) Second half of the year only.

(b) Output exported in 1959 totalled 1,647 tons worth $3.5m (compared with 2.3m lbs worth $1.7m in 1958).

(c) During these years rubber was Brunei's second most valuable export product, being exceeded in importance only by petroleum.

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when owners did not live on their holdings.[154] The number of trees in tapping increased markedly during the boom years of 1950-1, when prices were very high because of the extra demand created by the Korean War (see Table 21, above). Holdings in the vicinity of padi areas, however, were tapped irregularly, and the fluctuations were directly related to the padi-planting and harvesting seasons. The European-owned estates, of which there were only five (run by four companies) in 1945-6, suffered from shortage of capital and labour. One company sold up to the Government in 1953 setting a trend followed by the other companies before the end of the Residential Era. The four rubber companies, which found increasing difficulty in finding anyone prepared to accept employ-

154. Many smallholdings were worked on a share-cropping basis, the bulk of the proceeds being retained by the tapper.

ment as tappers and suffered from isolation from the main shipping routes, went out of business one by one during the years 1953-8. Agriculture suffered from the rival attractions of the oilfield and employment with the Government where greater earnings could be made.

There had been little, if any, forestry administration by the Japanese authorities in Brunei from 1941 to 1945, although royalties continued to be collected "in a desultory way until 1944, but only on produce used by persons other than Japanese".[155] Depletion of the forest by felling for timber was not extensive during the war but many inroads were made by hill farming and shifting cultivation. After 1946 Brunei's forests, properly-managed, were regarded as "an asset of continually increasing value" and the greatest importance was attached to their maintenance "not only as a source of revenue but on account of the many other benefits that accrue from the possession of them".[156]

Forest Industries. The ITC's cutch factory had been completely destroyed by Allied bombing in 1945. Production resumed only briefly, from September 1949 to April 1952. The administration was not unduly concerned: the termination of the concession would enable "a more effective control to be exercised over the mangrove forest than hitherto".[157]

Exports of jelutong resumed in 1947. The price rose dramatically in 1949-51 in line with that of rubber.[158] The Brunei producers

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155. Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 27.
156. Brunei Annual Report 1949, p 19.
157. Brunei Annual Report 1952, p 29.
158. During 1951 the price of bone-dry jelutong reached a new peak of $270 per pikul but dealers experienced difficulty in obtaining sufficient labour for tapping and production showed a sharp decrease.

found difficulty in organizing their tappers because the Singapore buyers declared themselves unable to give anything longer than monthly contracts. The whole of the production was bought by Malayan Guttas Limited of Singapore (a subsidiary of Wrigley's). Annual exports of jelutong totalled $115,134 in 1949 and reached a peak of $500,379 in 1958.[159]

Timber. Brunei had never had a timber exporting industry, despite the large area covered by forest. After the war the Government discouraged an export trade, urging that local requirements receive prior consideration. A protective tariff of 10% was imposed on imports to stimulate local production. The chief demand during 1946 was for materials for temporary buildings and timber for temporary engineering construction in the oilfield. For this purpose softwood timber and poles from the coastal swamp forest were readily available. The demand subsequently was for high grade timber for permanent construction, but in this case the supply was unsatisfactory because of the inaccessibility of hill forest. Demand, mainly (77% in 1947) from the BMPC, continued to exceed local supply, despite increases in annual output (718,000 cubic feet in 1947, 770,875 in 1949 and 987,408 in 1951, but only 557,183 cubic feet in 1950). In 1952 the BMPC imported 1,798 tons of sawn timber and 47 tons of teak - these figures being "of interest as an index of the amount by which the local timber trade is unable to meet the demand".[160]

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159. Experiments with pulai, a less-favoured latex, were conducted in 1949-52, but it was rejected as a substitute for jelutong. In March 1952 all licences to tap pulai were withdrawn because it had been discovered that jelutong latex was being adulterated with lower-grade pulai latex.

160. Brunei Annual Report 1952, p 30.

During 1947 an Australian timber company began exporting logs to Australia for plywood manufacture. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining a sufficient proportion of floating logs to make rafting by sea a sound proposition and this method had to be abandoned in favour of shipping by small, shallow draft vessels.

In 1949 firewood contractors were continually urged to produce charcoal for export, but efforts in this direction were deterred by shipping difficulties. But in 1952-3 there was a great expansion: in the latter year there were 22 kilns either built or under construction varying in capacity from 25-30 pikuls to 150 pikuls.[161]

After 1945 Brunei had a small but growing sawmilling industry, mostly in the hands of small-scale Chinese operators. In 1946 a privately owned sawmill situated on the Badas-Seria light railway produced softwoods, boards and scantlings, chiefly to the order of the BMPC. There were in addition two poorly-equipped sawmills turning out rough quality timber in the capital. The absence of a qualified sawyer remained a drawback throughout the late 1940s. Even the BMPC failed in its attempt, made in 1949, to establish an economic mill. In the early 1950s, however, there was a great increase in the number of new mills (8 in 1949, 24 in 1953). Of these, a few were permanent mills in towns, but most were portable mills in the forest usually consisting of a petrol engine and one 48" saw bench. Equipment was not up to date or efficient in layout: the argument being that with spasmodic supplies of logs there was no

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161. Brunei Annual Report 1949 p 24 and BAR 1953, p 50.

object in having a good mill. Outturn was not great: the largest saw-mill in Belait district, for example, paid annual royalty of less than $20,000: this compared with, say, the Rajang basin in Sarawak, where several operators could each guarantee a royalty of at least $25,000. The industry was handicapped in Brunei by the shortage and high cost of labour because of competition from the oil company, while the export trade was limited because of the high trans-shipment costs ($17 a ton) at Labuan. Hence Brunei timber was rendered uncompetitive with that produced by its neighbours. The mills concentrated on supplying the internal market, which was dominated by the requirements of the BMPC.

8. Conclusion

To sum up, it was not possible to commence rebuilding the towns of Brunei until 1949 or later. Building construction was given priority from 1950 so that by 1954 Brunei Town at least showed few signs of its wartime ordeal. In the economic sphere, oilfield rehabilitation took first place. The recovery and growth of this industry were phenomenal so that by 1950 production was about six times the 1938 level; Government revenues benefited in even greater proportion because of increases in the rate of oil royalty and, from 1950, the introduction of income tax. The second priority was to increase domestic food production. In 1948-51 local production of rice accounted for 75% of home needs compared with not more than 40% before the Japanese occupation. In 1946-9 rubber exports failed to match the level of the best pre-war year (1941) but there was a boom in price during the Korean War which caused new output records.

Water and electricity supplies, although remaining inadequate, exceeded pre-war totals by 1950. In the sphere of education, Mr Pearce complained that the system was expanding laterally but not growing up; whilst, in 1948, it was commented that nothing had been done to adapt the educational system to "the needs of the present era of intensive industrial activity".[162] In the health sphere infant mortality was down from 21% in 1938 to 13.8% in 1950; inpatients were up from 614 in 1938 to 1,105 in 1950 and outpatients from 19,435 in 1938 to over 50,000 in 1950 (not including 23,107 attendances at the riverine dispensaries by the latter date). The birth rate increased from 3.8% in 1938 to 5.7% whilst the death rate dipped from 2.2% to 2% (1.7% in 1951). In 1952 it was reported:

"Every effort has continued to be made to raise the standard of living of the people, to combat the effects of hookworm, malaria and malnutrition, largely responsible for their slower increase and heavier infant mortality; and to provide the widely disseminated education facilities that alone would make it possible for them to take their proper place in the economic and commercial, no less than the political, structure of the country; but greatly expanded health, medical and educational services as well as the formidable task of recruiting more trained staff to effect and maintain them over the State's dispersed and backward agricultural areas are vital and imperative preliminaries to the achievement of these ends". 163

Progress from 1953 was far more rapid.

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162. Brunei Annual Report 1948, p 18.
163. Brunei Annual Report 1952, p 2.

CHAPTER NINE

FULL STEAM AHEAD: THE FIRST FIVE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1953-1958

1. Introduction

In this chapter the economic development and social progress made in Brunei during the period of the first development plan (1953-8) are examined. The sine qua non for this project was the burgeoning oil revenues of the Sultanate, particularly after the introduction of income tax in 1950. The third section of this chapter deals with the assumptions behind the development programme; and, in the final section, the implementation of some of these schemes is described.

2. Background

"We are anxious to see new oil production in sterling areas".

The quick recovery of the Seria oilfield was regarded as a great success by HM Government. The last well fire was extinguished only on 27 September 1945. The BMPC proposed to build a new refinery on Muara Island; meanwhile the Lutong (Sarawak) refinery would be rehabilitated. The Ministry of Fuel in London was "fully in sympathy" with the company's proposal because "we are anxious to see new production and refining capacity developed in sterling areas",[1] thereby to save scarce British

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1. CO 852/643 (File 11, item 17), Minfuel to CO (RH Burt), 24 October 1945. Cf. CO 852/983 (File 3, item 19) Minfuel to CO, 14 May 1947.

reserves of American currency. While this remained the prime consideration, Borneo oil assumed greater perceived importance from the defence angle after the Chinese Revolution of 1949.[2] The BMPC co-operated with HM Government's policy of developing the Belait oilfield as rapidly as possible (cf. p 386, below). In 1948 Brunei overtook Trinidad as the leading producer of crude oil in the British Commonwealth. A further turning point was reached in 1954, which was a year

"of transition and consolidation. The oilfield may be said to have passed, in a planned and orderly manner, out of the 'rush' period which followed the end of the war, when the Commonwealth's demand for non-dollar oil supplies made it necessary to accelerate production at the expense of many other forms of activity". 3

It was found that the Seria oilfield extended under the sea; hence the continental shelf was annexed by proclamation in 1954. Exploration on land failed to bring any worthwhile results, except at Jerudong, where production was possible on a limited scale in 1956-60.

Turning from production to refining, the BMPC decided in 1949 not to proceed with the proposed refinery on Muara Island. This was despite generous concessions from the Colonial Office, which even waived, without asking a consideration fee, its requirement that the company should refine 50% of Seria oil at Lutong in Sarawak.

"So rich as to be almost indecent". In 1946 the principal sources of Government revenue remained the same as in pre-war years, the most important being oil royalty, followed by customs revenue. Brunei's

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2. CO 825/51 (File 55063/7/1949, item 37), revised report of (HM Government's) SE Asian Working Party, 19 September 1949, paragraphs 10-11.
3. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 59.

customs tariffs had been increased to bring them into line with those of North Borneo. This delayed commercial recovery and disadvantaged the people of Brunei, whose imports became more expensive.[4] Cession money payments from Sarawak were compounded in 1948.[5] The sale of opium was prohibited, so revenue from this source ceased. Thanks principally to the rapid expansion of oil output and increases in the rate of oil royalty (see below), the Brunei Government's revenue in 1949 amounted to $8.7 million, compared with $1.5m in 1940. One CO clerk commented:

"This fortunate little State is so rich as to be almost indecent and in the fortunate position of being able to sit back and watch the oil flow out and the money flow in". 6

Policy: "The oil company ought to pay more". After the war the Brunei Government resumed its cautious pre-war financial policy of meeting all ordinary expenditure from 'revenue other than that derived from oil'. Oil revenue was used for special expenditure, the surplus being invested in a General Reserve Fund. Mr Peel pointed out that whereas before 1941 revenue from oil and non-oil sources had approximately balanced, oil was providing over three-quarters of the total in 1947. He urged some revision of policy: "in order that Brunei should benefit from the increased revenue it is essential that some Government departments should be expanded to some extent". The High Commissioner ruled that the pre-war policy was sound and that "there should not at present be any considerable departure from that policy".[7] (Brunei had unknown liabilities with regard to war

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4. See below, p 388 (fn. 27).
5. CO 537/2242.
6. CO 825/76 (File 55426/1949, item 1), report by Mr LS Greening OBE MC (b 1895), 12 April 1949.
7. CO 943/1 (File 1, item 11), Governor-General (of Malaya and Borneo,

damage compensation and the cost of the BMA). Mr Palmer at the Colonial Office considered the policy "somewhat unduly conservative" and suggested that the Resident be invited to devise a five year plan and, taking account of the possible liabilities from the war, to draw up "a somewhat more realistic financial policy".[8] Although the High Commissioner's cautious approach was endorsed for the time being, an economic forecast for the coming five years (1948-52) was requested. This was forwarded to the Colonial Office by telegram on 17 December 1947. Mr Trumble, the Brunei Treasurer (1946-54), suggested that it would be "necessary and wise" to amend the existing financial policy to enable the State to meet a projected deficit on non-oil revenue and to keep pace with its obligations to the public. Mr Trumble recommended that

"the State be permitted to embark a part of the oil royalties for this purpose on a sliding scale of approximately the following ratio: 1948 and 1949: 10%; 1950, 1951 and 1952: 5%". 9

The High Commissioner, Mr MacDonald, agreed and urged strongly that

"a fairly large proportion of the State's surpluses should be placed to a general reserve...(It) would be prudent to ensure that, when oil revenue diminishes or ceases, the State's reserves enable it to maintain the standards to which it should then have attained". 10

The Colonial Office agreed that oil revenue would have to be brought in to make good the deficit:

"This, however, raises the whole issue of continuing to maintain two separate budgets...In the past it may have been a convenient and salutary

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ex-officio High Commissioner for Brunei) to CO, No 1 (secret), 30 January 1947, paragraph 2 (including comments by the Resident).
8. Ibid., minute by Mr Palmer, 20 February 1947.
9. CO 943/1 (File 15, item 9), memorandum by Mr Trumble, paragraph 8.
10. Ibid., Governor-General to CO, 17 December 1947, paragraphs 2-3.

fiction to lay down that oil revenue was only available to meet extra-ordinary expenditure, but it should be nothing more than a convenient rule of thumb...and...oil revenue should in future be included in the general revenue and...the aim should be to put a reasonable proportion of the total revenue to reserve, against the time when oil as a source of revenue will no longer exist". 11

The Colonial Office did not believe that Brunei should simply draw on the accumulated reserve when oil revenue ceased: these funds would eventually be exhausted and the country would then be left without reserves or alternative sources of revenue. Hence the Colonial Office suggested that the surplus should be utilized to develop other economic resources.[12] In 1948 Mr Palmer had the temerity to suggest that the oil company should pay more to the Brunei Government.

In April 1949 Mr R Gallieti at the Colonial Office concurred that the supply of oil was uncertain and that Brunei "may in due course find itself with a much larger population and public services and nothing much with which to maintain them" unless agriculture and fisheries were rapidly developed. He urged that Brunei

"should determine what proportion of its surplus is needed for current development projects and what proportion it should set aside to provide a regular income more or less equal to that now derived from oil. That is, it should aim at replacing its oil capital as it is used up by (1) productive capital assets in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and small industries; (2) investment funds to yield a pre-determined fixed income about fifty years hence". 13

The Brunei administration was advised to prepare a five year plan "on general lines which would be primarily directed towards building up alternative sources of revenue and economy to replace the

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11. Ibid., item 10, CO to Governor-General, saving (confidential), 11 March 1948 (based on a minute by Mr JE Rednall, 2 February 1948).
12. Ibid., paragraphs 5-6.
13. CO 943/1 (File 17) minute by Mr R Galletti, 9 April 1949.

wasting oil asset".[14] After the Chinese Revolution of 1949 there was concern about the possible spread of communism to SE Asia. Mr KG Ashton at the Colonial Office warned that it could not be expected that the British Protectorates in Borneo "will indefinitely continue to be an idyllic refuge from the harsh politics of the outside world". But the success of demagogues

"will depend on the wisdom of the (British Borneo) territories' governments in economic, social and constitutional matters, on the economic prosperity of the territories (both as directly enjoyed by individual producers and tradesmen, and as reflected in the revenue available to finance Government services) and on the political example set by the adjacent countries of SE Asia". 15

The main aims of the Colonial Office were to promote surveys (to acquire essential information about the natural resources of the territories); the improvement of communications; the testing and popularizing of various cash crops as alternatives to rubber and oil and the possible creation of an export trade in rice; and improving standards in health and education. Brunei, for the time being, was concentrating on post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation; when this programme was completed it would be able to finance its own development plan along broader lines.

HM Government's inter-departmental working party for SE Asia agreed that illiteracy, disease and malnutrition in SE Asia provided an environment in which communism might flourish. The Treasury wanted

"to develop the natural resources of the region in the way of food, power and all primary products, but not to embark on any over-ambitions schemes of industrialization in the east which might result eventually in un-

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14. CO 825/76 (File 55426/49, item 5) minute by Mr JD Higham CMG (b 1914), 26 May 1949.
15. CO 825/53 (File 55063/7/5, item 1), memorandum by Mr KG Ashton, 24 August 1949, paragraph 5.

desirable competition with the west".[16]

The Cabinet Office noted that the United Kingdom's colonies in the Far East "can only benefit if India and Japan sell them cheap consumer goods. It is we who lose".[17] Mr Higham at the Colonial Office preferred, as a short term policy, to "go all out for rice production in British territories" in the Far East.[18] The final working party report noted that British Borneo was "being developed politically and economically on lines fully in accordance with the needs of its population and with an eye to its possible future as a rice surplus area which can play its part in alleviating the food shortage".[19]

The British Resident in Brunei, who was less sanguine, replied that an increase in rice production would require new colonists on the land, but it was "difficult to see from what parts new settlers...could come". Furthermore, "the nature of the terrain appears to be unsuitable for the mechanical cultivation of rice". The only new industry of importance which had appeared since 1945 was the export of firewood to Hong Kong. Opportunities and inducements for the investment of private capital from overseas were not very great. The most promising field was forestry, but the possibilities had been investigated by Steel Brothers, formerly of Rangoon, who pronounced the difficulties to be so great as to render exploitation an uneconomic proposition. There was "plenty

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16. CO 825/51 (File 55063/7, item 13), Treasury to Foreign Office, 28 June 1949.
17. Ibid., item 11, Cabinet Office to Foreign Office, 27 June 1949.
18. Ibid., minute by Higham, 27 June 1949.
19. Ibid., item 37, revised report of (HM Government's) SE Asia Working Party, 19 September 1949, paragraph 12.

of cheap land" for large-scale agricultural ventures, such as rubber estates, but any new business would have to import workers. The 'crying need' of the country was for technical experts.[20]

Meanwhile, in September 1949, an outline plan for the ten years 1948 to 1957, of which the first year (1948-9) had already almost elapsed, was submitted to the Colonial Office by the Brunei Government. A surplus of $25 million over the ten years was anticipated, of which it was thought $10 million might be devoted to development and welfare programmes. Mr Ashton declared that the plan allotted "an impressive proportion of the money to economic development" ($6 million out of $10 million). Sir GC Whiteley (1891-1958) minuted that the only question was whether the plan was on a big enough scale. Mr P Selwyn, on the other hand, felt that many of the objects were "extremely vague" and there was no indication as to how they were to be achieved. More could have been allotted to social services, in his opinion.[21]

The introduction of company income tax - at a rate of 20% upon profits from 1 January 1950 (30% from the beginning of 1953) - caused an explosion in national revenue (see Table 22, overleaf). In 1949 the annual income of the Brunei Government amounted to less than $9 million; in 1951, with income tax yielding $40 million, it was $69 million; and in 1953 $98.98 million (of which income tax comprised $61 million).

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20. CO 825/87 (File 55425/4E, item 1), memorandum by Pretty, encl. in High Commissioner to CO, No 2 (saving), 14 August 1950.
21. CO 943/1 (File 18, item 1), Acting High Commissioner to CO, No 5 (Brunei), 24 September 1949; and minutes thereon by Ashton (25 October 1949), Whiteley (27 October) and Selwyn (23 November).

Table 22. Oil Exports and Government Revenue 1946-59 (in millions of Malayan dollars).

Year	Oil Exports:- Tons	Value	Total Exports	Government Revenues:- Oil Royalty	Income Tax	Total
	m	$m	$m	$m	$m	$m
1946*	0.2	n.a	0.9	0.06	nil	0.8
1947	1.7	29.5	n.a.	1.0	nil	4.4
1948	2.6	47.1	49.3	4.2	nil	6.6
1949@	3.2	60.1	62.1	5.6	nil	8.7
1950	4.0	198.2	205.4	13.2	0.009	17.3
1951	4.9	262.8	271.8	24.2	40.0	69.4
1952	5.0	270.7	275.6	26.8	41.6	75.7
1953	4.8	264.0	282.6	25.5	61.0	99.0
1954	4.7	262.2	273.5	26.6	n.a.	96.0
1955	5.1	287.0	303.4	31.6	50.0	102.7
1956	5.5	309.3	330.3	39.2	54.4	118.0
1957	5.4	313.7	340.0	44.4	57.5	131.0
1958	5.1	300.4	326.9	39.0	59.3	131.3
1959	n.a.	292.6	310.0	38.0	55.8	129.6

Notes. * second half of the year only.
@ the pound sterling was devalued by thirty per cent against the American dollar in November 1949. The Malayan dollar, as the Straits' dollar was renamed after the Second World War, remained fixed at 2s 4d (£0.1166).

Sources. Compiled by the author from Brunei Annual Reports (and also from the Brunei budget estimates, available in Rhodes House, Oxford).

Investment income also spiralled to $12.6m annually by 1955 and $25.4m in 1959. In the latter year total Government receipts were $129.6m, slightly down on the previous year's level. It is to be observed that, whereas as late as 1931 the annual revenue at the disposal of the Brunei Government per head of population was less than twelve dollars, by 1959 $1,500 was available per head per year (see Table 7 on p 179, above).

"'O fortunate Brunei'", commented Sir GC Whiteley as early as 1951.[22] The ten year plan had become redundant because Brunei by that time had far greater resources than had been anticipated.

The rocketing Government revenues should not obscure the fact that the BMPC enjoyed exceptionally favourable terms. The royalty rate paid by that company before the war was $0.10 per ton. Investigation in 1945 revealed that in the United States royalties reached up to $0.37 per ton, in Venezuela slightly more, and in Saudi Arabia and Iraq $0.20.[23] The Colonial Office in that year recommended royalties of not less than $0.20 per ton in the Commonwealth.[24] After the war, therefore, the Brunei Government exercised its reserved option to take ten per cent of Seria oil in kind. This was then sold back to the company at prices agreed from time to time (see below). Intimation of this intention was first made to the BMPC in May 1946: but the six months' notice was given only orally, whereas technically it should have been in writing.[25] Hence payment in kind did not begin until August 1947, to the detriment of the State of Brunei and the corresponding advantage of the BMPC.

The company agreed to buy the oil back at the rate of £2.25 per ton of light crude oil and £1.75 for heavy crude oil. These rates, suggested to the Colonial Office by the Minfuel, were to apply for a

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22. CO 943/2 (File 7) minute by Sir GC Whiteley, 23 August 1951.
23. CO 852/646 (File 3, item 1) memorandum by Minfuel, 13 June 1945.
24. Ibid., item 16, minutes of 19th Colonial Economic Advisory Committee meeting, 1 November 1945.
25. CO 852/983 (File 3, item 4) BMPC to CO, 28 February 1947; and ibid., item 13, BMPC to CO, 25 April 1947. "This was admittedly a try-on (by the Colonial Office)", Mr RH Burt minuted on 7 March 1947, "and it has not been successful".

period of two years from August 1947. Based on 10% of the value of crude oil, the company's offer was equivalent to a royalty of $0.175 on the heavy and $0.225 on the light crude. Since the company was producing approximately equal quantities of each, the average royalty of $0.20 was in line with the new guidelines established by Whitehall.[26] By way of recompense, the company was granted a rebate of more than half a million dollars for all the customs duty which it had paid on machinery imported to rehabilitate the Seria oilfield.[27]

In 1949 the royalty was revised to take into consideration "the sales value of the main products derived from crude oil produced in Brunei". As a result the effective royalty was increased to $0.51 for light crude and $0.385 for heavy, a significant improvement despite the 30% devaluation of sterling against the American dollar in 1949 (cf. Table 22, on p 386, above).[28] In April 1950 the visit of a specialist

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26. Ibid., item 1, Minfuel to CO, 25 January 1947. The field price for the best Texan light crude at this time was £3.25 per ton, but Persian crude, approximately the same quality as Seria light crude, fetched only £2.40 per ton. Hence Brunei fared reasonably when receiving £2.25 per ton of Seria light crude oil. With regard to heavy crude, on the other hand, the market price was £2.55 per ton, whereas the BMPC bought back at only £1.75 per ton, i.e. $0.80 was allowed for gathering, transporting, processing and loading. The Minfuel was satisfied, however, that there should be a differential of $0.50 between the prices for light and heavy petroleum. The company's offer of £1.75 per ton for the latter, therefore, was "acceptable".

27. CO 852/1079 (File 5) minute by Mr Palmer, 5 December 1949. (Cf. earlier in 1949 Mr Galletti at the Colonial Office had suggested that Brunei might very easily forego the very small proceeds from export duties - $103,000 - and remove the import duties on necessities such as flour, soap and salt because such relief "might be of some value to the population at a time when imports might be very expensive". This was rejected because it would have put Brunei out of step with North Borneo (CO 943/1 File 17, minute by Galletti, 9 April 1949, with marginal comment by Sir GC Whiteley, n.d.. See also, above, p 380).

28. CO 852/1204 (File 2, items 20 and 26).

to Brunei resulted in a further tightening up of the taxation rules.[29] (In 1955 the royalty rate was increased to 12.5% on old leases, but for offshore leases it was reduced to only 8% on production from wells situated 3-10 nautical miles from the coast and 5% if more than ten miles).[30]

The yield from income tax gives an indication of the scale of profit achieved by the BMPC. In 1951 the Brunei Government received $40 million from income tax, which suggests pre-tax profits of the order of $200 million for the company.[31]

The British also took advantage of Brunei's wealth to secure cheap loans for less-favoured neighbouring British colonies.[32] The yield from Government investments, entrusted to the Crown Agents on behalf of the Brunei Government, was also not the optimum, it was feared:

"The difference between actual earnings and potential earnings (i.e. of interest on reserves) has been substantial. ...Examination of existing investments shows that an unduly large proportion are on a relatively short term, with correspondingly low interest rates. There is no likelihood of the State needing to realize any of its investments for many years to come and therefore long-term, high yielding investments should be the order or the day, and it should be possible to exceed the figure of 3½% by a comfortable margin". 33

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29. CO 852/1204 (File 4, item 1) Foster Report 1950.
30. Borneo Bulletin, 5 November 1955.
31. This is so assuming (a) that the rate of income tax was 20% and (b) that the BMPC paid the overwhelming bulk of the income tax received by the Brunei Government. Mr HL Fountain recalls (in a letter to the author, 16 September 1983, paragraph 15) that shares in the BMPC bought for only £0.12 in the 1920s, were later sold for £2.35 each.
32. Not entirely successfully: see CO 1022/309.
33. ER Bevington, The Economy and Development of the State of Brunei, June 1956, pp 70-1 (copy courtesy of Mr ER Bevington CMG CEng). In one particular case in 1957, "investments showing a book value of $12.8 million were sold for $10.2m, the difference of $2.52m being the loss on the sale of these investments. Losses to this extent", the Auditor

Hence the Crown Agents would have to be kept up to the mark in future. Similarly, exoessive departmental estimating caused further losses beoause large sums, which might have been invested to earn interest, were kept in hand earning nothing.

By 1953 the work of post-war rehabilitation in Brunei was approaching ocmpletion. In July of that year the Government published a bald Summary of Proposals,[34] a wide-ranging plan for the future development of the State and the improvement of its public services. The State Council voted $100 million to be spent over the next five years for the welfare of the people of Brunei, as against $10 million over ten years in the outline plan of 1948. A Commissioner of Development, Mr ER Bevington from the Colonial Service in Fiji, was appointed to carry out the all-embracing new plan. In order of seniority, he ranked second only to the Resident.[35]

3. Assumptions Behind the First Five Year Plan (1953-8)

The Problem and Objective.[36] Although the broad goals of the first Five Year Plan were laid down in 1953, detailed planning continued in 1954 and 1955. In his review, published in June 1956, Mr Bevington, based his planning on the assumption that no new reservoir of oil

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concluded, "must be expected if the policy of limited depreciation...is continued during times when investments generally are depreciating" (CO 824/3 Audit Report 1957, paragraph 48).

34. CO 1022/336 Summary of Proposals (Brunei, July 1953, 6 pp).

35. Letter of instructions from Sir Anthony Abell to Mr Bevington, 13 October 1954, paragraph 8 (copy courtesy of Mr Bevington CMG CEng).

36. The following section is based upon Bevington, op.cit., especially pp 6-14, 18-21 and 53-63.

would be found: the administration was "in a position of trust", he argued, "and it would be the height of folly to plan expenditure now on a mere presumption that more oil was found". The existing Seria field was assumed to have a further life of 25 years. The current peak of production had been reached in 1952 (cf. p 386, above) and a progressive decline of output was expected. Since 83% of State revenue was derived from petroleum, the task in hand was to accumulate sufficient funds before oil output diminished and then ceased altogether, whilst, at the same time, making a second string to the State's bow in the form of alternative economic development. Expenditure was to be governed by these two "over-riding considerations".

The prime need was to concentrate the known available resources on necessities and carefully-planned economic development, so that if oil revenue decreased, the State would be able to maintain the services thus created and be able to progress as an economically-stable entity without outside assistance. This would entail careful budgeting each year with a view to accumulating the maximum surplus while oil revenue remained buoyant, and the careful management of expenditure, including the avoidance of long-term subsidies on services which should become self-maintaining. Similarly, development expenditure needed to be directed sensibly to ensure that the money was spent on true economic development which would enhance the ability of the people to support the services created. If a new oil reservoir was found, a more optimistic view of the timespan within which alternative economic bases need be

fostered would be possible.

There were three requisites, in Mr Bevington's opinion, to the implementation of a development programme: money, materials and people. Money was "sufficient but no more" for the programme envisaged in 1953. A buyer's market for materials had been established. (This favoured Brunei; and the position was better than in the immediate after-math of the war). The principal difficulty concerned personnel, most of whom had to be recruited from outside the Sultanate. There was a wide - and widening - gap between the standard of the products of local schools and the quality of staff required to manage the new development pro-grammes. Experts engaged from overseas would be employed "for a limited period only and will be replaced by trained Bruneians as soon as they become available".[37]

Diversification of the Economy. It was important that existing non-oil industries should not be allowed to collapse and that new ones should be established. The Brunei economy had depended upon agricoulture before 1932 and might have to do so again. The people already had a working knowledge of rubber production, ample supplies of budwood were available locally for bud-grafting, and the rubber industry was therefore "the first and most obvious one to encourage for the future". The boom of 1950-1 showed its elasticity: the people were able to respond immediately to high prices. In other words, this was an industry which was worth keeping alive and to which, in case of need, the populace could readily return. During the war, no replanting had been undertaken;

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37. CO 1022/336 Summary of Proposals, p 6.

after the war good quality replanting material was not available locally. By 1953, therefore, most plantations were long past their peak, if not entirely neglected. A vigorous replanting programme was necessary, and only Government could supply the stock. The scheme was expected to increase yield per tree and therefore yield per tapper, an important point when labour was expensive. Some form of subsidy was necessary to assist smallholders in the clearing of land and to tide them over the period when the old trees must be felled and the new ones were not yet in bearing. Most important of all, some repayment by smallholders was essential if they were to value the budded stock they had obtained and look after it in husbandlike manner.

Rice cultivation remained tedious and back-breaking. Experimental surveys into mechanical cultivation were seen by Mr Bevington as "only a beginning". If successful, further drainage and irrigation would become necessary and farmers would have to be trained in new methods. Brunei had "sufficient" lowland areas to become self-supporting in rice (Mr Bevington supposed), but was unlikely to do so while labour could earn money more easily elsewhere. Mechanical cultivation should go far to remove the drudgery from rice growing and increase the yield per worker and therefore his cash return.

As alternative means to diversify the economy, Mr Bevington considered the merits of copra, oil palm and cocoa, which had all been neglected in Brunei "although having obvious possibilities coupled with that ease of working which is usually associated with a 'tree economy'". Such crops could not be established immediately; but research and

experimentation into possibilities was needed, and there was time to undertake such studies before petroleum ran out. The meat-eating habit was growing in Brunei. Hence experiments were also required with climatically-suitable cattle and grasses so that Brunei might establish "a small cattle industry which may go far to cut down the State's reliance on imported meat and give it some measure of independence". A strain of cattle which could give worthwhile milk yields in Brunei was a further requirement. In general, shifting cultivation needed to be eliminated if the living standards of such farmers were to be raised.

Mr Bevington argued that the possibility of a large-scale commercial fishery industry for Brunei could not be written off on the basis of the survey taken in 1949-50 (which had concluded that the time-honoured methods of the Brunei Malays were more suitable than European-style Danish seining; cf. p 367, above). The Commissioner of Development noted that consumption in the Sultanate was not met by local fishermen; and there was an inexhaustible market in Singapore for any future surplus. Within Brunei the Government had controlled price and distribution in order to ensure that fish was available to all: without such control all supplies would have gone to the oilfield where there was the greatest demand and purchasing power. Such restrictions limited the return to the fisherman, who had little opportunity of improving his equipment and returns. To cut such a vicious circle, Mr Bevington suggested that the first necessity was to increase local production until it met demand and then achieve a surplus for export. Local

fishermen needed to be given access to more efficient methods although rapid changes could not be expected. Mr Bevington suggested that the Government should demonstrate the advantages of heavier, slower-moving but cheaper and longer-lasting craft, and take over financing and marketing from the Chinese middlemen. A programme of this type was essential if fishermen were to be raised from the bare subsistence level. The second stage of development would require still larger craft and methods new to Brunei fishermen. Although the first brief experiment with Danish seining in 1949-50 had not been a success, it was by no means proved that commercial returns were not obtainable by such European methods provided suitable local fishermen could be induced to experiment. Comparable experiments in Sarawak and Malaya needed to be watched and profited from.

A similar emphasis on the improvement of traditional occupations was shown in the Government's reluctance to allow the handicraft industry to die out. Instead, it was argued that better market research was required: the days of the 'knick-knack' were over because people would buy only useful objects having a funotional value. Gold cloths, for example, found few uses outside the Malaysian world despite the quality of the workmanship. It was suggested that this was an industry which lent itself to some form of co-operative organisation.

Other secondary industries were necessary to reduce the wastage of natural gas produced in association with Seria oil. Agricultural and industrial loans from the Government could foster the economy. A soil

survey and a geological survey were to be undertaken in the hope that they would aid the development programme by yielding information for Government departments, farmers and commercial undertakings.

In short, the Brunei Government seemed not to have envisaged diversification of the economy beyond improvements in traditional activities; and there was a high degree of over-optimism in the 1953 plan given earlier comments about problems of labour, terrain, weak personal commitment and in-built conservatism, to name a few. The soil survey, as shall be seen in due course, seemed to confirm Mr Pretty's gloomy appraisal of the situation in August 1950 (see above, p 384). It has been suggested, further, that to use waste gas was merely to provide a facility rather than significantly to diversify the economy.

In the sphere of social services, the Summary of Proposals (1953) made provision for non-contributory pensions for the elderly and disabled; the resettlement of the inhabitants of Kampong Ayer on terra firma; the construction of roads, ports, a telephone exchange and aerodrome; town planning, including reclamation and anti-erosion works and the extension of water supplies and electricity; the construction of thirty new schools and the provision of scholarships and free primary school meals; and the expansion of medical services, including a new hospital in Kuala Belait, the extension of travelling dispensaries in rural areas, anti-malarial work, the training of nurses and dressers, and the extension of maternity services.

4. Implementation

(a) The Economy. Brunei continued to remain overwhelmingly dependent upon exports of crude oil. Apart from the minor accumulation at Jerudong, no new oil reservoir was discovered until 1963 when the offshore field at Ampa Patches was struck. Most of Brunei's oil is now (1985) derived from under the sea. Following the fourfold increase in the price of oil imposed by OPEC in 1973 Brunei has achieved unprecedented wealth.

It was not possible to make better use of Brunei's waste gas in the 1950s. Mr Bevington realized that the prerequisites for the establishment of successful secondary industries - an unlimited supply of power, raw materials close at hand, adequate local labour (both skilled and unskilled), a good port, and ready access to markets - were mostly lacking. Possibilities included the manufacture of cement, nitrogen fertilizers and aluminium; but none of these ideas were implemented because of the difficulties just outlined. There was no sulphur in the gas at Seria, so a number of sulphur-using projects were automatically ruled out. Mr Bevington realized, in any case, that

"If some day industry based on gas becomes a reality, it will broaden the economy of the State but for a limited period only. The write-off period will probably have to be short and capitalisation reduced or the cost of the product increased. Agriculture will not diminish in importance as the mainstay for the future: it will merely be given a longer preparation period". 38

Some waste gas was used, however, to supply domestic consumers in the oilfield area. In 1953 238 Government quarters and 70 private

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38. Bevington, op.cit., p 62.

consumers were thus supplied. Two years later $600,000 was approved by the Government for a new reticulation system in order to give an adequate supply to a much larger area. Work on this project did not begin until 1958. It was completed the following year, however, resulting in a general increase of pressure at consumer points and the inclusion of areas not previously served in Seria. On 21 January 1955 the Sultan opened the BMPC's new $14 million gas plant, which resulted in an increase in consumers from 867 in 1956 to 1,387 in 1958. (It was not until 1972 - when natural gas in liquefied form began to be exported to Japan - that a full use was found for Brunei's 'waste' gas).[39]

The soil survey taken in 1956 proved discouraging: there appeared to be very little extra flat land suitable for further agricultural development.[40] Although Inche Hamidoon, the State Agricultural Officer, criticised its findings as unrepresentative because it was based upon a small (60,000 acres) and swampy area, a larger-scale survey reached much the same conclusions in 1970. Equally discouraging was the $130,000 geological survey, which was ready by 1959.[41] Apart from oil, the chief mineral resource of Brunei was coal. Future mining prospects were poor because there was negligible local demand for coal and it was

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39. During the Residential Era the value of annual natural gas exports from Brunei peaked at $1.28 million in 1947, before falling to $0.44m in both 1951 and 1952. A slight recovery then ensued ($0.62m in 1958); but as late as 1970 Brunei's natural gas exports fetched only slightly above $1.0m. After the commencement of liquefied natural gas exporting in 1972, however, there was a phenomenal increase from $46.5m in 1973 to $685m in 1976. Source: compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports.
40. Borneo Bulletin, 4 and 25 October 1958.
41. Borneo Bulletin, 15 August 1959. A revised version (presumably) of this report - GE Wilford, The Geology and Mineral Resources of Brunei and Adjacent Parts of Sarawak - was published in Brunei in 1961.

unlikely that Brunei's lignite could compete economically in overseas countries with fuel oil and locally-produced coal as a fuel for general heating purposes. Much of the coal-bearing area was relatively inaccessible, most of the thicker seams dipped steeply, and many had clay floors and roofs. The thickest and most accessible seams at Brooketon Colliery had probably been worked out. Other mineral resources included constructional materials such as sand, gravel and limestone, and brick clay. Most of the limestone could be used for cement manufacture, but was situated in the relatively inaccessible interior. Extensive deposits of high-grade silica sand suitable for glass-making occurred in the coastal area. Dr Wilford, the geologist, was unable to substantiate reports of antimony and diamonds said to be found in the area (see above, pp 202-3).

If suitable secondary industries proved elusive, the preservation of existing non-oil occupations was no less difficult. Both Mr Pretty in 1950 and Mr Bevington later on had seen rubber as a possible area of growth. In early 1956 a five million dollar rubber improvement scheme, aimed at smallholders, was announced. After the Korean War boom ended, low prices and the attraction of other work (such as the oilfield and the building programme) resulted in a sharp decline in tapping. The aim of the rubber scheme was to increase smallholder acreage and to improve the quality of their product. To achieve this purpose, smallholders were given subsidies, bonuses, improved planting materials and chemicals. Towards the end of 1953 the Government had purchased the Brunei United Plantations Company's estate at Berakas,[42] where a 33-acre

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42. See above, p 205.

rubber nursery was started the following August "with the object of producing budded stumps for sale to smallholders".[43] Towards half a million improved seedlings and budded stumps from Berakas were sold (at 25 cents a time) during the years 1955-9.[44] In 1957 new planting was subsidized at the rate of $300 an acre and replanting at $500 an acre (limited to a minimum of three acres and a maximum of ten). In each case deductions were made for the cost of planting materials and fertilizers. Subsidies were paid for the first three years after planting, subject to a stand of rubber having been established to the satisfaction of the State Agricultural Officer.[45] Attempts to induce the production of smoked sheet met with little response because smallholders "were content to sell their unsmoked sheet at a lower price than they were entitled to". The extra labour and care which the production of smoked sheet entailed was not matched by the price paid by Chinese dealers.[46]

Total rubber production (of which only a small and declining proportion was accounted for by surviving estates) actually fell sharply, from 3.2 million pounds (weight) in 1955 to only 2.3 million in 1958. It showed an even more alarming decline in value because of the falling world price, on the one hand, and, on the other, the attraction of easier work, an assured wage being available to persons who previously made a living by tapping rubber. In 1958 it was estimated that not more

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43. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 34.
44. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 39.
45. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p 33.
46. Brunei Annual Report 1950, p 12 and BAR 1955, p 38.

than 50% of all smallholdings were in tapping and this fell to a mere 25% during the padi-planting and harvesting periods. In 1959, however, output revived to reach its highest annual level since 1953 because of higher world prices and the greater attention to rubber in Brunei following the disbandment of workers hitherto engaged in development projects. In the next years, however, rubber production continued to decline. By 1959 all of the European rubber companies had sold their estates, usually to the Government. These estates do not appear to have participated in the 1956 scheme.

In the case of rubber, market forces rather than the persuasion of the Government had prevailed. The benefits of the rice improvement scheme were also not immediately apparent. The Bunot resettlement programme, which commenced in March 1952, was specifically designed for Malays from Kampong Ayer with the object of encouraging these non-agricultural people to acquire land for food crops, rubber cultivation, goats and poultry-rearing and wet-padi growing. The people were provided with land free of charge, free seed, fruit trees, and a limited number of planting materials and poultry. A house grant of $50 per family plus a family subsidy of two dollars per working day would cease after the first padi harvest. Payment was also made for the construction of an access road and drain. Wells were constructed to supply settlers with fresh drinking water. Nineteen families had settled before the end of 1952.[47]

In 1953 it was reported that early settlers showed keenness in

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47. Brunei Annual Report 1952, p 20.

farm work, especially poultry-rearing.[48] Some workers, however, were content with a plot of land which their wives could cultivate, allowing themselves to adhere to their previous lifestyle, while the Government recognized that certain types, such as tradesmen and fishermen, might refuse to move for many years to come. By 1955 it was admitted that progress towards resettlement at Bunot (and similar sites) was slow and that the Government might have to make the aid offered even more attractive.[49] Expenditure upon resettlement amounted to $116,413 in 1954, but fell to only $12,561 in 1957 as interest waned. By 1960 the population of the River Village was higher than it had ever been in this century: of the 22,939 inhabitants of Brunei Town, 13,237 lived in Kampong Ayer compared with less than 10,000 on terra firma.[50] The Bunot scheme, in short, had attracted comparatively few people (the exact number is not available), although it offered water, electricity and scavenging services not available in Kampong Ayer. Presumably there was a basic cultural antipathy to the move, despite the generous financial and other incentives to do so. Perhaps, also, the type of labour required in Bunot, other than in poultry farming, was more rigorous than in Kampong Ayer.[51]

Connected with this plan to resettle River Villagers on the

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48. Brunei Annual Report 1953, pp 40-1.
49. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 2.
50. DE Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate (Brunei 1970), p 41.
51. The resistance to land settlement persists to this day. "Urban Brunei", the Telegraph Sunday Magazine reported on 5 February 1984, "is famous for its...water villages...The locals love them, despite the lack of running water or modern sanitation...and efforts to move kampong inhabitants to houses on land have been most unpopular".

mainland were the Mulaut irrigation project and experiments into the mechanical cultivation of padi, all of which were designed to render the Sultanate self-sufficient in rice. Mechanical cultivation, if feasible, would overcome the shortage of labour.[52]

In 1954 consultants began a survey of the drainage and irrigation potentialities of the Lumpas and Mulaut areas. This survey indicated that certain tracts were suitable for irrigation for wet padi growing. By 1956 plans had been drafted which, it was hoped, would make Brunei completely self-supporting in rice "within three or four years". Five million dollars were earmarked under the plan for the drainage and irrigation of 8,000 acres of land near the capital.[53] The River Mulaut dam was completed in 1958; but the overall scheme was defeated by the difficulty of obtaining sufficient supplies of unpolluted water and of labour to work in the padi fields.[54]

The second aspect of the rice programme, an enquiry into the practicability of mechanical cultivation, was completed in May 1958.[55] Considerable success was claimed in the cultivation of deep swamps for rice growing. New implements were designed to reduce labour, speed up work and cut costs of production. According to a report in the Borneo Bulletin, the Mulaut scheme was abandoned because "additional funds were not available".[56]

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52. Borneo Bulletin, 27 November 1954.
53. Brunei Annual Report 1956, p vi.
54. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 32.
55. The final report had yet to be presented at the conclusion of the year; and no further information is available to the present writer.
56. Borneo Bulletin, 12 April 1958.

The padi scheme failed to render Brunei self-sufficient in rice, or anything approaching such a condition. Whereas the country's population more than doubled between 1947 and 1960, acreages planted with rice, total output and yields per acre failed to keep pace, and, after 1953, were less impressive than they had been in the immediate post-war period.[57] In 1957-8, the worst season, domestic production met only one-third of requirements. There was some evidence of a beginning of mechanization, however;[58] and, as mentioned, the research engineers had designed some implements specifically for use in Brunei.

Another industry attracting the Government's attention was fishing. Many of the inhabitants of Brunei district and of the coastal villages between Tutong and Kuala Belait gained their livelihood from fishing. Sea fishermen operated close inshore on rocky patches or coral beds. The prawn fishing industry, with headquarters on the islands of

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57. The area under rice declined from 8,615 acres in 1948-9 season to less than 7,000 acres during the years 1954-60. Total production, which had peaked at 2.7m gantangs in 1948-9 season, declined to 2.1m in 1951-2 and by 1957-8 had slumped to only 0.67m gantangs, before recovering to 1.04m in 1958-9. Yields of wet padi were as follows: 370 gantangs per acre in 1948-9, 200 gantangs in 1957-8, and 224 in 1964-5. Yields of dry padi were even poorer: 240 gantangs per acre in 1949-50 and 1950-1, 70 gantangs in 1957-8, and 159 gantangs in both 1958-9 and 1964-5. Rice imports fluctuated from a peak of 89,916 pikuls to a low of 25,198 in 1955 and back up again to 83,585 pikuls in 1957. (See also, pp 225-31, 278 and 363-6, above).

58. Imports of 'agricultural machinery and implements' (excluding tractors) totalled over $1m in 1956, but less than $100,000 annually in 1953-5 and 1957. (Perhaps the unusually high level in 1956 was because of imports brought in by the research engineers, the figures for the other years representing the standard level). Imports of tractors rose sharply from $0.36m annually in 1954 to $2.24m in 1957, but halved in the following year. The value of manufactured fertilizers brought into Brunei during 1958 totalled only $18,849.

Baru Baru and Berbunot, was centred around the south-eastern part of Brunei Bay. The industry was certainly not an insignificant one, for, in 1953, it was reported that

"numerous fishing stakes and nets (tugus) are to be seen extending from the Southern shores (of Brunei Bay) to nine miles out, and practically right across the Bay from west to east, leaving clear only the navigable channels of the Brunei, Limbang, Temburong and Pandaruan Rivers". 59

Most of the fishermen were employed by a handful of Chinese middlemen residing in the two islands mentioned. Fresh prawns were bought from the fishermen by the towkays and resold at market rates. There was an export trade in prawn dust (produced by sun-drying and then powdering of selected prawns); and a fish paste called balachan was also manufactured for local retailing. Otherwise, all fish and prawns landed at Brunei ports were for consumption within the State and none was exported.

The coast off Kuala Belait was considerably more exposed than in Brunei Bay, so fishing there was much more dependent on the weather. Catches failed to meet demand in the oilfield towns; and the scarcity of fish there caused its price to rise.

(Apart from sea fishing, with which we are concerned here, river fisheries also existed; but the returns were "so small as to be negligible"[60] and, in general, they were operated for the personal consumption of the owners. The fish were of "no marketable value").[61]

Mechanization of the sea fishing industry had been proceeding since the start of the 1950s. In 1955 it was reported that the intro-

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59. Brunei Annual Report 1953, p 54.
60. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 56.
61. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 62.

duction and extensive use of outboard engines, originally purchased on interest-free loans to the individual fishermen had, in that year, enabled the industry to extend its activities to the nearer offshore grounds. As a result, production was almost treble the previous year's catch, itself a year (1954) of exceptional abundance;[62] and, by the end of 1955, only the very small, one- or two-man, prahus were still using hand paddles as a means of propulsion.[63] In 1956 the catch doubled again.

Mr Bevington, the Development Commissioner, then argued that outboard engines were not very economical to operate and he hoped that fishermen would opt instead for heavier and slower-moving, but more cost-effective, diesel-powered craft.[64] Two years later, however, fishermen stated that the new, heavier boats were too small for the crew and equipment used in local fishing and that they were unsafe in rough seas.[65]

In the marketing sector of the fishing industry, the Government faced the following difficulties:

(1) to ensure that the actual fishermen got a fair deal from the middlemen and that the fishermen, for their part, delivered their entire catch to the towkay;

(2) to secure continuity of supply in the capital; and

(3) to improve the quantity of fish retailed in the oilfield.

In 1954 marketing was in the hands of a limited number of

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62. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 61; and Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 57.
63. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 61.
64. See above, pp 394-5.
65. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1958, p 58.

licensed towkays. Controls were exercised (by the Government) over the movement of fish and prawns within the State and in the Brunei Town area a price control was imposed. The towkay system largely financed the industry. The fisherman

"obtains the necessary gear and boats, and in some cases even food, from the Chinese towkay, and is thereafter considered to be under 'contract' to hand over to the towkay all the fish that he catches". 66

This system was open to abuse because the initial debt was often "out of proportion to the fisherman's earnings and is carried on indefinitely". It was, however, of advantage to the fisherman during the monsoon seasons, when for days on end he might be weatherbound and unable to put to sea.[67]

The introduction of power-driven craft and the resultant increase in the fishermen's returns was expected, in time, to enable the fishermen to become independent of the towkay system. Consideration was given by the Government to a marketing scheme which aimed to remove from the few licensed wholesalers the control which they exercised over sea produce after it had been landed; but nothing seems to have emerged from such deliberations.[68]

The doubling of the catch in 1956 was ascribed largely to a tightening of control over the homeward-bound fisherman returning with his day's catch, previously waylaid in the river by craft from neighbouring ports in the Brunei Bay area and enticed to sell his fish to them at probably slightly higher rates than the controlled prices. The Brunei fisherman, having disposed of most of his catch, could proceed to

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66. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 58.
67. Ibid.
68. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 64.

his home with the minimum of delay usually experienced when landing his fish in the Brunei Town market. Strict enforcement of the rule that fish might only be disposed of in the licensed market and to certain licensed merchants, supported by surprise patrols, produced results which satisfied the Government.[69] Greater continuity of supply was also achieved. Formerly, any surplus left unsold would have been converted into animal food. Now, however, with an almost daily surplus of first quality fish, little difficulty was experienced in disposing of the previous day's balance thanks to growing interest in 'iced' fish. Fish became available practically throughout the day, whereas previously it had been necessary to await the return of the fishing fleets and then scramble for a share of their frequently inadequate catches.[70] In short, the Government was concerned to protect the interests of the consumer as well as those of the producer; but, given the increase in the total catch, the fishermen themselves must have enjoyed better overall returns. (No figures are available, however, to demonstrate this contention).

The Government also faced the task of how to secure an adequate supply to the oilfield without, at the same time, denuding the capital of fish. Early in 1955 price control was extended to include Kuala Belait and Seria. Previously, in spite of 'movement restrictions' being enforced on sea produce landed in Brunei, a large quantity of the daily catch was diverted to the oilfield area and resulted in a flourishing black market and frequent shortages of sea food in the northern half of

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69. Brunei Annual Report 1956, p 55.
70. Ibid., p 58.

the country. It was hoped that the extension of price control would ensure a fair distribution of fish and prawns landed in Brunei and remove "the incentive to 'smuggle' these commodities out of the area in which they are caught".[71] In 1955 the measure seemed to be working;[72] but two years later "the high prices for fish in Seria" (despite attempted price control) contributed to a continuing black market. The Marine Department lacked the staff to prevent this happening.[73] In 1958, it was decided to issue permits for movements of fish from the capital to Seria: 417 were handed out in 1958 for 687 pikuls of fresh fish and 45 pikuls of prawns.[74] These quantities failed to match the demand, as the import figures prove (see below, footnote 76 on p 410).

The growth in the quantity of fresh fish landed in Brunei Town was very impressive. The amount rose from a mere 2,264 pikuls in 1953 to no less than 40,330 pikuls in 1959, whilst production of prawns rose from 589 pikuls to 4,742 pikuls over the same period.[75] (These figures do not include landings made at Muara, Baru Baru, Tutong, Kuala Labu and Kuala Belait). The increasing demand for fresh sea-food in the capital caused the export of prawn dust to decline considerably from the mid-1950s. Despite the marked increase of domestic production of fish, there were also heavy imports of fish and associated products during the

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71. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 63. See, also, Borneo Bulletin, 11 December 1954 (letters) and Borneo Bulletin, 30 April 1955.
72. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 63.
73. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p 57. See, also, Borneo Bulletin 10 March 1956 and Borneo Bulletin, 2 March 1957.
74. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1958, p 56.
75. Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports.

1950s.[76]

As in the fishing industry, so in other aspects of the economy, the Government's purpose during the period of the five year plan was to preserve and strengthen traditional Malay skills, while simultaneously improving the general economic prospects for indigenous subjects. In May 1956 $500,000 was provided for development loans to help "small (business-) men to expand and improve their businesses on fair and reasonable terms" (the fairness of the terms to be decided by the Government, of course) - but only for projects which would "benefit the country" and help to provide new and better services. It was Government policy

"to encourage Malay enterprise and, in the recent past, there have been several examples of substantial loans being made to projects originated by local people". 77

The money was to be made available for relatively small-scale items - e.g. to enable farmers to buy buffaloes or boatmen to buy engines[78] - which, in itself, revealed the comparatively weak ranking and role (in Government eyes) of Malay peasants, fishermen and craftsmen. The State Council had decided earlier in 1956 to grant a loan to erect buildings for silversmiths on the mainland.[79] Whilst the latter were recognized as producing work of exceptionally high standard, their output could not match the demand. Established craftsmen were often too

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76. In 1953 2,320 pikuls of "fish: fresh or simply preserved" worth $185,400 were imported, compared with 3,888 pikuls worth $434,054 in 1958. In addition, imports of "fish: canned or fish preparations" rose sharply between 1953 and 1955 ($651,315 in the latter year), but by 1958 had fallen back to $207,739 (or only two thirds of the 1953 level).
77. Borneo Bulletin, 5 May 1956.
78. Ibid.
79. Borneo Bulletin, 7 January 1956.

busy to teach youngsters, whereas the latter could earn more money elsewhere for less graft. Hence, when the Government set up a showplace and general workshop in Jalan Roberts, with a school for apprentice silversmiths under Pehin Bendahari, the latter had to be paid an annual allowance to compensate him for loss of earnings while teaching.[80] Most silversmiths were of advanced age.[81] Under the 1956 scheme, ten pupils would be trained for three years on a grant of $85 per month, which would be gradually reduced as their own proficiency and earnings increased. While the Brunei Government was determined to preserve a traditional crafts sector, the labour input was small and mechanization could be applied only to certain preliminary processes. Similarly, Brunei women continued to weave high quality sarongs, which could sell individually for up to $200, but took about three weeks to produce on the somewhat primitive wheels in use.[82]

A rather more innovative scheme, involving apprenticeships for cabinet-making, wood-craft, upholstering and bookbinding, was announced in January 1958.[83] In March the State Council agreed that loans for development buildings might be granted to Brunei citizens on certain conditions, including that they owned the land of the prospective

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80. Ibid. (NB. "Sales" of silver in Brunei totalled $24,950 in 1956, compared with $19,271 in the previous year, and $11,070 in 1954. In the best pre-war year, 1928, "exports" of silverware were worth $16,500. - See p 235 (above); and Brunei Annual Report 1956, p viii).
81. Borneo Bulletin, 7 January 1956. (An example was Awang Jamar, born in about 1891 or 1892, whose ancestors had come from Java, where they had also been silversmiths. Ibid.). See, also, Borneo Bulletin, 19 March 1983, pp 20-22.
82. Borneo Bulletin, 14 January 1956.
83. Borneo Bulletin, 11 January 1958.

site, that the proposed buildings were permanent, and that the plans were approved by a professional architect.[84]

In conclusion, it may be remarked that the Government's economic projects, even if successful, still implied that the role of the indigene was confined to that of paid craftsmen, artisan or smallholder, instead of being large-scale entrepreneurs. There were, however, no Government restrictions on non-indigenous ownership (unlike Malaya, where Chinese businessmen often had to be fronted by a nominal bumipatra). Clearly, the schemes which have just been outlined were not intended radically to alter the economic balance of power and function in Brunei. Rather more progress, on the other hand, was made in the sphere of social services, as shall become apparent in the next two sections.

(b) "The first and pressing necessity".[85] Education was given the highest priority in the development plan. The principal aims in 1953 were to build and equip thirty new schools and provide teachers for them; to increase the number of overseas scholarships; and to introduce a free school meals service.[86] Improved local education was a necessary preliminary to the reduction of Government dependence on personnel recruited from overseas, which was creating disquiet among Malays already in the

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84. Borneo Bulletin, 29 March 1958.
85. Bevington, op.cit., p 39.
86. CO 1022/336 Summary of Proposals, paragraphs 13 and 20; and Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 5. The Education Plan was drawn up in 1954 by the State Education Officer, Mr HJ Padmore, following consultation with the Resident, the Director of Education (Sarawak), the former Brunei State Education Officer, and the Superintendent of Malay Education" (BAR 1954, pp 71-2).

civil service.[87]

By 1954 the apathy of pre-war years had changed to a "clamant demand for education".[88] In 1954-5 just under $11.25 million was voted for various extraordinary educational projects, including school buildings and equipment, teacher training, expatriate staff from the United Kingdom, grants-in-aid to private schools, and financial provision for overseas scholarships, adult education, teaching aids, school libraries, and the creation of a vernacular literature. A representative Education Advisory Committee was established in 1955.[89] There was no intention of building up a "white collar complex" and emphasis throughout school life was also placed upon practical training, such as school gardens.

From the beginning of 1954 the priority was to train teachers to meet rising enrolments of pupils, following an appeal by the Sultan to all parents to send their children, especially daughters, to school.[90]

"If education is to progress rapidly" - thus Mr Bevington some time later - "the vicious circle of low standard pupils becoming low standard teachers and turning out low standard pupils must be out". 91

Construction of 23 new Malay primary schools (presumably including several replacements for existing schools) and a further three large secondary schools had been virtually completed before the end of 1957. The Govern-ment set itself the target of training 300 teachers within ten years.

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87. CO 1022/396 (item 12) Sir AF Abell to CO, No 54 (saving), 13 May 1953, paragraphs 4-5.
88. Bevington, op.cit., p 39.
89. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 73 and CO 824/4 HJ Padmore, Triennial Report on Education 1955-7, p 12.
90. Padmore, loc.cit., p 5; Borneo Bulletin, 4 December 1954 and Borneo Bulletin, 5 March 1955.
91. Bevington, op.cit., p 39.

After the founding of Brunei's own training college in 1956 students were no longer sent to Batu Lintang in Sarawak (cf. p 359, above, and p 418, below), but links were maintained with colleges in Singapore, Tanjong Malim (SITC) and Kota Bahru. Women teachers were trained at Malacca and, from 1955, at Jesselton. As a result, the number of <u>trained</u> teachers in Malay primary schools doubled from 61 in 1953 to 122 in 1958 and a further one hundred students were being trained in the latter year. It was necessary, however, to continue to employ unqualified staff: no less than 96 at the end of 1953, for example.

An important feature of the development plan was the recruitment of specialist, top-quality English teachers from the United Kingdom for the new secondary schools. Brunei also took advantage of Malaya's offer to provide annually five of its own citizens to be trained as English teachers in the United Kingdom and afterwards to serve in Brunei. This solution was expensive[92] but necessary if progress was wanted.

The Government assumed greater control of the independent Chinese vernacular schools, principally for political reasons, <u>viz.</u> to avoid the kind of disturbances which had occurred recently in Chinese Middle Schools in Singapore and Sarawak.[93] (There were seven such establishments in Brunei in 1953 and an eighth was added in 1956. By

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92. Under this project, which was planned originally to last for three years, fifteen Malayans were trained as teachers at Kirkby, near Liverpool. Although this scheme cost the Brunei Government $163,817, it was pronounced to have been such a success that it was extended, in 1958, for a further five years. When the scheme matured, thirty teachers, including ten women, would have been trained for service in Brunei (Padmore, <u>loc.cit.</u>, p 15).

93. <u>Borneo Bulletin</u>, 29 October 1955, 28 May 1955 and 7 April 1956.

the following year three of them had secondary sections).[94] In return for a Government subsidy covering 50% of school costs plus certain building grants (from 1955), half the school committee, including the chairman, was to be appointed by the Government. Chinese teachers were awarded a pay rise of 25% to bring them into conformity with Government salary scales. This measure at once created a greater sense of security among Chinese teachers, and, as a result, their feelings of unrest subsided and itineracy was much reduced.[95] Practically all the well-qualified teachers in Chinese schools came from overseas, but there were some locally-born, if untrained, staff. Each passing year witnessed a steady increase in the already high percentage of Chinese children in school.[96] An inspector of such schools was engaged in March 1955.[97] In addition, half the cost of training Brunei Chinese students as

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94. The medium of instruction was Mandarin. Brunei Chinese schools, it was reported in 1951, taught "the conventional subjects, superimposed on the background of their own culture. (The curriculum included) arithmetic, general knowledge, civics, physical training, games and handwork. English as a subject is added in the third year. History, geography and social science completed the Higher Primary curriculum". The first Chinese school to open Middle (secondary) classes was the one at Brunei Town in 1953; two more had followed suit by 1957. It was hoped that this would produce more teachers having Brunei domicile. Prior to 1955, when only token Government grants were awarded, Chinese schools experienced difficulty in raising sufficient capital to meet the cost of providing new buildings. In 1955, however, the Government made available $109,000 for this purpose, and, in the next year, no less than $412,000 was forthcoming.

95. Brunei Annual Report 1955, pp 74-5; Brunei Annual Report 1956, p 64; and CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p 63.

96. Padmore, loc.cit., p 7. It is interesting to note that in 1957 4,821 Chinese attended all types of school in Brunei compared with 4,835 Malays. This was despite the fact that Malays were about twice as numerous in the general population. (See p 417, below).

97. Borneo Bulletin, 19 March 1955.

teachers at Sibu in Sarawak was also met by the Brunei Government.[98] It is to be emphasized that these subventions did not win the unanimous approval of members of the State Council.[99]

Under the Development Plan, the independent Christian mission schools, of which there were seven by 1959, were awarded grants totalling one-third of the cost of teachers' salaries. But these schools failed to build up a full permanent staff (because teachers were often the wives of BMPC employees and their availability was contingent upon their husbands remaining in the country), and the subsidy was not sufficient for teachers to be paid at Government rates.[100] State aid was also available for new buildings. A condition of such Government financial help (as, also, with the Chinese vernacular schools) was that a course of instruction in the Malay language had to be followed.[101] The State Education Officer regretted that, as late as 1958, "the curriculum in these mission schools is entirely literary and they are not yet in a position to afford buildings and equipment to start effective teaching of science, domestic science, metalwork and woodwork".[102] Sir Anthony Abell, the High Commissioner, encouraged the missionaries, however, because they maintained "the highest standards of integrity, loyalty and discipline" whilst preserving "traditions and customs evolved over many generations against

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98. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p 63. See also Sarawak Annual Report 1956, p 77; SAR 1957, p 64; and SAR 1959, p 93.
99. On 1 February 1958, for example, the Borneo Bulletin reported that financial support for Chinese schools had been extended for a further year, but only after "lengthy and heated debate" in the State Council. (Evidently, times had changed since 1924 and before: see p 137, above).
100. Padmore, loc.cit., p 33.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid., p 7.

those (such as communists) who wish to institute a creed of violence and false values".[103] In mid-1959, however, State backing of Christian education was withdrawn because it had come to be deemed inappropriate in a country with a (narrowing) Muslim majority.[104]

Government English Schools. Before 1951, when the organized teaching of English began in Brunei, parents with sufficient financial resources sent their children to Kuching, Labuan, Jesselton or Singapore for an English education. In 1951-2 two very small Government English schools were started in Brunei Town and Kuala Belait (see above, pp 359-60). By the end of 1954 there were approximately 250 pupils in the two schools. Teaching conditions were extremely bad at that time.[105]

Under the Development Plan three major schools were built to replace the existing ones and were named after the Sultan, Sultana and the British High Commissioner. The buildings were constructed in several stages. The Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin (SOAS) College in the capital was begun in July 1954, eventually costing $3,000,000 to complete. (The necessity for the expenditure of such a sum - which represented double the Government's entire annual receipts even in the best pre-occupation year, 1940 - to provide just one fully-equipped secondary school, must surely make us hesitate even more before criticizing the efforts of pre-war Residents in the educational sphere). After a lady principal had been engaged in 1957, one section of the school was separated to form

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103. Borneo Bulletin, 25 June 1955 (my addition in parenthesis).
104. Borneo Bulletin, 20 June 1959; and CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 68.
105. Padmore, loc.cit., p 15.

the Sekolah Tinggi Perempuan Rajah Isteri (Sultana's High School for Girls).[106] From 1956 another section of SOAS College was used for teacher training, the first such institute in Brunei, before moving to a new site in 1959. The Abell College in Seria, the third Government secondary school, was officially opened in 1958, though versions of the school (originally in Kuala Belait) had existed since 1952. All these schools were headed by an expatriate, assisted by other expatriate teachers (such as the minor British novelist, Mr A Burgess) in key posts. Each school was "generously equipped" with modern furniture, textbooks and teaching aids. Laboratories, workshops and art-rooms were added in order to ensure the broadest-possible education. In 1959 a gynasium/ auditorium and a swimming pool were planned for SOAS College.[107] The principal limitation was obtaining sufficient specialist teachers. Safe-guards were made to prevent too many students being attracted to "white collar" employment. In 1955 candidates were entered for an external examination - the Sarawak Junior Certificate - for the first time and, in 1958, GCE 'Ordinary Level' standard was attained. Plans were afoot for the establishment of a Sixth Form at SOAS College.[108]

Government English Schools in Brunei were "the envy of visiting educationalists".[109] All classrooms had electric fans and, by 1958, teaching conditions generally were "as modern and as comfortable as can

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106. In 1954 it was envisaged that Brunei Town would eventually require a 600-boys' secondary school and a 300-girls' secondary school. In fact, enrolment in SOAS College in 1959 was 491 (including 20 girls) with a further 184 girls attending the STPRI.
107. Padmore, loc.cit., pp 15-17.
108. Ibid., p 20.
109. Ibid., pp 44-5.

be possibly made in this area so near to the equator".[110] Students had difficulty in studying at home in the evenings because of poor lighting conditions and so it became Government policy to provide comfortable hostel accommodation for all secondary pupils living away from their homes. The majority of families in and around Brunei Town possessed a radio and attendance at cinema was popular. There were few books for leisure reading in Malay and Chinese homes, but the circulation of newspapers, both locally-produced and imported, was rising. Little English was spoken in homes.[111]

Achievement. The education programme was not without its successes. First, Malay primary schools were established in many scattered and inaccessible up-country locations. All these schools were finished in bright colours and stood out in the various villages as the finest buildings around.[112] Almost every kampong had its school and by 1958 90% of Malay boys of school age and 37% of Malay girls were enrolled.[113] If the number of Malay vernacular schools increased only from 33 to 52 between 1953 and 1959, many older schools moved into new premises and the total number of pupils nearly trebled (from 2,769 to 7,164). In addition, there were eight semi-independent Chinese primary schools with 3,459 pupils in 1959[114] and a much more even sex ratio (1,944 boys to 1,515 girls), partly because Chinese schools were mainly

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110. Ibid., p 45.
111. Ibid., pp 45–8. (Nowadays Bruneians are excellent linguists: see below, p 549, footnote 61).
112. Ibid., p 17.
113. Ibid., p 32.
114. There was also one unaided Chinese school (with 131 pupils in 1959).

in urban areas (and hence more accessible) and partly because Chinese parents allowed their daughters more latitude. It was hoped that, as more Malay women teachers became available, more Malay girls would also be sent to school.[115] There were, in the primary sector, a further seven non-Government Christian mission schools, compared with only three before the occupation. Most of the pupils were Brunei Chinese, but a sizeable minority of Malays also attended.[116] Finally, each type of school provided secondary classes; and three modern Government English secondary schools had been opened. By 1959 Brunei possessed 72 primary schools with 13,618 pupils and eight secondary schools with a register of 1,119 children. A further 199 students, predominantly from outside the Sultanate, were being trained at the BMPC's Trades School at Seria (see pp 357-8, above). Overall, a total of 15,006 children attended school in 1959[117] and there were 64 student teachers enrolled at Berakas College. A number of youngsters were awarded scholarships to attend schools and then universities overseas. About one thousand adults attended night classes

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115. Mr Padmore reported in 1958 that parents in Brunei were "extremely fond" of their children. Families of six to twelve boys and girls were not uncommon. Generally, "most of the children from an early age are self reliant and particularly in the country districts (they) assist with the cooking of the family meals, search for and chop the fire-wood, the girls particularly washing their clothes and assisting their mothers with the young children. The girls generally speaking have a harder life than boys and it is only in recent years that girls are being encouraged to go to school". There was a "deep rooted traditional feeling that the place for girls is at home helping the mother to rear the large families..." (ibid., pp 46, 47 and 48).

116. Figures are available for 1951 when, out of 863 children attending mission schools, 598 (69%) were Chinese compared with only 168 Malays.

117. In 1960 16,679 attended school out of a population of 39,109 aged under 15. Even after excluding the under fives, there was clearly much progress to be made before universal education became a reality.

and a further 915 joined adult literacy classes, begun in 1959. In the same year a regional literature bureau was established. This expansion cost a hefty sum of money: capital expenditure under the Development Plan accounted for $15 million by mid-1958[118] whilst annually-recurrent charges jumped from $0.3m in 1952 to about $3.2 million in 1958.

If a considerable amount of money was being devoted to education and progress had been made in building schools, enrolling children and training teachers, Brunei was still far from achieving universal and high-quality education at the conclusion of the Residential Era. (To this day, indeed, the country lacks a university). In places, classes were too large[119] and the number of teachers, particularly specialists, remained insufficient. The absence of Malay girls in school was striking. In the main urban centres, paradoxically, rising enrolments strained existing school accommodation. Some Malay parents voiced fears that vernacular education was a 'no through road', leaving their children without adequate career prospects. There were insufficient places for children anxious to enter Government English schools; hence some parents were obliged to pay fees to mission schools in order to secure a further education for their offspring.[120] In an attempt to alleviate this problem to some extent, it was announced in late January 1958 that Government secondary schools were to be expanded and scholarships allotted for pupils

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118. Padmore, loc.cit., p 29.
119. On 20 July 1957, for example, the Borneo Bulletin referred to "gross overcrowding" in two Chinese schools, one in Kuala Belait, the other in Seria. Many potential pupils had to be turned away.
120. Borneo Bulletin, 15 March 1958.

to attend mission schools.[121] Other weaknesses remained. First, the children lacked technical training, which discouraged potential investors in Brunei.[122] Secondly, education was organized partly on communal lines, which gave rise to fears that racial tensions might develop in the future. Both the Partai Rakyat Brunei (see pp 493ff, below) and the Borneo Bulletin argued in favour of a single, national system in which all children mixed together.[123] The British denied any intention to divide and rule;[124] and, certainly, the English and mission schools were multi-racial. Many Chinese parents, on the other hand, preferred their children to have a grounding in their own culture, and this wish was respected by the administration. In 1955, indeed, when the Education Department acquired greater influence in the running of Chinese schools, assurances had to be given that the suppression locally of Chinese culture was not the goal.[125] Since the (unsatisfied) popular demand was for English education, it has been suggested that the PRB seemed to be "rather dogmatically nationalistic" in its attitude.

The Borneo Bulletin, fearing that children were being "sacrificed at the altar of selection",[126] appealed for a diversification of education, particularly in the technical sphere. Mr HJ Padmore, the

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121. Borneo Bulletin, 1 February 1958.
122. Borneo Bulletin, 4 October 1958. "Brunei people are almost totally unskilled", it was claimed.
123. Borneo Bulletin, 28 May 1955, 25 May 1957 (Editorial) and 1 June 1957 (Editorial).
124. Borneo Bulletin, 7 November 1959. On 21 April 1956 Sir Anthony Abell was quoted by the Borneo Bulletin as saying that no local government officer in Brunei should base any decision on racial grounds.
125. Borneo Bulletin, 5 November 1955.
126. Borneo Bulletin, 15 March 1958 (Editorial).

State Education Officer (1954-9), replied that Government policy aimed to give all Malay children secondary education provided that they had the required minimum standard of intelligence. Entrance to secondary schools had to be based on merit.[127] Elsewhere it was stated that there were not yet enough books in Malay for secondary schooling in that language.[128]

The PRB argued that insufficient students were being educated overseas and that such scholarships as existed were awarded on the basis of favouritism. The PRB demanded technical education for farmers, fishermen and Malays engaged in industry. The latter groups, however, were notoriously conservative in outlook, as illustrated by their reluctance to leave Kampong Ayer or to work in the oilfield; and it might appear to an impartial observer that there was little <u>real</u> public demand for technical education beyond the PRB and <u>Borneo Bulletin</u> insisting - wisely, no doubt - that there <u>should</u> be.[129] Finally, the fact remains that the professional, managerial and skilled personnel necessary for the maintenance of the new development programmes were not yet forthcoming in 1959. This is amply demonstrated in the health sphere.

(c) <u>Health</u>.[130] The health service was not quite so backward as

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127. <u>Borneo Bulletin</u>, 22 March 1958.
128. <u>Ibid</u>. ("Education in Brunei" by a "Special Correspondent").
129. On 8 October 1955 the <u>Borneo Bulletin</u> itself editorialised that Brunei Malay youth did not appear to be willing "to work hard and undergo fairly long periods of sustained effort in learning the various trades".
130. See, also, pp 13, 192-6, 286-92, 331, 337, 344-5 and 360-2 (above) and 535 and 553 (below).

education had been in 1953, and so, in certain respects, major improvements had been made before the beginning of the Development Plan and less spectacular advances were added by 1958. The major problem was not money, but to find any pool at all of possible local personnel.

In the 1953 Summary of Proposals the broad goals of the intended medical programme included the construction of a new Government hospital in Kuala Belait, the addition of a travelling dispensary service by road and water to bring medical attention to those living in remote areas, an expansion and intensification of existing anti-malaria work, enlarged training facilities for nurses and dressers, improvement of the maternity service and the provision of free school meals to all children attending State primary schools.[131] It was not until October 1955, however, that a more detailed plan, prepared along these lines by the State Medical Officer (Dr EC Vardy), was approved by the State Council. A sum of $17.6 million was earmarked for capital expenditure and a further $4.9m for annually-recurrent charges over five years (making $22.5m in all). Hitherto the Department of Health had concentrated on the care of the sick who sought their aid. Now, however, the former system of having a well-organized service in the two main urban areas, with little provision for rural dwellers, was to be discarded and plans made for a general curative service covering adequately and fairly the entire country. The plan, as a whole, arranged for the "eventual provision of modern medical aid...for all people living in the State".[132]

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131. CO 1022/336 Summary of Proposals, pp 5-6 (paragraphs 15-20).
132. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 109. See also, Borneo Bulletin, 12 November 1955.

Plans to replace the badly-designed hospital in the capital and to build a new one at Kuala Belait were shelved. The design faults in the Brunei Town hospital, opened in 1951, were gradually overcome and extensive additions were made to the original buildings during the later 1950s, including new wards (capacity was doubled to 160 beds by 1958)[133] and various specialized departments, such as a training school for nurses. The Government dispensary at Kuala Belait, built by 1950, was raised to the status of a hospital in November 1953. The initial total of 30 beds had been increased to a capacity of 75 by 1958.[134] These two hospitals provided facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of all but the most 'difficult' cases.[135] The latter patients were referred to the BMPC's hospital at Kuala Belait[136] or to the General Hospital in Singapore. The company's hospital, by 1959, could cater for 120 in-patients at any one time and was fully-equipped to deal with all but the most specialized cases. Its facilities included a 22-bed 'tuberculosis' ward, financed by the Government. Outpatient clinics and infant welfare centres were also financed by the company, which was responsible for environmental sanitation within the area of its reserve. Good-natured rivalry between the company's and the Government's doctors conduced to

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133. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1958, p 81.
134. Ibid.
135. The word 'difficult' was not defined. Helminthiasis and tuberculosis replaced malaria, in 1952, as the commonest cause for admission to hospital. Other conditions receiving treatment included fibrositis, arthritis, sinusitis, catarrh, neuritis, post-poliomelytis, sciatica and injuries to nerves and tendons.
136. The BMPC was actually renamed the Brunei Shell Petroleum Company (BSPC) at the beginning of 1957. In order to avoid confusion, however, only the former title is used here. See, also, pp 483-4 (below).

the maintenance of high standards.

Fixed dispensaries existed in the capital (in association with the hospital), Tutong, Bangar (Temburong) and, from 1959, Labu. In addition, a determined effort was made to take medical care to isolated rural areas. Travelling dispensaries operated along the rivers; but the outboard type of engine was unsatisfactory because frequent engine break-downs hampered the work. Launches were sometimes out of order for lengthy spells. This meant that proposed meetings with kampong folk could not be kept, and, as there was no means of letting them know, many people, having come down to the river stopping-places, returned to their villages untreated and disappointed. To avoid letting them down in this way in future, the State Medical Officer (in 1954) planned the establishment of small permanent dispensaries in the ulus.[137] Five years later this was described as a "popular and useful arrangement".[138] As a new departure in the 1950s, dressers were encouraged to search for people needing their aid, rather than simply waiting on the river banks for patients to appear.[139]

One of the factors retarding the development of a health service in Brunei was the dearth of qualified personnel because of deficiencies in the education system (see pp 412-23, above). Although the training of staff gathered pace in the 1950s, numbers failed to meet demand. By 1954 a training scheme for assistant nurses, begun three years earlier,

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137. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 93.
138. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 84.
139. Brunei Annual Report 1952, p 61.

had become established on a permanent basis. At the end of 1955 it was reported, perhaps prematurely, that adequate numbers of women were forthcoming to meet existing needs. By 1957 "a small but regular output" was produced by the training scheme which helped to relieve the nursing shortage, but the recruitment of local persons remained "extremely difficult" and "until the results of the expanded education programme begin to appear, it will be necessary to look to Sarawak and North Borneo for some of our recruits".[140] It was not until 1958 that the first Bruneian, a Malay, to have undergone a full training as a nurse and a midwife, completed her course.[141] From 1955 steps were taken to standardize such training in the three British Borneo territories and to work for recognition of the course by the General Nursing Council in the United Kingdom.[142] This was expected to require several years; and, indeed, recognition had not been secured at the end of the Residential Era.

In 1952 the Medical Department's staff comprised two doctors, two European and two locally-trained nursing sisters, twenty junior nurses (five trained) and nineteen dressers.[143] By 1959 there were nine doctors, two dentists, one matron, 103 nurses of various grades and 44 hospital assistants. Recruitment of further assistant nurses ceased temporarily in that year, but other personnel were sent overseas for training.[144]

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140. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, pp 70-1.
141. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1958, p 77.
142. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 98.
143. Brunei Annual Report 1952, p 54. In addition, there were six senior technicians and 105 subordinate staff. These statistics, of course, take no account of the personnel employed by the BMPC in Belait district.
144. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 81.

Doctors and senior nurses were all expatriates, mainly (if not entirely) Europeans and Australians, whilst junior nurses were local products coupled with some recruits from neighbouring territories in British Borneo.

The expansion of hospital facilities, the amplification of the travelling dispensary service and the training of assistant nurses, were accompanied by sustained attacks upon disease. The first such effort was the 'malaria eradication scheme' conducted under WHO auspices in 1952-8. In the major centres, malaria - which had been endemic in 1945 - was quickly brought under control after the occupation, though the actual vector was not discovered until 1951. In Kuala Belait the situation took somewhat longer to control because of "neglect by the Japanese, the very rapid enlargement of the oilfield (from 1946) and the lack of labour (for anti-malarial work)".[145] In padi-growing areas, by contrast, malaria was the rule rather than the exception. The main feature of the WHO scheme, beginning in 1952, was the spraying with dichloro diphenyl trichloroethane (DDT)[146] of the internal walls of all houses in even the most remote rural districts. In addition large areas were oiled, and, in some places, insecticide fogging was practised. Careful attention was given to the maintenance of existing drains and the

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145. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1946, pp 16-17.

146. Nowadays, of course, the use of DDT is suspect. It was reported in 1960 that there was increasing public resistance in Brunei to spraying because of the virtual disappearance of malaria and partly because spraying had caused the death of domestic animals (Brunei Annual Report 1960, p 81).

elimination of stagnant water in low-lying areas by filling. As a result of such measures the number of cases slumped from 3,076 in 1953 to only 66 in 1959.[147] To all intents and purposes malaria was defeated.

Closely connected with malaria, and constituting one of the major lingering health problems of Brunei, was tuberculosis. Although the disease was prevalent among all races just after the war, more Brunei Chinese sought hospital treatment than other nationalities.[148] Before the occupation little had been done to help sufferers.[149] During and immediately after the Japanese interlude, there was a marked increase in the incidence of the killer disease, which, in the 1950s, superseded malaria as the principal cause of death. It was reported (in 1946) that patients invariably sought treatment only when the disease was too far advanced to be cured.[150] Little improvement was anticipated until over-crowding in houses, spitting, malnutrition and debilitation due to other diseases had been combatted.[151] In 1950 a WHO expert, Dr Roberts, visited Brunei and advised a campaign of vaccination with the bacillus of Calmette and Guerin (BCG), which would help in raising the resistance of the population to tuberculosis.[152] Efforts were concentrated upon school-children and new-born babies. A number of hospital wards specifically

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147. The situation may not have been quite so impressive as these statistics might suggest because only new cases were included in the 1958 figures whereas both old and new cases may have been jumbled together in those for 1953 (CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1958, p 94). There were 96 cases of malaria in 1965, 11 in 1970 and 10 (all imported) in 1976.
148. Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 14.
149. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1931, p 4.
150. Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 14.
151. Ibid.; and Brunei Annual Report 1947, p 25.
152. Brunei Annual Report 1950, p 44.

to cope with the disease were built in the capital (1951) and at the BMPC's hospital at Kuala Belait (1952), the latter also at Government expense.[153] A WHO team attempted (in 1951), with the aid of radiography and BCG vaccination, to determine the number of people suffering from tuberculosis and to advise on their treatment. Investigation began with schoolchildren. The increased focus on the disease produced an apparent rise in its incidence.[154] Most cases referred to Brunei Town hospital were of old standing. The replacement of temporary post-war shacks with proper shophouses helped to contain the disease, as did the free meal service provided as part of the school feeding scheme (see below, p 431).

Although increasing attention had been devoted to tuberculosis after the end of the war, it was not until February 1958, just as the malaria eradication programme was approaching a successful conclusion, that a doctor was appointed to conduct a scientific tuberculosis survey. He planned to establish a unit which aimed

"to determine the size of the tuberculosis problem in the State, to detect and treat all possible cases of the disease, and to protect with BCG vaccination the younger members of the population and those older persons exposed to the risk of contracting the disease". 155

The measures taken included the establishment of a tubercular register (which contained 978 names in 1959); the opening of a chest clinic; and, most importantly, the provision of funds to dependents of tubercular patients. The number of new cases discovered in 1958 totalled 534 and

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153. In 1950 30-50% of all hospital beds were filled with tubercular patients and waiting lists were long (ibid.).
154. Brunei Annual Report 1951, p 42.
155. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1958, p 89.

422 patients with the condition were admitted to the hospital in Brunei Town.[156] A further 539 new cases, including 56 from the Limbang district of Sarawak, came to light in 1959. As occurred so often in Brunei at that time, shortages of staff and equipment in the face of a massive volume of work delayed progress. Existing efforts had been confined to the capital and its environs.[157]

Whilst tuberculosis was "a severe debilitating disease", helminthiasis was "much more widespread though curable in a shorter space of time".[158] In 1952 helminthic infections headed the list of complaints diagnosed in outpatients;[159] but, pending improvements in sanitation and hygiene, treatment was considered pointless because victims tended to become reinfected almost immediately upon returning home.[160] During the period of the Development Plan sanitation remained primitive: as late as 1959 plans for water-borne sewage disposal in Brunei Town and elsewhere were yet to be implemented because of inadequate water supply.[161] An attempt was made by the Government to install modern latrines in town and kampong, but with little result.[162]

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156. Ibid., pp 91-2.
157. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, pp 88-92. In 1960 "steady progress" was made. New cases of tuberculosis numbered 393 in that year, 354 in 1961, 230 in 1962, 212 in 1963, but 264 in 1964. In the following year, 1965, it was announced that "as soon as it is more practicable to do so, a campaign will be launched for the elimination of this scourge" (Brunei Annual Report 1965).
158. Brunei Annual Report 1952, p 63.
159. Almost one-third of the 10,850 persons examined in Brunei Town hospital in 1952 suffered from either hookworm or roundworm.
160. Brunei Annual Report 1953, p 90.
161. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 95.
162. A "Build More Latrines' campaign in 1954, for example, failed completely and the experiment does not appear to have been repeated.

A far more successful programme of preventive medicine was the 'School Feeding Scheme', launched in late 1953.[163] Practically every school in the country, including the independent ones, quickly joined in with the project. The original idea was to provide each pupil with one substantial and balanced meal a day free of charge. In March 1955, however, the State Council ruled that the greatest need for the scheme was in rural areas and that the full meal should be supplied in country schools only. In urban areas, henceforth, only a fortified drink - of milk, specially-prepared to rectify certain dietary deficiencies - would be provided. Two years later a further alteration took place: schools having a majority of their children living more than one mile away were given a full meal, whilst those with the minority of children living more than one mile away were given a fortified drink. The value of this scheme, it was reported in 1959, "can not be over-estimated" because children looked "healthier than heretofore, and they are also very much more active, both in their work and in their play".[164] If so, the cost of the scheme - around half a million dollars annually - was money well spent.

Achievement. During the period of the Development Plan the scope of the Brunei health service was broadened. Existing services were greatly expanded, whilst new ones (such as dentistry and ophthalmology) were introduced.[165] Special attention was given to rural dwellers.

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163. Padmore, loc.cit., pp 26-8. Brunei Annual Report 1953, p 68; 1954, p 71; 1955, p 68; 1956, pp 67-8; 1958, p 72; and 1959, pp 75-6.
164. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 76.
165. An eye clinic was opened on a temporary basis at Brunei Town hospital in 1955; there was another at Kuala Belait. An ophthalmologist visited the country twice a year, each visit lasting about a month (PTO).

Annual State expenditure on health, which had been less than $0.3 million in 1950, increased from $1.1m in 1953 to $2.64m in 1959. The number of inpatients admitted annually to Government hospitals rose from 1,105 in 1950 to 3,328 in 1953 and 4,617 in 1958, whilst attendances by outpatients numbered 50,654 in 1950, 111,971 in 1953 and 119,667 in 1958.[166] The jump from 1953 to 1958 was less marked, it will be noticed, than that between 1950 and 1953; but in 1959 a further 2,175 inpatients and 91,610 outpatients were treated in the oil company's hospital, compared with 2,604 and 22,291 respectively during the previous year.[167] These increases are indicative of rising population and greater readiness to take advantage of medical services rather than of worsening health. They are an index, also, of the unmet need before the occupation. Despite extensions to existing hospitals and dispensaries, accommodation remained inadequate in 1959, when new building programmes were planned. On the other hand, even in 1957 there was much "prejudice" against Western medicine to be removed and it was still "far too common" for the sick

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Dentistry was also based at the two Government hospitals, which, by 1957, were fully-equipped with modern units. A first dentist had been engaged by the Government by 1954 and a second arrived not long afterwards. Four Brunei students were being trained on Penang in 1957, two as dentists and two as dental nurses. Government dentists pursued the departmental policy of providing a service primarily for schoolchildren, and gave the remainder of their time to the treatment of hospital patients and emergency work among adults. In schools, propaganda was employed to encourage pupils to keep their teeth in good condition.

166. The picture is distorted somewhat by the fact that the number of outpatients treated in 1953 was exceptionally high: cf. 87,963 in 1952 and 87,799 in 1954. A further 23,107 people were treated by travelling dressers in 1950 (cf. 17,215 in 1953 and 18,672 in 1958). All these statistics have been compiled by the author from Brunei Annual Reports.

167. Statistics compiled from Brunei Annual Reports.

to refuse to consult doctors or, having done so, to ignore the advice tendered.[168] Much further work was also required to modernize water supplies and sanitation.

Under the Development Plan, malaria was effectively eradicated and a major campaign launched against tuberculosis. Among other serious diseases, acute polio and typhus were entirely eliminated by 1959, whilst the annual incidence of typhoid fever, dysentery and diphtheria remained at, or had been reduced to, double figures only. Dietary measures, such as the School Feeding Scheme, assisted the improvement of health standards. Overall, the death rate was curbed from nearly 2% in 1953 to 1.2% in 1958, whilst the birth rate accelerated from 5.7% in 1950 to 8% in 1954, before falling back to 5.7% in 1958.[169]

The principal failure of the Brunei health service remained the high rate of infant mortality, though some progress had been made even in this direction.[170] New maternity clinics were built in association with hospitals and dispensaries. Despite the difficulty of

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168. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p 74.

169. Statistics compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports. In later reports different figures were given for 1953 and 1954: for example, the death rate in 1953 - 2% according to the Brunei Annual Report 1953 - was later reckoned to have been only 1.5%.

170. The maternity clinic in the capital had been destroyed during the closing stages of the war. For a time an atap building was in use, but in November 1946 a maternity ward with ten beds was opened in the capital, and there was a second clinic in Kuala Belait. The training of local midwives was begun; vigorous propaganda was waged against "old customs and superstitions"; and milk coupons were issued to expectant mothers to induce them to attend the clinics. In 1947 there were four midwives operating in the State, two in Brunei Town and one each at Kuala Belait and Tutong. Emphasis was placed by the Government upon domiciliary midwifery and few women were delivered in hospital. The local bidan remained far from extinct.

recruiting staff, this sector was growing more rapidly towards the end of the 1950s than any other and there were health sisters in five centres. In accordance with the general policy of assisting rural dwellers, each sister and her staff ran several sub-clinics in country areas and made regular visits to the ulus. The welfare measures taken contributed to a perpetuation of the downward trend in the rate of infant mortality (from 13.3% in 1947 to 11.3% in 1953 and 9.3% in 1959)[171] and to a noticeable improvement in the health of mothers and the weight of their offspring; but progress might have been even more marked, it was claimed, but for the reluctance of Malays, especially in Kampong Ayer, to take advantage of modern midwifery.[172]

(d) Public Utilities. The extension of treated water supplies was seen, in part, as an essential factor in the improvement of health. Cheap power was necessary for any form of industrial development in Brunei.[173] Provision was made in the Development Plan, therefore, for the extension of water and electricity supplies in the main towns and larger kampongs.[174]

A new water treatment and pumping station at Tasek (to serve the capital) came into operation on 14 January 1956 and consumption doubled within a month (though declining subsequently). Brunei Town, for the first time, was supplied with filtered and chlorinated water of

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171. Statistics compiled by the author from Brunei Annual Reports.
172. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p 74.
173. Bevington, loc.cit., p 24.
174. CO 1022/336 Summary of Proposals (1953), p 4.

high quality.[175] Investigation of the problem of providing a direct water-main to Kampong Ayer, begun in 1956, was completed during the following year and plans were made for the construction of a flexible pipeline on the bed of the River Brunei.[176] This scheme had not been implemented by the end of 1959, although tenders had been invited and accepted by the Government.[177] Consumption in the capital exceeded 262 million gallons annually in 1959 from the Tasek reservoir alone; but supply was restricted during times of drought, e.g. February to June 1958.

In the oilfield area, a continuing shortage of water caused great inconvenience to the public. In 1954, therefore, the Government proposed to increase the supply of water purchased from the oil company for the towns of Seria and Kuala Belait. The scheme was scheduled to be completed by May 1955 and the anticipated benefits included the lifting of severe rationing; the provision of filtered, chlorinated water for the first time; and the connection of many potential customers who had been turned away earlier.[178] The initial contractor proved unsatisfactory and so, in 1956, a different firm was engaged to complete the construction of a water-main from Seria to Kuala Belait. By December 1956, when this task was completed, water became available round the clock instead of the one hour daily beforehand.[179] In about July of that year it had become possible to supply Seria in a similar fashion. More than two

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175. Brunei Annual Report 1956, p 132.
176. Ibid., pp 135-6; and BAR 1957, p 122.
177. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 151.
178. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 140.
179. Brunei Annual Report 1956, p 136 and BAR 1957, p 126.

thousand connections were made between 1956 and 1958, consumption in Kuala Belait-Seria exceeding half a million gallons daily in 1959.

Elsewhere in Brunei, water supply was inadequate in Tutong Village but satisfactory in Bangar (Temburong) and Muara. A fair slice of development funds was devoted to the improvement of supplies to many rural kampongs,[180] but by 1959 a backlog of applications had developed because the Government lacked sufficient staff to keep up with the demand.[181] In 1957 subsidized water rates were introduced as an "expedient way of passing on to the people some of the wealth of the country".[182] (But higher prices were introduced in 1958).

Electricity.[183] A $9 million development scheme to give Brunei a statewide electrical grid network fed from a central power station at Kuala Belait, fueled by gas from the Seria field, was shelved in 1954 in favour of a less ambitious project. A big potential industrial consumer had dropped out and Mr Rajaratnam, the State Electrical Officer, feared that village and ulu people were not yet ready to utilise the projected service to anywhere near the capacity of the proposed central generating plant.[184] Instead, an interim scheme was implemented. This involved the provision of two 280 kilowatt sets in Brunei Town and two similar sets in Kuala Belait. When these sets were installed, power

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180. In 1957 $165,354 was spent on rural water projects compared with only $74,999 in the capital.
181. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 151.
182. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p 124.
183. See above, pp 284-5, 355-6 and 396. (For water, see above, pp 191-2, 284 and 355).
184. Borneo Bulletin, 13 November 1954.

well in excess of demand was achieved, temporarily at least. In 1956, indeed, electricity prices were reduced slightly, in order to attract customers.[185] A better distribution network, which eliminated overloaded mains, facilitated the transmission of electricity to the public.[186] A scheme for the hire or hire-purchase of domestic appliances by the inhabitants was continued. Kuala Belait (from 1949) and Seria were still supplied by the Government with electricity purchased from the oil company, although a Government power station was briefly in operation in Seria in 1954-5.[187]

The growth of electricity generation in Brunei during the period of the Development Plan was rather impressive. Between 1950 and 1953 the number of units generated annually in the capital doubled from just under 0.4 million to just over 0.8m. In 1959, by contrast, nearly 5.2m units were generated for the benefit of 2,499 consumers, compared with only 696 consumers in 1953 and 337 in 1950. Generating capacity in the capital increased from 322 kilowatts in 1953 to 2,778 kilowatts in 1959. For the State as a whole, the number of consumers more than trebled between 1954 (1,529) and 1959 (4,739) whilst the quantity of electricity generated almost quintupled over the same period (1.5m units in 1954; 7.0m in 1959).[188] Clearly the use of electricity was spreading rapidly.

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185. In 1956-7 electricity prices were reduced from their usual level of 30 cents per unit for light and ten cents per unit for power to only 28 cents and 8 cents respectively.
186. Bevington, loc.cit., p 24.
187. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 146 and BAR 1955, p 163.
188. Statistics compiled from Brunei Annual Reports.

(e) Communications. A better network of communications was a major goal of the Development Plan and an essential sine qua non for further economic, political and social progress. Roads could open up the interior and make its resources more readily accessible and facilitate the construction of schools and visits from medical staff. Business could not function properly without an up-to-date telephone service. A national broadcasting station was needed to instill a sense of community to people living in scattered villages and to enable the Government to communicate adequately with them.[189] Finally, an improved airport was needed to link the country more effectively with the outside world.

The construction of roads, which swallowed up massive expenditure, was a most important feature of the first five-year plan. In 1953 the network was not sufficient for the proposed internal development of the country and it was hoped that by improving existing roads and building new ones it would be possible to open up new areas of valuable land for forestry operations and agriculture, as well as making travel much safer and faster within the State. The new road programme envisaged the reconstruction of the roads from Brunei Town to Berakas, Muara, Jerudong and Tutong respectively. In addition, an inland trunk road was proposed. This would be sited so as to fit in with a projected main road from North Borneo to Sarawak. The section of the route in Brunei would be sited so as to open up areas of interior forest land, at the

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189. Bevington, op.cit., p 44. Mr Bevington wished the people to be kept fully informed about what was being done and why in order to reduce public impatience at any apparent slowness in the implementation of development programmes.

time unworkable because of inaccessibility. Finally, a large mileage of secondary and logging roads to assist in the internal development of the State was proposed in order to connect interior kampongs to the road system.[190]

During 1954 funds were approved by the State Council for the first three years of the road programme and technical assistants arrived from Australia in 1955. A special 'Roads Section' of the Public Works Department was created to supervise the execution of the work. In 1954-5 a new method of construction called soil-cement stabilization[191] was pioneered, and, proving its ability to stand up to heavy traffic, was extended for use on all new roads.[192] Under the Development Plan priority was given to the new Brunei Town-Kuala Belait highway. This involved the rebuilding of existing stretches of road (such as that from Brunei Town to Tutong) and the construction of an entirely new section from Tutong to Seria. The trunk road, linking the capital directly to the oilfield for the first time, was completed in September 1958. Two major bridges were built over the River Tutong, but one major bottleneck remained: the ferry link between Danau and Tutong. Given the shortages of essentials, such as stone, equipment, mechanics, supervisory staff and an experienced labour force, the building of the road was a "fine achievement".[193] Travel between the capital and Kuala Belait was greatly

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190. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 156; and BAR 1955, p 174.
191. This comprised a 4½ inch consolidated 'pavement' (foundation) of locally-procured sand clay, stabilized with a layer of cement, this coat later being surfaced with three inches of bitumen.
192. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 175-6.
193. Borneo Bulletin, 27 September 1958.

facilitated and the exchange of visits, particularly by omnibus, between the two towns popularized. The road was well used from the outset by a public which had been increasingly impatient to see results.

Meanwhile the construction of subsidiary roads had been somewhat neglected. One route ran from the capital to Berakas beach, with a branch to Muara. Towards the end of 1953 a major reconstruction was started in order to make Berakas Quarry - the principal source of road stone in Brunei after its discovery in about 1950 - more accessible from Brunei Town. Resurfacing was completed in 1957, by which time a by-pass had been built around the new airport. The branch to Muara (12 miles) was originally an earth road of "reasonably wide formation", except on hill slopes, where in the past it was necessarily left narrow because of the lack of earth-moving equipment. Gradients were reduced in the mid-1950s. The majority of the available heavy plant in the State was concentrated on the Muara Road during 1959 and the major portion of the earthwork completed by December of that year.[194]

Work was begun on the first stage of the proposed inland coastal route to the oilfield. This would follow the Tutong road for a while and then branch off towards Kuala Abang in the interior. In 1954 the first mile of the branch road towards Kuala Abang leading to the agricultural station at Birau was quite good but after that the road deteriorated rapidly. Work was slow because of the lack of earthmoving equipment, but renewed attention became possible after the completion of

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194. Brunei Annual Report 1953, p 127; BAR 1954, pp 159-60; BAR 1955, p 181; BAR 1956 p 168; BAR 1957, p 161; and BAR 1959, p 155.

the main highway (i.e. from Brunei Town to Kuala Belait *via* Tutong).[195]

An earth road to Limbang from the south side of the River Brunei was seldom used by vehicular traffic; nor was the Bandar-Pandaruan one, though it was popular with cyclists and pedestrians. The construction of bridle paths was seen as a necessary corollary to the main road system and their function was to provide access to and from cultivated areas and to allow farmers to bring their produce to the market. Although the Government itself built some bridle paths, local villagers were encouraged to take this task upon themselves because it was believed that they would take a pride in any road thus built and be more likely to maintain it in a good condition.[196]

Telecommunications[197] within the State were improved in 1955 by the establishment of a VHF telephone circuit between Brunei Town and Kuala Belait and between those main centres and a number of places in surrounding districts. The Resident understood that the State could boast that its telephones were more modern than those in many European cities.[198]

Construction of a new airfield was delayed, partly because priority in the supply of gravel was given to road construction and partly because of unsuitable weather. In November 1956, Brunei's airport was opened to Dakota traffic and passengers were enabled to fly to Singapore, Kuching and Jesselton directly without having to use the small feeder aircraft which previously linked the State with these

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195. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 161; and BAR 1959, p 155.
196. Bevington, loc.cit., pp 29-30. For further details about roads in Brunei, see above, pp 4-5, 185-7, 280-4 and 356-7.
197. See also, above, pp 191 and 285-6.
198. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p vii.

trunk routes. The cost was $2.5 million.[199]

Further achievements in the communications sector under the Development Plan included the establishment of a national radio station in 1957, and general improvement of wharves and port facilities. The time was judged to be unripe, however, for the construction, at enormous expense, of a major international port at Muara.[200] The river-clearing scheme, designed to assist small-scale economic activity in the ulus was abandoned before it had been completed fully.[201]

(f) Miscellaneous. In 1955 a pensions scheme was devised which provided for non-contributory pensions and allowances, of $20 per month, without means test for persons aged over sixty, the blind, the disabled and dependents of lepers. Such pensions were payable irrespective of ethnic origins, but subject to a residence test. This scheme was thought to be the first of its kind to be introduced in a territory where senior citizens were predominantly illiterate. Thus it was decided to use approved headmen to distribute the money, taking it directly to the homes of recipients when necessary. A further difficulty was the determining of age, because registration of births had commenced in Brunei only in 1922.[202] Old age pensions were introduced with effect from 1 January 1955.[203] Rehabilitation allowances were paid to discharged lepers.

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199. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 5; BAR 1956, p v and BAR 1957, p vii.
200. Borneo Bulletin, 18 October 1958. See, also, Borneo Bulletin, 5 November 1955.
201. Borneo Bulletin, 5 April 1958.
202. See above, p 193.
203. In 1955 2,362 old age pensioners received $564,430 and in 1959 3,136 recipients shared $764,160. There were 62 blind pensioners (in 1955) and a handful of lepers and lunatics.

Hitherto, British colonial servants and indigenous senior Government officials had been the only recipients of State retirement pensions.

The showpiece of the first five year plan was the $9 million Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque in the capital. Opened in the same week as the Brunei Town-Kuala Belait highway, immense difficulties were experienced in its construction. It was built on the edge of swamps and foundations were said to reach down to depths of more than one hundred feet. Taking the normal commercial considerations the building was wrongly sited, but "aesthetically, religiously, fundamentally and to the Malay eye" it was entirely correctly placed.[204] Designed by British architects and built by Italian marble cutters and Chinese artisans,[205] it was "imposing", according to a contemporary witness, but gave "the feeling of being a successful contractor's job, not a labour of love by the people of Brunei. The only things in it locally-made are a silver incense-burner, not a thing of beauty, and a nasty-looking book-case. Perhaps the mosque will look more human when it has been worshipped in for fifty years". 206

Buildings were fine, the leader of the nationalist party commented in late 1956, but new industries were an even more urgent priority to reduce the country's dependence upon oil.[207]

5. Summary and Conclusion.

During the years 1953 to 1958 $76.4 million of the allocated

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204. Typescript of a recording made for the author by courtesy of Mr ER Bevington CMG CEng, 10 August 1983, p 35.
205. Cf. mutatis mutandis, A Burgess, Devil of a State (London 1961), p 231.
206. Quoted by courtesy of an expatriate Sarawak Government officer who sometimes visited Brunei.
207. Borneo Bulletin, 20 October 1956.

$100 million had been spent on development, and, at the end of 1958, the remaining $23.6m was transferred back to the General Revenue Balance. In fact, the so-called 'five year' plan was not so neat and tidy: although funds had been voted in mid-1953, the Development Commissioner did not arrive until late 1954, and some departmental programmes were not devised until 1955 and continued, therefore, beyond 1958. In short, the plan lacked a clearly-defined beginning and end.

Although Brunei was fortunate to have "ample"[208] funds - or, as Mr Bevington would have it, only a sufficiency (see above, p 392) - this removed only one of the factors limiting development. Apart from staff shortages, especially in the skilled grades (managers, supervisors, engineers, teachers, doctors, nurses, artisans), the dearth locally of suitable stone affected adversely both building and road construction.[209] Contractors experienced difficulty in coping with the volume of work, which further retarded progress.[210]

Speed rather than efficiency often had to be adopted by planners as their criterion for political reasons. Although an unprecedented

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208. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 6.
209. Ibid.
210. Soon after the Development Plan was launched all local contractors of good repute had their resources fully stretched. The rapid pace of development in Brunei led to the employment of foreign contractors, since local Malay contractors had not yet reached the necessary standard of efficiency, despite Government attempts to assist them. Some Malays made the criticism that profits on the development of Brunei were being creamed off by outsiders. The Government preferred this charge, however, to the alternative one of slow progress, which would undoubtedly follow any policy of restricting development (Brunei Annual Report 1955, pp 7-8).

constructional programme was being attempted, the Resident reported (in 1956) that, to those people living in the State, "progress seems painfully slow, buildings take ages to rise from the ground, and new works completed are taken for granted while attention is focussed always on to the future and what remains to be done".[211] Similarly, once a road was finished it ceased to be a subject of conversation; people talked only of those roads not yet completed, or not even started.[212]

The first development plan, Mr Bevington explained, had been

"in essence the laying of foundations for the State's future. The plan has provided electricity and water supplies, roads, airfields, telecommunications and other basic services without which industry could not hope to be attracted here (Brunei)". 213

Although "rather a Tory point of view", it was "absolutely fundamental" that commerce should be encouraged to invest in Brunei so that its profits could be taxed to pay for the new social services. Commerce would not be attracted to the country, on the other hand, unless an infrastructure existed, whilst the people could not be assisted until business created the wealth necessary to finance welfare services. Equally central in the Development Commissioner's thinking was the realization that oil resources were finite and that

"unless one could leave a viable entity which had created its own industry, commerce and infrastructure, then the people would just fall right back". 214

It was essential, therefore, that Brunei Malays should become involved in <u>productive</u> enterprises rather than rely upon "a Government

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211. <u>Brunei Annual Report 1956</u>, p v.
212. <u>Ibid</u>. See also p 439, fn 189 (above).
213. <u>Borneo Bulletin</u>, 4 October 1958, quoting Mr Bevington.
214. Mr Bevington, typescript of recording, p 32.

job which depended upon oil". In short, the choice rested between whether oil revenue should be used "to hand out State pensions to all and sundry" or whether the wealth should be used to provide the people with an education so that they could maintain themselves when oil revenue ceased".[215] Upon his departure from Brunei in 1958, Mr Bevington stated that there were great opportunities for any Malays willing to work hard.[216] Most Brunei Malays, however, seemed to lack the necessary spirit of enterprise.[217]

By 1958 all the basic services were completed or nearing completion. The major facility wanting was a good deep sea port. This deficiency was taken as the principal cause of the lack of new commercial endeavour designed to reduce the country's economic dependence upon petroleum. Heavy trans-shipment charges at Singapore and Labuan were almost certain to price any Brunei product out of the market.[218] Plans for a new port at Muara were received from consultants during 1958; but it was not until the early 1970s that the port was ready.

If attempts to diversify the economy had failed, it was difficult enough to preserve existing non-oil industries, such as rubber-tapping, rice-growing and the manufacture of silverware. People took little interest in rubber; and the mechanization of the rice industry had not shown any immediate results (although the Development Commissioner

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215. Ibid.
216. Borneo Bulletin, 18 October 1958, quoting Mr Bevington.
217. Borneo Bulletin, 8 October 1955; and Telegraph Sunday Magazine, 5 February 1984, p 21.
218. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p viii. See, also, pp 275-6 (above).

still saw no reason why Brunei could not become self-sufficient in rice).[219] The handicrafts were not attractive vocations to contemporary Brunei youth and remained in danger of dying out.[220] River clearing was not seen through to completion.[221] The prospects detailed in the social and geological surveys were not encouraging. On the other hand, there had been real gains in social services. An infant was much more likely to survive thanks to improved maternity services and living conditions, the child was likely to be educated to literacy, to receive medical treatment for any ailment, and could anticipate a non-contributory retirement pension. The expansion of the health and education services is detailed in the table below.

Table 23. The Expansion of Social Services in Brunei 1932-59

Year	Annual Expenditure:- Health ($ Straits/Malayan)*	Education	No of Patients: In	Out	Schools:- No	Pupils
1932	17,957	9,118	199	11,060	16	968
1938	64,051	20,755	614	19,435	28	2,231
1947	96,564	56,018	995a	40,889a	34a	3,484a
1950	283,699	201,041	1,105	73,761	38	4,499
1953	1,101,213	618,120	3,328	129,186	46	5,917
1959	2,637,052	3,754,111	4,617b	138,339b	81c	15,006c

Notes: * The Straits' dollar, renamed Malayan dollar after the Second World War, was fixed in value at $0.1166.
a 1948
b 1958
c including the BMPC Trades School at Seria (199 pupils).

Sources: Compiled by the author from Brunei Annual Reports 1932-59.

219. Borneo Bulletin, 18 October 1958.
220. Cf. Telegraph Sunday Magazine, 5 February 1984, p 21.
221. Borneo Bulletin, 5 April 1958.

At the end of 1958 much remained to be done and a committee was appointed to consider further plans for the progress and welfare of the State. The new committee was faced with the task of providing employment for the ever-increasing annual output of local schools and was expected to give consideration to training in agriculture and crafts as well as to the introduction of secondary industries.[222]

The year 1959 saw few new development projects because of constitutional changes, but development activities continued with the completion of schemes delayed under the 1953-8 Development Plan. Work commenced on a new water supply for the capital and plans were formulated for hospitals in Brunei Town and Kuala Belait, as well as a new lapau and Dewan Majlis (Council Chamber). The absence of new large-scale development projects and the consequent decrease in activity had a marked effect on the commercial world of the State.[223] Retrenchment of staff, particularly in the Public Works Department, gave rise to concern, but the situation was not expected to improve until a second development plan was introduced.[224]

Once buildings were constructed or services introduced determined effort was made to ensure that they were run and maintained as far as possible by local people. Funds were readily made available for the training of local youths or quite senior civil servants and others overseas, especially in Australia, New Zealand, Malaya and Sarawak.

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222. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1958, pp i-ii.
223. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p ii.
224. Brunei Annual Report 1960, p 1.

This co-operation extended to the sending of advisers to Brunei who also undertook the training of local staff whilst in the Sultanate. Brunei was indeed "fortunate in its friends", the Resident enthused;[225] but the dearth of qualified local personnel was alleviated only slightly.

Before leaving Brunei in late 1958 Mr Bevington had drafted a second five year plan along the broad lines that Brunei should be developed as the home of light industries, but it was yet to be approved. One of the first requirements for the people of Brunei was the provision of technical education so that they could take over and run essential State services. At the time more and more people were obtained from overseas because Brunei Malays lacked the necessary expertise to staff departments such as telecommunications, broadcasting and public works.[226] In fact, however, the second five year plan was not approved until April 1962,[227] which lies beyond the scope of the present work. Whilst the first plan had been in progress (1953-8), Brunei had also been moving towards internal autonomy, a process which is described in the following pages.

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225. Brunei Annual Report 1956, p viii.
226. Borneo Bulletin, 18 October 1958.
227. Brunei Annual Report 1961-2, p 1; and Borneo Bulletin, 7 April 1962.

PART IV: AUTONOMY 1959

CHAPTER TEN

POLITICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS 1946-1959

1. Introduction

In this chapter I shall examine the developments which culminated in the promulgation of Brunei's first written constitution and the termination of the Residential System in 1959. In the process it will become possible to decide how far the long term strategy of the Colonial Office, drawn up during the Second World War, was actually implemented. Before the Japanese occupation, Residents had not been faced with a vociferous nationalist movement. As the 1950s progressed, however, the Brunei people increasingly demanded a voice in their own future.

2. British Planning for Post War Brunei 1943-5

During the war HM Government had given its attention to the future constitutional system in British Borneo as a whole. A long-term strategy was devised for the eventual self-government of Brunei, preferably in closer association with its neighbours in British Borneo and with Malaya.

Closer union of the Borneo territories had been advised in the past: by CP Lucas before the Residential Era, by Sir John Bucknill in 1916, and by Sir Cecil Clementi in the early 1930s. In 1940 Mr JM Martin at the Colonial Office referred[1] to the nonsense of having four separate

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1. CO 531/29 (File 17) memorandum by Mr (later Sir) JM Martin (b 1904), 14 February 1940.

administrations and tariff systems in British Borneo (viz., Brunei, Labuan, Sarawak and North Borneo) and pointed to the slow progress of social services in Sarawak and North Borneo and the difficulty of recruiting staff for these two independent services. He contended that the United Kingdom's increasing responsibility for Sarawak and North Borneo in international forums was not matched by a corresponding increase in its executive powers within the two countries concerned. There were also strategic arguments for a closer union. Mr Martin envisaged "an independent Borneo running its own Government". He suggested the return of North Borneo and Sarawak to Brunei, but there were two main objections to such a course. First, the personality of the Sultan of Brunei was "hardly an asset" and he awoke "surprisingly little respect or even interest in the Sarawak Malay's mind" (see pp 299-302, above). Secondly, British Borneo was a "hotch-potch" of races with little in common. Yet "a great and prosperous territory" could one day be built in Borneo, comparable perhaps to Malaya, and presenting "a solid bastion against the southward thrust of Japan".[2] The Secretary of State thought the memorandum was interesting, but did nothing. This remained the situation until the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941.

A minute by Mr WBL Monson at the Colonial Office in December 1942[3] indicates that a connection between the British Protectorates in Borneo was being considered before the first anniversary of the Japanese landing at Kota Bahru. It was envisaged, further, that these territories

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2. Ibid.
3. CO 531/30 (File 4), minute by Mr (later Sir) WBL Monson (b 1912), 3 December 1942.

would participate in "any regional organization or combination of the United Nations which may be established for security reasons in the Far East".[4]

In March 1943 three options for the future of North Borneo were discussed, including the possibility that its territory might be returned to Brunei. The latter was ruled out, however, because the Brunei royal house had "shown no qualities which would justify an extension of its territories".[5] At the end of 1944, however, this idea was revived by Mr Macaskie, who suggested that the restoration of the Sultan's former territories (including the 5th Division of Sarawak) would gratify the monarch and make him more willing to agree to a new treaty granting direct jurisdiction to King George VI on the lines of the treaties proposed for Malaya. Emphasis on an indigenous dynasty, he added, might prove a useful counterpoise to local Chinese nationalism and demands for greater political power in Borneo. The oil royalties of Brunei would benefit far more people. The proposed new State would comprise "a compact territorial unit with a well-balanced economy", which might be included in a Malayan Union. Mr Macaskie recognized, on the other hand, that it might be "contrary to accepted policy to increase, even nominally, the authority of the Sultan".[6] By this time, indeed, alternative plans (as follows) had been formulated and Mr Macaskie's proposals were deemed to be inopportune. But the possibility of a discussion of closer relations in British Borneo after

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4. Ibid.
5. CO 825/42 (File 55104/3/1943-44, item 1A), extract from a memorandum for constitutional reconstruction in the Far East, 20 March 1943.
6. Ibid., item 37, Macaskie to Wodeman, memorandum (secret), 4 December 1944. NB: Mr Macaskie was Head of the Borneo Planning Unit.

liberation was not excluded.[7]

On 6 January 1944 a committee headed by Mr Attlee was appointed by the War Cabinet to consider "the question of the constitutional policies to be followed in Malaya and in the British territories in Borneo on their liberation and to recommend a directive on which the authorities responsible for planning the civil administrations of those territories after liberation can work".[8] The policy was that which had been formulated already in the Colonial Office. The basic assumption was that the restoration of the pre-war constitutional and administrative system of the four territories in British Borneo would be "undesirable in the interests of security and of our purpose of promoting social, economic and political progress in colonial territories".[9] These purposes required, first, the direct assumption by HM Government of administration in North Borneo (including Labuan), and, secondly, the cession to King George VI of full jurisdiction in Brunei and Sarawak. The purpose of political progress required, further, that "self-government in Brunei...should not merely develop towards a system of autocratic rule, but should provide for a growing participation in the government by people of all communities". A new treaty was to be negotiated at the earliest opportunity with the Sultan of Brunei to accord George VI such jurisdiction as would enable him to legislate fully for Brunei under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act. There was no intention, however, to impose a united Borneo because the

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7. Ibid., item 38, Mr (later Sir) JJ Paskin (1892-1972) to Macaskie, 12 January 1945.
8. CO 825/43 (File 55104/15, item 22) draft report of war cabinet committee on Malaya and Borneo, 24 April 1944. Cf. ibid., item 28.
9. CO 825/42 (File 55104/3/1943-44, item 35), print of draft directive.

territories had "few racial or other affinities". In short, the directive recognized that the "basis of closer unity hardly exists" but "community of policy" could be assured by the subordination of the three proposed administrations to the "authority and direction" of a Governor-General for Malaya and Borneo to be stationed in Singapore.

In 1946 both Sarawak and North Borneo became British crown colonies. The emissary despatched in late 1945 to negotiate the new treaties with the Malayan rulers - Brunei, it will be recalled, was counted as a sixth Unfederated Malay State - was Sir Harold MacMichael (1882-1969). The treaty with Brunei had to be delayed until SEAC took over from the Australian forces, which did not occur until January 1946. Meanwhile, before Sir Harold could reach Brunei, he was recalled and sent on another mission, this time to Malta.[10] The revision of the treaty with Brunei was "not considered urgent"[11] and was deferred

"until such time as the Governor-General had taken office and could advise upon the question and also consider the possibility of the union of Brunei with the other British Borneo territories". 12

The first post-war Resident, Mr WJ Peel (then a junior, Class IV, MCS officer),[13] was sent out with instructions to take over from the BMA and re-establish civil government. His immediate superior was Mr M MacDonald (1901-81), who acted de facto as High Commissioner for Brunei

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10. WO 203/4471A CO to Sir H MacMichael, telegram, 17 December 1945.
11. WO 203/5535 WO to SACSEA, telegram (top secret), 11 March 1946.
12. CO 537/2244 (item 23), memorandum by Secretary of State, 24 December 1947. Cf. CO 323/1873, minute by Mr AN Galsworthy, 7 February 1946; and CO 531/31, File 9, minute by Galsworthy, 11 March 1946.
13. CO 537/1614 minute by Galsworthy, 11 March 1946. (Mr Peel had been recommended by one Mr Howitt as "in every way fitted for the appointment of Resident", despite his junior status at that time).

though he was never issued with a commission as such.[14] Mr Peel's object was

"to get on with the job and not keep harking back to the war. In general I...received a warm welcome from the people and very wise advice and co-operation from Inche Ibrahim, who knew all the pre-war background. Of course it was helpful to know that oil was going to make an impoverished State very rich quite quickly". 15

For the time being the pre-war structure of administration was restored unchanged. Brunei did manage, however, to secure the services of a European to fill the post of Treasurer for the first time since 1919.

3. "Brunei should be associated with a larger administration" (1947-8).

In May 1947, at a conference between Mr MacDonald, Mr Peel and Sir Charles Arden-Clarke (Governor of Sarawak, 1946-9) it was concluded[16] that Brunei was "too small a State to transfer a sufficient number of good administrative and technical officers to the higher grades of its public services and therefore cannot by itself achieve a proper standard of Government. It should be associated with a larger administrative unit which can aid it in these matters". But Brunei would remain a separate State because any suggestion of cession to the British king or absorption in a colony would be "both impolitic and wrong" because "it would be unlikely to be acceptable to either the Sultan (and) his State Council or his subjects". The association with a neighbouring territory,

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14. CO 943/1 (File 5, item 3), note for discussion with the Governor-General, paragraph 3; and ibid., item 8.
15. Dato Sir WJ Peel Kt DSNB DSLJ, letter to the author, 11 August 1982, paragraph 4. See also, above, pp 154, 306-7, 321-2 and 346.
16. This section is based upon CO 537/2244 (item 5), Governor-General to CO, secret, 16 May 1947, paragraph 1 (a) to 1 (e).

"should therefore", the Governor General argued, "be on the basis that a State under the protection of His Majesty is being joined for administrative and any other necessary purposes with a neighbouring colony, without any derogation in theory from the former's present constitutional position. Presumably the Governor of the colony concerned would become High Commissioner for Brunei...The general policy would be similar. The British Resident (in Brunei) would be under the authority of the Governor, who would direct policy in both territories". (16)

It was recommended that Brunei should be associated with Sarawak, by which it was "surrounded" (sic), rather than with North Borneo. In due course the three British Borneo territories would be brought under one administration, either on a unitary or federal basis.

The Colonial Office endorsed these proposals. "We are having to retrace our steps in Malaya in the matter of jurisdiction" - thus Mr G Seel - "and I should have thought it wise to wait and see the final outcome of that before embarking on adventures elsewhere".[17] The Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir T Lloyd, ruled that "on the question of jurisdiction, we ought not to seek to go further in Brunei than is now planned for the Protected States in Malaya".[18] In other words, the aim of acquiring direct jurisdiction for King George in Brunei was to be abandoned. The Governor-General agreed that it was not necessary to raise with the Sultan the question of the King's jurisdiction in Brunei. Mr MacDonald had been advised that "we can achieve in practice all we desire under the terms of the existing treaty" and that to raise questions involving amendment of the 1905-6 treaty was undesirable "since this might tend to arouse an opposition party to our proposals

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17. Ibid., minute by Mr (later Sir) G Seel CMG (b 1895), 24 May 1947.
18. Ibid., minute by Sir TIK Lloyd KCMG KCB (b 1896), 27 May 1947.

and perhaps defeat our proposals altogether".[19]

In November 1947 "the Sultan agreed to the proposals (concerning links with Sarawak) without exception" and at a confidential meeting of the State Council there was no dissentient voice, although all attached importance to the "position and authority" of the Resident in Brunei remaining unchanged.[20] On 1 May 1948 the Governor of Sarawak would become High Commissioner for Brunei and as such would exercise the same powers as the Governors of the Straits Settlements had exercised before the war (see above, pp 120-2). The Resident in Brunei would come under the High Commissioner. The heads of technical departments in Sarawak would become also "effective heads" of their respective departments in Brunei, acting, in theory, "in an advisory capacity to...the Sultan".[21]

Early in 1948 the interim Resident, Mr LHN Davis MCS, organized a series of preparatory public meetings to explain the reasons for the new departure and to reassure the people that it was not intended to hand over Brunei to Sarawak. These meetings were fairly well-attended, the most probing questions coming from the nascent Malay intelligentsia. The presentation of an accomplished fact was resented by some school teachers and Government officials. Mr Davis reported that the announcement of the transfer of the High Commissionership for Brunei to Sarawak originally was regarded with considerable suspicion until it was explained emphatically that it did not involve political or financial subjection to

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19. Ibid., (item 14), Governor-General to CO, No 358, telegram (secret), 23 October 1947, paragraph 2.
20. Ibid., item 16, Governor-General to CO, No 405 (telegram), 24 November 1947, paragraphs 1, 2 and 4.
21. CO 943/1 (File 5, item 6) Secretary-General to CO, saving telegram, 10 January 1948.

Sarawak. Mr Davis warned, however, that had the change involved any closer association with Sarawak, there would have been real, though passive, opposition not only from those of "doctrinaire opinions" but also from the "older and more respectable" members of the community. This was due to historic distrust of Sarawak and the deep-rooted conservatism of the people of Brunei in the mass.[22]

On 1 May 1948, the occasion for the transfer of the High Commissionership, large crowds assembled to welcome Sir Charles Arden-Clarke from Kuching. "Such is the friendliness of the people of Brunei", he enthused, "that I do not feel a stranger among you". Now that the High Commissioner was based in Borneo (rather than Singapore), he added, "it will be possible for him to visit your State more frequently and give your affairs the personal study and attention of the spot which they demand".[23] The powers and duties of the High Commissioner remained legally undefined; and if the change of holder was supposed to allow him to devote more time to Brunei, it is doubtful whether he actually did so. Mr DG Stewart, for example, declared in 1949 that he had very little idea how much he was supposed to intervene in the affairs of Brunei,[24] whilst a subsequent High Commissioner complained that he lacked sufficient staff for the purpose.[25]

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22. CO 943/1 (File 5, item 30) report by Mr Davis, 9 March 1948. See Straits Times, 9 March 1948 (Editorial: "A Bitter Pill for Brunei").
23. CO 604/28 Sarawak Gazette, 1 May 1948, p 116.
24. CO 943/1 (File 6), minute by Mr KG Ashton, 5 December 1949.
25. CO 943/2 (File 7, item 1), High Commissioner to CO, No 81 (saving), 11 August 1951, paragraph 5; CO 943/1 (File 5), minute by Mr KG Ashton, (30 November 1948), who pointed out that there was only one legal adviser in Sarawak to serve both that country and Brunei.

4. "The Sultan should be advised to grant a constitution" (1949-51).

When Mr Grattan-Bellew (1903-85), Attorney-General of Sarawak, found time to examine the situation in Brunei, he entertained doubts about the very validity of its legislation. The Sultan, technically, was an autocratic sovereign and only he could make laws. There were "no written laws...before 1906".[26] After that time the enacting words were: "it is hereby enacted by...the Sultan-in-Council as follows...". Each enactment was signed at the top by the Resident though the words "I assent" were not used. No authority could be found for the statement that the assent of the council was required for the enactment of legislation. It was assumed that this was the arrangement which had been made by the Resident and the Sultan following the 1905-6 Treaty. Enactments in this form were law in the State; but some were passed by the State Council when the Sultan was absent, and doubt was felt about the validity of such legislation. The Sultan had not expressly delegated his legislative power to the Resident, but even if he had, printed copies of the laws did not purport to be passed by the Resident-in-Council. All enactments from 1906 to 1930 had been collated and published in book form, "by authority", presumably of the Sultan. Mr Grattan-Bellew thought such law would be accepted by a court as valid; but if a party to a proceeding challenged a post-1930 statute, a court might not be prepared to accept it as valid because the Sultan's consent was not apparent. Hence it was decided to print a book of all legislation since 1930 and to pass an 'interpretation and general clauses ordinance' in order to make it clear

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26. See pp 140-3 (above).

that the Sultan need not be personally present in the State Council for legislation to be valid. The next step was to pass a 'Revised Edition of Laws Enactment' and then to revise all the enactments and rules and regulations of the State. A Government Printer was to be appointed and a Government Gazette published. Once these steps had been taken, doubts about the validity of individual enactments were permanently removed. (The latter were not printed "by authority" nor did they bear the name of a printer). An 'Application of Laws Enactment' was also required to legitimize the use of English Common Law in Brunei courts in cases where no alternative legislative provision had been made in the Sultanate. Subsequently the monarch would be advised to grant a constitution.[27]

Mr McPetrie, a legal adviser in the Colonial Office, pointed out that since legislative power was not conferred upon the Sultan by any written law, an interpretation ordinance was not an appropriate law by which to establish a particular method for the exercise of such power. The most suitable way would be to make the necessary provision in any constitution which might be granted. But since the drawing up of a constitution would take time, Mr McPetrie suggested as an interim measure a new interpretation ordinance governing the Sultan's legislative powers which should expressly confer upon the Resident-in-Council the power to legislate if the Sultan should be absent or unable to act. This law could also give validation to laws enacted by the Resident in the past.

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27. CO 943/1 (File 6, item 1), Mr CW Dawson (acting High Commissioner) to CO, No 7, 14 October 1949. See also, p 143 (above).

Another difficulty arose: did power to grant a constitution reside with the Sultan? If there was no evidence to the contrary, Mr McPetrie (b 1911) argued, the Malayan precedent could be followed: in each case there the constitution had been granted by the monarch.[28]

Most, if not all, the measures suggested by Mr Grattan-Bellew, including an "Interpretation and General Clauses Enactment", were executed in 1951.[29] Progress towards the promulgation, in 1959, of a written constitution is treated in due course.

5. The Longer-Term Strategy (Preparation for Self-Government).

The longer-term strategy of the Colonial Office for post-war Borneo involved:

a. greater co-operation between the three British Borneo territories;

b. the creation of a greater sense of national unity and of common citizenship among the various races; and

c. preparation for self-government.

Co-operation between the three Borneo territories took the form of Governors' conferences (held every six months) and the sharing of services where practicable in order to avoid duplication of expenditure. A joint labour adviser was appointed in 1947. A combined judiciary was established in 1951. Progress was made towards a customs union (which was not entirely beneficial for the people of Brunei).[30] Co-ordination

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28. Ibid., minute by Mr (later Sir) JC McPetrie, 24 June 1950.
29. Brunei Annual Report 1951, pp 45-6; CO 985/1-2 Brunei Government Gazette (1951-9); and CO 943/2 (Files 1 and 3).
30. See pp 380 and 388 (above).

was attempted in police and shipping matters and there were joint health and education projects. Other ventures included a geological survey of British Borneo,[31] a combined airline and a pooling of resources in archaeology and fishing. A tendency to treat Brunei de facto as a sixth division of Sarawak was resented and resisted by Brunei Malays. A proposal to integrate the Sarawak and Brunei Police Forces, for example, had to be abandoned in 1949-50 for this reason.[32] Similarly, operations on a pan-Bornean basis were not permissible when attempted by a nascent Brunei nationalist party.[33]

In 1946 (one CO clerk recalled some years later) it had been "the definite (though not overtly declared) intention that the two newly-created colonies of North Borneo and Sarawak and the State of Brunei

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31. See above, pp 383 and 398-9.

32. CO 1022/61 (item 19), memorandum by Mr Higham, 20 January 1953, paragraph 6. NB. In 1949 the Police Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr WC Johnson, found grave shortcomings in the Brunei Police Force, including insufficient European gazetted officers, the urgent necessity for a proper police station to be built in Seria, inadequate training of the rank and file, unsuitable service conditions which attracted the wrong type of person into the force, poor living accommodation, and a shortage of uniforms. To complete the catalogue of deficiencies, Mr Johnson noted that there was "no clear definition as to the responsibility for the Brunei Police Force - whether it is a completely independent unit under its own Chief Police Officer, or whether the Commissioner of Police in Sarawak has an overall responsibility...I suggest that consideration should be given to the amalgamation of the Brunei and Sarawak Forces or, alternatively, their separate identities should be clearly established" (CO 537/4427, item 1, secret, WC Johnson to OAG Sarawak, 28 October 1949). In August 1950 the Governor, Mr Abell, replied that amalgamation was not a practical proposition for the time being for political reasons, but close co-operation between the two forces was planned (CO 537/6109, item 3, Abell to CO, No 41, saving, 18 August 1950). Legislative provision had already been made in Brunei and Sarawak, indeed, to enable the Sarawak Constabulary and the Brunei Police to operate in certain circumstances on either side of the frontier (CO 954/6 File 58922/1/1950). See above, pp 23, 38, 43, 85-90, 147-52, 307, 313, 316, 326-7, 349-50.

33. See below, p 494.

should in due course be brought under some form of unified administration. But it was considered that a public declaration to that effect at the time would have had a bad effect on public opinion in Sarawak and would have played into the hands of the anti-cessionists (see footnote 34), whose campaign was in full swing...Nevertheless, in order to pave the way for political union, a policy of close association (and, where suitable, combination) between the various departments of Government was embarked upon. But in January 1949 the two Governments complained that the pace was being forced beyond the capacity of the two administrations and a modified policy of slower progress was agreed upon". 34

The problem of bringing Brunei into the scheme of things remained "intractable" (because of opposition from Malays in the Sultanate).[35]

The original conception of the Colonial Office had been that, on the one hand, Malaya and Singapore would come together and, on the other, the three Borneo territories, and that the two blocks might then be merged into "some sort of confederation". Indications had emerged by 1953 that a closer union might have been more acceptable if it was approached "on the basis of the territories all coming together at the same time rather than forming into Malayan and Bornean blocs". Mr Higham at the Colonial Office was not happy to leave the matter in abeyance: Singapore was marching ahead of Malaya and there was a risk to British Borneo from a "potentially-acquisitive Indonesia". He could see

"little future for a self-governing colony of British Borneo, plus Brunei. The Federation and Singapore themselves are, in all conscience, small enough in size and population when compared with their neighbours...I think that all possible means should be used to forward the idea of a British SE Asia dominion". 36

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34. CO 1022/61 (item 24) memorandum (n.d., unsigned), "The policy as re granting self-government to the territories concerned", paragraph 8. NB. The anti-cessionists, led by Mr Anthony Brooke, nephew of the third Rajah, opposed the transfer ('cession') of Sarawak to the British Crown, which had taken place in 1946. See pp 455-6 (above).
35. CO 1022/61 (item 19), memorandum by Mr Higham (Head of the SE Asia Department), 20 January 1953, paragraph 6. See also p 497 (fn), below.
36. Ibid., (Higham memorandum), paragraphs 7-9.

Some efforts had already been made towards this goal. In December 1951 advantage was taken of the formation in SE Asia of branches of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to attempt to bring together politicians from all these territories and thus to foster the idea of a political association of all 'British' SE Asia in a single group. In February 1953 the Commissioner-General (Mr MacDonald) and the Governor of Sarawak were hopeful of real progress. Their aim was to establish a council of British Borneo to meet periodically. In the first instance its purpose was to promote the co-ordination of policy and administration between the three territories. If and when the 'atmosphere' of the discussions on the council made it possible, the question of federation between the three territories might be considered.[37] The first such conference was held in Kuching in late April 1953. "A good beginning", commented Mr Paskin at the Colonial Office.[38] A second meeting convened at Jesselton in September 1953 and thereafter gatherings were held twice a year.[39] The first public results did not become apparent until February 1958 when the Governors of Sarawak and North Borneo broadcast simultaneously their proposal for a federation of British Borneo. This plan met a lukewarm response and was eventually abandoned because of Brunei's jealousy of its oil wealth and indigenous apprehensions of the Chinese.[40]

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37. CO 1022/63 (item 4), Commissioner-General (as the office of Governor-General was renamed in 1948) to Governor of North Borneo, No 54 (saving), confidential, 10 February 1953; repeated to CO, No 32 (saving), paragraph 2. NB: Mr MacDonald was informing Jesselton and London of the outcome of discussions which he had just held with Sir Anthony Abell.
38. CO 1022/294 minute by Mr Paskin, 13 June 1953.
39. Borneo Bulletin, 14 March 1959 (quoting The Times).
40. Mr (later Sir) JD Boles MBE, writing in about 1960, declared that

Similarly, in 1963, negotiations for Brunei's inclusion in the proposed Federation of Malaysia also collapsed.

If Brunei rejected independence in federation with regional States, how far was it progressing towards independence in its own right? Despite the new administrative link with Sarawak in 1948, the Colonial Office thought it politic to send Mr E Pretty back to Brunei for a second term as Resident. A contemporary comments that he (Mr Pretty)

"constituted a bridge between the old and the new. He had first come as Resident to poor little Brunei in the 'twenties and had got to know its people, its problems and its attitudes at village level. Twenty years later he returned for a post-retirement contract as a respected administrator with thirty years' experience of the MCS behind him. But in addition he was now invested with the dignity of a patriarch...leading his people into their promised land, flowing with oil and gas. Moses himself could hardly have been more appropriate. Amongst Muslims, with whom long acquaintance makes a vital contribution to trust, his previous association with Brunei was highly significant". 41

The return to Brunei of so senior an officer as Mr Pretty is an index, indeed, of the rising importance of the country.

"Governors' conferences have been useful, but their organization and success stem more from a determined effort to ensure that they shall succeed rather than from any genuine growth of common bonds and common purposes". Agreement on common policy was not often reached, but a greater understanding was achieved of the problems of other territories. Real co-operation was possible, he added, only where joint departments had been created (RHO: Mss Pac s52: JD Boles, "Closer Association Between the British Borneo Territories", pp 4-5). Datuk RN Turner, who had risen to the post of State Secretary (North Borneo) by 1956, comments that Governors' Conferences were "designed primarily (1) to encourage contacts/co-operation...and (2) to ensure that the three territories did not charge off on divergent courses at a time when closer association was the aim". The "sharing of services", referred to on p 463 above, "usually sprang from discussion at these conferences...(As) conferences went, they were quite useful in clearing the ground: triangular correspondence would have got nowhere" (Datuk RN Turner SPDK CMG, letter to the author, 14 August 1983, paragraph 4).

41. Mr P Scanlon, letter to the author, 24 August 1983, paragraph 3.

After 1951 the type of Resident altered.[42] Before the war they had usually been junior officers of the MCS until 1936, when the post had been upgraded. In 1946-51 the Residents had been chosen ad hominem, although they, too, had MCS backgrounds. After 1951 Residents were likely to be much older than their pre-war counterparts (average age on assumption of post: 45) and married; their background was service in Brooke Sarawak rather than Malaya; and their tenure of office in Brunei was likely to be the pinnacle of their careers or close to it. The Sultanate, as the largest petroleum producer in the British Commonwealth, had by then achieved considerable importance in its own right; consequently the post of Resident became increasingly prestigious. The attributes required by a British Resident in Brunei, as enumerated by Sir Frederick Weld in 1887 (see p 114, above), were equally necessary at the sunset of the Residential Era. Mr Gilbert's citation for the CMG in 1958 stated that there were few posts of this kind with greater or more complex problems "requiring tact, patience and firmness to the highest degree". Mr Gilbert had displayed all these qualities and his "wide experience, good judgement and fearless honesty" had provided the Sultan with "not only sound advice but also a competent administration which, together, are responsible for the progress we see in Brunei today".[43]

To the Assistant Resident in Kuala Belait was added a second, stationed in the capital, from 1949. One such officer recalls:

"Residents operated on a stratospheric State level dealing with multi-national oil companies and contractors, international agreements, State

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42. Theme pursued from pp 111-18 and 298-300 (above).
43. Borneo Bulletin, 19 July 1958.

legislation, development and finance. They were 'The Government'...But while they were busy being the central government, somebody else had to be the local government, viz., the two Assistant Residents...These gentlemen performed virtually any function that in the United Kingdom would be performed by a local authority plus a few extras either in the magisterial and conciliation field or merely as dogsbodies.

About these areas of life the Residents, on the whole, simply did not want to know unless something went wrong. Then they showed a talent for homing in pretty swiftly, perhaps too swiftly for comfort". 44

Unlike Residents in the 1950s, who had backgrounds in pre-war Brooke Sarawak, the Assistant Residents were regular colonial administrative personnel. Although generally seconded from Sarawak, which had become an official British colony in 1946, many had not joined the colonial service until after the Second World War. They were as likely to originate from a grammar school/red brick university background as from the traditional public school/Oxbridge training ground, and at least two were Australians who came to Borneo originally as members of the British Military Administration in 1945-6. Some such officers remained in the Sultan's service after the conclusion of the Residential Era in 1959. Finally, the last Assistant Resident stationed in the oilfield was a Malay, Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Omar (d 1906).

Both regular colonial service personnel and the former Rajah's servants tended to look down on the other.[45] Regulars sneered at their Brooke equivalents generally as parochial, eccentric and amateurish "country squires" (who drank rather too much). The former Rajah's officers, by contrast, had no doubt that Brooke methods of administration

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44. Mr P Scanlon, letter to the author, 24 August 1983, paragraph 4. Theme pursued from pp 113-4, 116, 155 and 302-4 (above).
45. Theme pursued from pp 61-3, 65 and 73 (above).

were infinitely superior to those practised by aloof CO types.[46] Rajah's servants took pride in their own accessibility to the governed, the self-reliance of their civil service and the comparative independence of Brooke Sarawak.[47] Such divergent attitudes created a degree of tension after the war when the two sets of administrators were obliged to work side by side in Sarawak and Brunei. Both groups tended, however, to subscribe to a common, conservative, political outlook.

Government became far more complicated in the 1950s. Before 1941, when revenues were meagre, seven British officers had sufficed to carry out the main administrative duties. In the immediate aftermath of war, change was limited, but in the 1950s there was an influx of expatriates particularly to run the new development programmes. The State Engineer, for example, was augmented by a State Electrical Engineer, two assistant engineers, an architect, a chief road engineer (with ten colleagues), an earthmoving engineer, a project engineer and five workshop engineers. Similarly, the Chief Police Officer found himself assisted by expatriate commanders of Belait (1950) and Brunei (1951) districts, a Head of CID (1950), a Head of Special Branch (1952), a

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46. Mr JO Gilbert CMG, who gave distinguished service in Brooke Sarawak and in Brunei after the war, comments that "the Colonial Office type" failed for two reasons. "First, they expected the people in their charge to meet them in the office and listen to complaints etc through an interpreter. They did not know anything about the customs of the people they were supposed to be governing. Secondly, they failed miserably in following the teaching of the Rajah, which was that he expected every DO to take Government to the people and not to expect the people to have to come to the Government. (As a result of these two failings) the average headman and his followers often ignored him"(letter to the author, 16 February 1985, p 1).

47. Mr AJN Richards, letter to the author, 8 March 1985, p 1.

separate Immigration Officer (1954), and an Officer Commanding Field Force Platoon (1954). In the course of the 1950s Brunei also acquired a Development Commissioner (ex-officio Controller of Civil Aviation), a Deputy Legal Adviser, a Commissioner of Labour, a Marine Officer (with two assistants), an Auditor, a Director of Broadcasting and a separate Controller of Customs and Excise (see Appendix 3.9). For senior Malays there were new posts, such as the State Custom, Religion and Welfare Office, created in 1954 so that the Pengiran Pemancha might do something useful (see p 495, below), and a district officer for Seria. Brunei also benefited from the wisdom of a stream of experts from the Colonial Office (e.g. p 464, fn 32, above).

The Brunei judicial system was restructured in 1951. The former Court of Appeal and the Court of the Resident were replaced by the Supreme Court of British Borneo. The British Resident, but not the Assistant Resident, then ceased to exercise judicial functions.[48] Below the Supreme Court came the High Court, then the Courts of the Magistrate (first, second and third class) and the Court of the Kathi. The Supreme Court, which had a unified jurisdiction over Brunei, Sarawak and North Borneo, comprised a "Chief Justice" and as many puisne judges as might from time to time be appointed. An uneven number of not less than three Supreme Court judges constituted the Court of Appeal. One Supreme Court judge constituted the High Court, which had unlimited jurisdiction in all

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48. Mr JO Gilbert CMG, letter to the author, 4 February 1985, para. 9: "In my time (1953-8) the BR was never involved in magisterial work". Theme pursued from pp 142-5 (above). See also CO 954/5 (File 58930/49) and CO 954/7 (Files 58930/1950 and 58930/1951).

criminal and civil cases (except certain marriage suits). Legislation also proliferated after the war: 24 enactments in 1953, 13 in 1954 and 21 in 1955 (cf. 3 in 1906).[49]

Administration became far more expensive.[50] The annual cost of the Sultan was eight times higher in 1955 ($300,933) than it had been in 1941, whereas the amount spent upon the British Resident's Office rose fivefold (to $103,321) during the same period. Expenditure upon police and prisons increased from $81,030 in 1947 to $722,598 in 1953 and $2.2 million by 1959 - and these sums did not include the cost of buildings, which was borne by the Public Works Department. The number of policemen jumped from 185 in 1950 to 328 in 1959 and, from 1954, there was also a Field Force of Sarawak Ibans stationed in the country. Yet, given the increase in population and the greater opportunities because of wealth derived from oil, crime remained remarkably rare. The most common offences, indeed, were breaches of traffic regulations. The number of people committed to prison was only 64 throughout 1947 and 84 in 1957, an annual peak of 179 having been reached in 1954 (see Appendix 6, below).

The many expatriates involved in all branches of Government in Brunei in the 1950s indicates that the objects of May 1947 (see pp 457-8, above) of achieving proper standards of administration by secondment from, and association with neighbouring colonies (as well as direct

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49. See above, pp 143-7 and 349-50.
50. Colonial Office, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, Vol 5: The Far East (HMSO, Col No 281, 1955), p 108. The annual cost of civil administration rose from $112,336 in 1938 to $603,446 in 1952.

recruitment of qualified expatriates) was successful, but would also suggest that real Bruneian involvement in decision-making was negligible, particularly before 1950. Indeed, Dato Sir WJ Peel, referring to the years 1946-8, commented that the State Council was "not an executive body".[51]

An additional constraint on Brunei involvement in real administration was the attitude and dubious character of the then Sultan. The influence of Brunei monarchs had been limited in the past by two factors. First, during two prolonged royal minorities (1906-18 and 1924-31) the wazirs acted as Regents. Secondly, Sultans had had character defects which reduced their personal standing. In 1950, however, a rather more acceptable monarch emerged.

Sir Ahmad Tajuddin - the "drunkard and...altogether unworthy"[52] Sultan - died at the age of 36 in mid-1950, to be replaced by his younger brother, Pengiran Muda Omar Ali Saifuddin III. The late Sultan had wished to be succeeded by his only legitimate daughter, Princess Ehsan (born 10 October 1935), and there were reports that he had persuaded the wazirs to sign a document to this effect.[53] Sir Ahmad was entitled to expect deference to his wishes because, in 1906, Mr McArthur had assured the dying Sultan Hashim that HM Government would ensure the "due succession" to the throne "in the line" of his son, Pengiran (later Sultan) Muhammad

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51. Dato Sir WJ Peel, letter to the author, 19 January 1985.
52. CO 943/1 (File 20) Sir C Arden-Clarke, quoted by Mr JD Higham, 2 June 1949.
53. Dato Sir WJ Peel insists that "no such succession document was ever produced for me to see even by Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin himself and he never mentioned it when he stated that his daughter should be recognized as the heir" (letter to the author, 17 March 1985, paragraph 2).

Jemalul Alam.[54] The latter was Sultan Ahmad's father. Princess Ehsan, therefore, had a prior claim to the throne over Pengiran Muda Omar Ali in 1950 if females were included in Mr McArthur's pledge. The British authorities feared, however, that a Sultana would not be acceptable to Muslim opinion in Brunei and so the succession of the Pengiran Muda was endorsed by HM Government.[55] In any case, Sultan Omar Ali was "in the line" of Sultan Jemal, if not immediately so.[56]

Sir Ahmad Tajuddin had died in Singapore on 4 June 1950 whilst proceeding to the United Kingdom to discuss a revision of the 1905-6 UK-Brunei Treaty and the oil royalties paid by Shell.[57] His final years had been plagued by ill-health and conflict with the British. He spent much time in Sarawak and apparently refused to attend the State Council. Although an irresponsible character, His Highness complained, with some justification, that he was not treated in a manner commensurate with his dignity or appropriate to the wealth of his Sultanate (or, he might have added, in accordance with the assurances given to his grandfather in the letter subsidiary to the 1905-6 Treaty).[58] Sir Ahmad was especially incensed when he compared his circumstances with those of Malayan Sultans. His allowance ($3,500 a month) was low; and he had to live in an old

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54. See above, p 67.
55. CO 943/1 (File 12); (RHO) Mss Pac s77, AM Grier "Funeral of the Sultan of Brunei 1950"; and RHW Reece, The Name of Brooke (Kuala Lumpur 1982), pp 35 and 279.
56. Datuk RN Turner SPDK CMG comments that "a sort of Salic Law prevailed in Brunei and since the Pengiran Muda (Omar Ali Saifuddin) was the next male heir to his brother, his elevation to the Sultanate in succession to (Sir Ahmad) was fair enough" (letter to the author, 6 February 1985, paragraph 2).
57. Straits Times, 5 June 1950.
58. See above, p 108, and below, Appendix 1.1 (p 559).

palace instead of in a properly-designed modern one like his Malayan counterparts. If Sir Ahmad was treated with markedly less liberality by the British than his successor, it is equally true that Sir Ahmad would have presented a stronger case if he had behaved in a manner commensurate with his exalted rank.[59]

Mr GTM MacBryan (1902-51) - "a very strange man indeed",[60] the somewhat mentally-unstable, erstwhile secretary to Rajah Vyner Brooke - claimed to have been appointed Political Adviser to Sultan Ahmad and guardian of his daughter. He was also entrusted with the Brunei regalia, the golden serpent, and cane and seal of State, without which there could be no enthronement.[61] Mr MacBryan declared the Pengiran Muda's succession illegal and sent a telegram of protest to King George VI. Mr Abell, the long-serving (1950-9) High Commissioner, described Mr MacBryan's intervention as "a characteristic piece of irresponsibility and foolish interference in Bornean affairs".[62]

Whatever the rights and wrongs of this episode, the exclusion of Princess Ehsan aroused little, if any, public protest in Brunei,

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59. CO 943/1 (File 20) and CO 943/8 (File 8). Dr RHW Reece (op.cit., p 270) states that Sir Ahmad was irked by the cession of Sarawak to the Crown in 1946. Sarawak was "not a kebun getah (rubber garden) to be sold off by the Rajah", the Sultan complained. "If the Rajah wants to give the country away (discrepancy in original), why does he not give it back to me?". Readers of this work will have little difficulty in providing the answer.

60. Mr MH Wood, letter to the author, 16 March 1983. Dato Sir WJ Peel claims that "anything MacBryan may have said would have been highly suspect" (letter to the author, 17 March 1985, paragraph 4).

61. CO 943/2 (File 12, item 2) Mr MacBryan, quoted in the Daily Graphic, 8 June 1950; also in News Chronicle, 8 June 1950.

62. Ibid., item 10, Mr (later Sir) AF Abell to CO, No 141 (telegram, confidential), 10 June 1950, paragraph 8.

although it appears to have caused lasting bitterness within the royal family itself.[63] Apparently a pious Muslim, the new monarch was an improvement in some respects upon his late brother: he eschewed alcohol, for example.[64] Born in 1914, he had had a limited education at Kuala Kangsar in Malaya (see above, p 297) and took up a post in the Forestry Department after his return to Brunei. During the war the Japanese occupying forces employed him on the construction of an airfield. After liberation he was promoted (in 1947) by the Resident, against the wishes of the jealous Sultan, to the vacant post of Pengiran Bendahara.[65] In this capacity he was "universally popular"[66] and "far more respected and respectable"[67] than his brother, the then Sultan. It is noteworthy that Sir Omar owed his appointment, both as Pengiran Bendahara and as Sultan, to the British. Before his reign was completed, he would have a third occasion to be thankful for the support of HM Government.

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63. Professor DE Brown, letter to the author, 5 April 1983, p 2. Lady R Peel observed that Princess Ehsan, "rather spoilt" because she was always being pushed forward by her father, could "play chequers and skip and dance and everything at home, but she's shy with us" (Lady R Peel, letters home, 1946-8; typescript courtesy of Lady R Peel).
64. Some contemporary verdicts were less favourable: "a difficult little man, though not without a wry sense of humour" (historian); "hardly educated at all,...always on the defensive...(but) had a sort of peasant cunning" (expatriate British civil servant); possessed of a "neurotic obsession" that everyone with whom he came into contact was "solely concerned to get money out of him" (another expatriate).
65. It was felt, indeed, that the public would not have objected if he had been appointed Sultan. But Mr (now Sir) WJ Peel declined to adopt the role of kingmaker. At the time Mrs (now Lady) R Peel suggested that, but for the British presence, enmity between the Brunei royal brothers and their followers might have erupted into violence (Lady R Peel, letters home, 1946-8).
66. CO 943/1 (File 5, item 30), report by Mr LHN Davis, 9 March 1948, paragraph 1.
67. Lady R Peel, typescript of letters home, 1946-8.

With regard to the second of HM Government's original longer-term objectives, the fostering of a greater sense of common citizenship (cf. p 463, above), the major problem was the separateness of the growing Brunei Chinese population who were reluctant to renounce their links with their homeland and who were regarded as more progressive than indigenous Borneans. As early as 1946 the Governor-General had detected "indications that young Malays are beginning to be apprehensive of a policy in Brunei which would result in Chinese influence increasing at the expense of themselves".[68] This may have contributed to the formation of a youth organization, the Barisan Pemuda (Barip) in 1946.[69]

For some time after the war the BMPC was short of labour, especially skilled workmen. Possible sources were China or Java; but China, in the throes or revolution, was suspect for political reasons whilst Indonesia refused to permit Javanese to work in a colonial territory. In 1949 it was decided that immigration of Chinese people into British-controlled SE Asia needed to be stemmed: "present conditions make it necessary that the political and security aspects should be the chief consideration in determining the immigration policy of each territory".[70] There was concern that the political situation and the high cost of passages was encouraging a tendency among immigrants to remain in the Nanyang. The rate of natural increase among Overseas Chinese, moreover,

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68. CO 537/1613 (item 227) Mr M MacDonald to CO, No 94 (telegram), 18 July 1946, paragraph 4.
69. See below, pp 493-4.
70. CO 954/4 (File 58911/1949, item 2), appendix (conference discussion paper) to the minutes of the ninth Commissioner-General's meeting held at Singapore, 22 & 23 January 1949, paragraph 2.

was greater than that of indigenous people; hence even immigration control would fail to stem a rising proportion of Chinese in the total population. This further complicated political development and added to security problems. The promotion of self-government required that

"the inhabitants should develop a common loyalty and learn to regard the country as their 'true homeland and object of their loyalty'. Experience shows how difficult it is for the Chinese to develop this sense of loyalty, they tend rather to remain aliens looking to China as their homeland and often for guidance, and reproducing its political factions". 71

The political and security problems outweighed the advantages of any stimulus the Chinese might give to development. The Brunei Government decided to restrict immigration to skilled workers recruited from Malaya and Singapore, rather than directly from China or Hong Kong. In 1950, however, the shortage of both skilled and unskilled workmen continued because attempts to Malayanise the workforce had failed and it was impossible to recruit sufficient numbers from Singapore.

In Brunei immigration controls were tightened and identity cards were issued from 1949. A Criminal Investigation Department (including Special Branch) was created in 1950. The continued development of the oilfield and the inauguration of the five year plan in 1953 necessitated closer attention to security problems. The large sums of money spent resulted not only in an increase in the number of workers directly employed on development, but attracted to the State wage-seekers of all descriptions. As a result there was a floating heterogenous population of about five thousand in the oilfield. Although outward

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71. Ibid., paragraph 14.

signs of restlessness were few in the early 1950s, a close watch was kept on any tendency towards a change in this state of affairs.[72]

On the other hand, the Chinese were denied citizenship rights in Brunei and were not allowed to own land without the consent of the monarch. In such circumstances it is not easy to appreciate how they could have been expected to offer their first loyalty to the Sultanate.[73]

Strains did exist beneath the surface. Finally, a strong Malay nationalism - 'Brunei for the Bruneis' - developed after the war and was supported,

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72. Monthly political intelligence reports were prepared and submitted to HM Government (CO 537: Files 1644, 3764, 4864, 4865, 6085 and 7340).

73. The British appear to have done nothing to secure Brunei citizenship for the Chinese inhabitants of the country. On the contrary, racial discrimination was practised. The Immigration Enactment of 1958 denied Brunei-born Chinese classification as citizens of the State. If they had lived in Brunei for seven years or more between 1948 and 1958 they had to apply for residence permits. If they had lived in Brunei for less than seven years during that period they were required to obtain visitors' passes to remain in the country. The Sultan-in-Council refused a petition from the Brunei Chinese requesting citizenship for their kindred born in the Sultanate. The Resident, Mr DC White, explained that the law was designed to safeguard the country from the entry of undesirable aliens and to facilitate the departure from, and re-entry into, the State of bona fide residents. It did not provide for the nationality of an individual; this was effected by a nationality or citizenship law. Brunei had no existing citizenship legislation, however, and the position of persons born in the State who were not included in the definition of Bruneis in the Immigration Enactment had been uncertain. If the petition had been granted all the locally-born Chinese would have had to apply for a re-entry permit on every occasion they wished to leave the State. A residence permit gave legal authority for non-indigenous residents to live in the State without the necessity to obtain a re-entry permit (Borneo Bulletin, 30 August 1958).

To this day most Brunei Chinese remain stateless; but the Rev DR Rawlins suggests (letter to the author, 10 October 1983, paragraph 4) that a visitor to the country would be completely unaware of citizen/non-citizen status. The Brunei Chinese enjoy excellent educational and economic possibilities; they came to Brunei "not to be citizens but to improve their lot" and, in any case, "citizenship provides nothing much if one is...'permitted to reside' and do business, or work, without it".

apparently by Sir Anthony Abell[74] in contravention of the intended policy of HM Government.

The BMPC employed a large proportion of the wage-earning population. Management posts were held mainly by expatriate Asians and Europeans. Artisans were mainly Chinese, many of whom belonged to the Chinese Mechanical Engineering Association. This union, which had its head office in Canton (in 1946), was not recognized by the BMPC. South Indians constituted many of the drilling gangs and did most of the stevedoring at Kuala Belait. Indigenous people tended at first to carry out the more menial tasks, but came to occupy most of the skilled manual labour jobs as the 1950s progressed.

Relations between BMPC management and labour appear to have been reasonably good. The 1946 strike,[75] caused by the special circumstances obtaining at the time, was confined to the Chinese section of the work-force. The occasion was the worsening of the supplies situation and an increase in the cost of living which pay rises failed to offset. The Malays chose to supplement their rations with cheap sago, but the Chinese demanded higher wages. The main cause of the dispute, according to the mediator (Mr Wolters), was psychological: the over-weening class consciousness of Chinese artisans, resentful of any confusion of their

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74. Sir Anthony Abell was reported to have said that Brunei was entitled to adopt an anti-Chinese policy. The people there felt that the problems of Malaya had arisen from unrestricted Chinese immigration in the past and as Brunei was a small and vulnerable territory, they did not want to be swamped (Borneo Bulletin, 6 September 1958). Such a statement hardly encouraged "a growing participation in the government by people of all communities" (see p 455, above).

75. Theme pursed from p 364 (above).

status with that of Malay coolies, had been damaged. They were also "profoundly ignorant" of the current world situation: all they could remember were the better times before the war. Brunei Chinese were much better off than their cousins in Singapore; but they did not realize this. Although money was no object to the BMPC, the General Manager was unwilling to do anything which would justify the use of the strike weapon in the eyes of his labour force. Following the mediation of Mr Wolters, the artisans accepted revised allowances plus special 'rehabilitation' allowances which the company had promised but not paid. Improved salary scales were introduced, as well as better promotion prospects, a disputes procedure and a works committee designed to forestall future conflict.[76]

The BMPC had an industrial relations department headed in 1949 by a Mr RM Harcourt. The Malayan Government's Trade Union Adviser, Mr JA Brazier, visited the oilfield in April of that year and reported[77] that there appeared to be "no overall labour relations or welfare policy, neither did anyone...have a clear idea of what was meant by the term 'industrial relations'". The oilfield labour organization comprised an Industrial Relations Officer (IRO), an Assistant IRO, and four labour supervisors. The functions of the labour supervisors were mainly concerned with the engagement, supervision and control of labour and they served as channels for complaints coming from the workers to the IRO. Periodic meetings were held between the labour advisers and the IRO and

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76. CO 954/1 (File 58901/1946-7, item 5), Wolters' report, October 1946.
77. CO 954/1 (File 58901/1/1949, item 1), report by Mr JA Brazier, 10 June 1949.

the latter in turn held periodic welfare meetings with selected members of the labour force. Chinese artisans, who were represented on welfare committees, but not as trade unionists as such, complained of non-recognition of their union and a "lack of understanding" of their particular problems by the management because there were no Chinese-speaking Europeans in Brunei. In Mr Brazier's view, the existing welfare councils were "window dressing" and "no alternative to proper agreed negotiating machinery between the trade union and the management". Mr Barltrop at the Colonial Office shared the view that "the union should be recognized by the company for negotiating purposes: they will certainly have to do so one day and better now than later".[78] But by July 1951 no progress had been made.[79]

Apart from a lack of class-consciousness among indigenous workers (as opposed to Chinese artisans), obstacles to labour combinations included the high turnover of personnel and the large number of different racial groups employed by the oil company. In such circumstances unity was very difficult to achieve. Many immigrants came to work only for a specific period after which they were immediately repatriated. Deportation was a weapon used to deal with 'troublemakers'.[80] Hence strikes were rare. At the beginning of 1957 358 Hong Kong artisans struck because one of their number had died following a brawl with Brunei Malays

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78. Ibid., minute by Mr Barltrop, 20 December 1949.
79. CO 954/8 (File 58950/1/1951, item 1) report by Mr TM Cowan, 26 July 1951. Mr Barltrop agreed but saw "no reason to hasten the formation of trade unions" in Brunei (minute, 24 August 1951).
80. In 1949, for example, 64 Ibans were repatriated.

in Seria bazaar. Half the strikers were repatriated for refusing to comply with an ultimatum from the company to return to work. Apart from this instance, Brunei was free from labour disturbances during the years 1957-9.

At the end of 1947 the Governments of British Borneo appointed a joint labour adviser. In Brunei this officer performed the duties of Controller of Labour and gave "close attention to all labour questions which are assuming an increasing importance with the expansion of the oil company's activities at Seria".[81] By 1949 it had become essential that a labour adviser should be stationed permanently in the oilfield;[82] but it was not until 1954 that such an officer could be found. Thereafter most labour differences were settled by reference to him.

In 1949 the Labour Code was revised. Later the Workmen's Compensation Enactment required financial amends for injuries to workmen during the course of their employment. A further law, passed in 1957, increased the amount of compensation payable. An up-to-date labour enactment in 1954 was passed to give workers protection

"in such matters as hours of work, health conditions, the age of admission to employment, medical treatment, provision of written contracts of employment, notice pay and conditions of extra-territorial recruitment". 83

At the end of the war there was no legislative provision for sickness or old age "though provision on a satisfactory scale is in fact made for

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81. Brunei Annual Report 1947, p 9; and CO 954/1 (File 58901/1946-7).
82. CO 954/1 (File 58901/1/1949) Brazier report. (The urgency for such an appointment was repeated by the British Resident, Mr Barcroft, in 1951).
83. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, pp 14-15.

the former by large employers".[84] A national pensions scheme was introduced under the first five year plan (see above, pp 443-4).[85]

With regard to the third of HM Government's original strategic objectives, preparation for self-government (see above, p 463), Brunei actually began to regress relatively rather than to advance because of the influx of expatriates, particularly from 1953. As mentioned before, the gap between the standard of personnel required to run the new services and the quality of the products of the indigenous education system tended to widen. The first essential, therefore, remained the expansion of educational facilities. Meanwhile, selected officers were sent

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84. Brunei Annual Report 1947, p 9.

85. At the beginning of 1957 the British Malayan Petroleum Company (BMPC) was re-named the Brunei Shell Petroleum Company (BSPC). The BMPC of 1956 and BSPC of 1957 were virtually the same company, with the same shareholders (Royal Dutch-Shell), the same oil mining leases, the same company offices, the same General Manager (Dato RE Hales CBE), and the same staff and employees.

The name-change arose because of the Brunei Companies Enactment of 1956, which required companies operating in Brunei to be registered locally. (The BMPC was registered in London). Mr Bevington comments: "I think the first move came from The Hague (Shell HQ) or Whitehall, as empires faded and the need was realised to acquire a 'local' image". Apparently there were "numerous other examples" from the African territories and the Far East" (letter to the author, 3 October 1983, paragraph 2).

Subsequent Development of the BSPC. The Brunei Government acquired 25% equity in the BSPC in 1973, 50% in 1975. In 1972 an associated company, Brunei Liquefied Natural Gas, was established in order to ship gas, in liquefied form, to Japan. The Brunei Government's initial 10% stake in this company was increased to one-third in 1977. Finally, from 1978, Brunei also acquired 50% of Brunei Shell Marketing, which undertakes the distribution of petroleum products within Brunei. (T Ong Teck Meng, "Modern Brunei: Some Important Issues" in Southeast Asian Affairs 1984, Singapore 1984, p 78). Phenomenal wealth was derived from exports of LNG: 425m Brunei dollars in 1975, and B$685m in 1976. This compares with ordinary natural gas exports of B$1m in 1970.

abroad for training. As late as 1959, however, Brunei could still not boast a single university graduate of its own. It is equally true that, in private at least, British officers who served in Brunei during the 1950s will deride the abilities of contemporary Malay department heads (see below, Appendix 3.9).[86]

A feature of the 1950s was the rising importance of the Sultan and State Council. Theoretically,

"the supreme authority in the State is vested in the Sultan-in-Council. The State Council consists of eleven members including the British Resident, with the Sultan as president. The assent of the Council is necessary for the enactment of legislation and important questions of policy are referred to it.

The general functions of administration are carried out by a British Resident under the supervision of the Governor of Sarawak as High Commissioner". 87

By June 1957 the position had changed since the time of Mr Peel (see above, p 473) because Mr Gilbert declared that the State Council "combines the functions of both a legislative and an executive council".[88] In private correspondence Mr Gilbert explained that the State Council remained predominantly a legislature but became a "sort of Executive Council" also, because the Sultan demanded that certain matters on which Sultan and Resident could not agree (in 1957-8) were referred to it for decision. The Resident might have used his power of requiring acceptance of advice; but HM Government were anxious to avoid a direct confrontation with the Sultan in 1957-8 because they were trying to push through a new

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86. Similarly, a pre-war British officer, when requested to name and comment upon the outstanding Malays of his day, commented tersely: "there were no outstanding Brunei Malays".
87. Brunei Annual Report 1954, p 179.
88. Borneo Bulletin, 8 June 1957. Theme pursued from pp 135-7 (above).

constitution.[89]

Coupled with the emergence of a more acceptable Sultan in 1950, another factor making for constitutional change in practice was the growth of business placed before the State Council for decision. Hence council meetings became less infrequent. It has been suggested that if specific legislation or some similar action was required by the State Council, "then the Sultan could block it absolutely" if he so wished; but if it was an administrative matter, where the Sultan could not reverse decisions, the British Resident was more likely to achieve his ends.[90] In other words:

"The British Resident held the range of administration in his hands, and really did everything - and had all the power in giving detailed instructions to staff. The Sultan really could not, and certainly did not, give instructions even to Malay Heads of Department. Everything went through the British Resident. (But) if the Sultan opposed something (more innovative, His Highness) usually had his own way". 91

On perhaps two occasions in the 1950s, indeed, a change of Resident occurred at the Sultan's whim.[92]

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89. Mr JO Gilbert, letter to the author, 4 February 1985, paragraph 11.
90. Typescript of a tape recording prepared for the author by courtesy of Mr ER Bevington CMG CEng, p 39. After the enlargement of the State Council (see below), members of the powerful Brunei Malay Teachers' Association, such as Pengiran Yusof and Chegu Ali, were appointed to the Council. These people "always had a meeting at the palace with the Sultan the night before the official meeting", Mr Gilbert comments, "and anything the Sultan did not like, was strongly opposed by these members (on the next day). Previously it was generally comparatively easy to get the Sultan and his ministers to agree to any reasonable proposal, but it was much more difficult to persuade chaps like Chegu Ali and Pengiran Yusof. I am not trying to say it was a bad thing, it wasn't, but it slowed everything down considerably" (letter to the author, 12 November 1983, paragraph 4).
91. Mr Bevington, loc.cit.
92. Mrs P Gilbert, letter to the author, 22 February 1984, paragraph 4.

The State Council also spawned several sub-committees. In 1955, for example, the Government appointed an Education Advisory Committee, which had forwarded over forty resolutions to the State Council, the majority of which had been implemented, by mid-1958. Mr Gilbert, Resident 1953-8, recalls that he conducted business through the intermediary of the Sultan's respected secretary, Pehin Dato Ibrahim, so that possible points of difference, particularly concerning proposed constitutional changes and the proposed federation of British Borneo, could be resolved before reaching a direct confrontation between Sultan and Resident. For political reasons, it was no longer possible, or desirable, for the British to insist upon the acceptance of advice.[93]

A third trend in post-war Brunei - apart from the expansion of the bureaucracy (see above, pp 470-1) and the growing influence of the Sultan and the State Council - was greater departmental co-ordination. Unlike pre-war times, when 'cabinet' meetings were virtually unknown

"meetings of all heads of department (after 1946), presided over by the British Resident, took place from time to time, e.g. to discuss the annual financial estimates prepared by each department, or the construction of new Government offices to find out how much space each department required, or to discuss what to do about the visit of the Secretary of State for the Colonies (1955), housing, traffic and general administrative matters of that kind affecting all departments". 94

Former British civil servants in Brunei are unable to agree about the nature of the powers of departmental heads.[95] Mr Gilbert

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93. Cf. above, pp 473 and 485-6. In addition, Malays were supposed to be preparing for self-government.
94. Mr BE Smythies, letter to the author, 8 February 1985, paragraph 4.
95. Theme pursued from pp 304-5 (above).

states that the latter were "merely advisers and had no executive powers".[96]

Mr BE Smythies, by contrast, insists that as State Forest Officer from 1952 to the end of the Residential Era (and beyond), he

"<u>was</u> an executive officer, responsible for the day to day running of the Forest Department, subject to the Forest Law and to the annual financial estimates approved by the Government.

...(The) State Forest Officer was given a free hand under the Forest Enactment but important matters, such as the recruitment of expatriate staff, had to be approved by the State Government, e.g. the recruitment of a Forest Botanist on contract from the UK". 97

The solution is that, as far as routine administrative duties were concerned, departmental heads possessed executive authority, whereas in more important matters, involving extraordinary expenditure or a change in established policy, they acted only in an advisory capacity.

Mr Gilbert comments:

"(Mr Smythies) was a very fine Forest Officer and it would be unlikely that the BR would ignore his requests. But, of course, the BR, especially if indigenous customs or rights (were involved), might well think it advisable to discuss the matter with the Sultan before approving such a request. The Forest Department was administered exactly the same way as any other department and was certainly not an exception". 98

A fourth major theme of the post-war era was the influence of the BMPC/BSPC, which continued to bulk large.[99] The General Manager of the company was granted a seat on the State Council not later than 1951.[100] Restoring and expanding the services provided before 1941, the company

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96. Mr JO Gilbert, letter to the author, 4 February 1985, paragraph 10.
97. Mr BE Smythies, letter to the author, 8 February 1985, paragraphs 5 and 3.
98. Letter to the author, 22 April 1985, paragraph 3.
99. Theme continued from pp 309-11 (above).
100. (PRO) <u>Colonial Office List 1952</u>.

supplied its workers with rent-free housing,[101] free land for their gardens, medical care, free transport to and from work, four social clubs and a free cinema. Gas, electricity and water were transmitted to the public via the BMPC. The company established a number of first-aid points and operated an ambulance service. The BMPC employed its own police. These acted primarily as watchmen, but traffic offenders on their roads were hauled before a Shell tribunal. This was considered totally out of order: hence the roads were transferred to the Government and only certain stretches were retained for Shell's own use.

Despite what seems excessive influence exercised by the oil company, Government officials did not entertain this view. The Resident and the General Manager of the BMPC seem to have co-operated closely. One post-war Resident recalls that the oil company's staff

"were not unco-operative but were inclined to press their requirements on one. Though the General Manager was a friend, I remember feeling somewhat outweighted sitting in his office at Kuala Belait to face him and his divisional heads while I had virtually no one to bat on my side. But I would not want to suggest they got away with it". 102

Another former Resident considered that the BMPC was in nobody's way in Belait district, and, since the company provided services which the Government could not (or would not), he was quite content to let them bear the charge. Yet another informant commented that "Shell did not exert undue influence, but of course they could not be ignored because

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101. After the end of the Japanese occupation the BMPC undertook a crash programme to provide temporary housing for its employees; subsequently the entire workforce was re-housed in permanent buildings.
102. Mr LHN Davis CMG, letter to the author, 28 February 1983, Part I, paragraph 10.

of their size and resources". A former General Manager of the BSPC, for his part, assures the present writer that there was never - to quote his Americanism - "an adversary situation" between Shell and the Government and cautions that "a thesis which records a struggle between the colonialists and big business against the exploited natives will not be in line with the facts in Brunei".[103] Dato Linton did not sit on the State Council, but he states that, as a member of the post-1959 Executive Council (a successor to the State Council), he confined himself

"to business and administrative matters on which, in some cases, it might be that I had more experience than some of the other Members. In all cases, of course, Members' views were merely advisory to His Highness. As for membership itself, I...would have preferred...to remain outside such political circles.but...the State of Brunei was entitled to call upon the services of any resident within the State. That being so, in no way could an invitation to serve His Highness be declined". 104

Dato Linton adds that in general terms "Shell's policy the world over is to keep out of politics; we expect to be able to work with any Government only finding ourselves very rarely forced to withdraw from a country when conditions become impossible as we did from Indonesia in the 'sixties".[105] The Brunei Shell company would have found it "unthinkable" to interfere with constitutional arrangements.

6. Towards a Constitution: I (1953-6)

The aim of British policy after the Second World War was to

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103. Dato PM Linton (General Manager BSPC 1959-63), letter to the author, 27 March 1984, paragraph 11.
104. Ibid., paragraph 3.
105. Dato PM Linton, letter to the author, 14 November 1983, paragraph 4.

transfer to the people of Brunei the administration of their country "as soon as practicable". HM Government could not countenance the idea that any form of Government which denied minority rights would ever develop in and dominate any territory of the Commonwealth.[106] Progress in Brunei was slow: reform failed to keep pace, indeed, with developments in neighbouring Sarawak and North Borneo. In short, major advances in certain fields, such as welfare provision, were matched by a stubborn conservatism, at least among the pengiran class, in matters of politics and social status.

After the preparatory steps outlined in 1950 by Mr Grattan-Bellew had been implemented (see above, pp 461-3), the Sultan proclaimed his wish, early in 1953, that a constitution be set up within his State.[107] An advisory committee of seven eminent Malays decided that the first step should be the formation of District Advisory Councils, elected by the people of the four districts, and each district would eventually have proportionate representation in the State Council. On 11 September 1954 the first District Advisory Council was formed, all members in the first place being nominated by the monarch. Each District Advisory Council was empowered to appoint observers to the State Council. (They became full members in 1957). The preponderance of Government officers recommended for membership of the advisory councils was noted. It was appreciated that they represented a very large body of educated

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106. CO 604/30 Sarawak Gazette, 7 June 1950. (Sir AF Abell was actually referring to Sarawak but his words were equally applicable to Brunei).
107. Brunei Annual Report 1953, p 2.

opinion and for that reason the Sultan was prepared to allow a number of them to serve, on the understanding that it was a temporary measure and that, where there was any conflict of interest, their clear duty was to support the policy of the Government.[108] Chairmen were elected for one year. The Resident reported that this was the first time that rural dwellers had been able to air their complaints and views openly and they were "not backward in doing so". This "kept Heads of Department on their toes as their complaints...are generally directed towards...improvements of water supplies, communications and other social services".[109] The experiment proved successful and it was hoped that the district councils would eventually provide for the establishment of local government in Brunei. The intention was to form urban and district councils having their own budgets and employing their own officials, thereby giving them more executive control over local affairs. A special commission of enquiry discovered, however, that the people rejected these proposals, for fear that the new councils would result in increased taxation, that many of those holding minor posts in the Government and those exercising some customary power would find themselves divested of what influence they retained and, finally, "a lack of understanding of the true function and meaning of the proposals which was due in part to the lack of staff to undertake continuously the duties connected with the initiation and development of local government".[110] But, according to another point of view, the councils had been rejected because they were "another

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108. CO 985/1 Brunei Government Gazette, 31 August 1954.
109. Brunei Annual Report 1955, p 3.
110. Brunei Annual Report 1956, pp ix-x.

symptom of colonialism" and not truly representative of the people because nominated members could not speak freely. The new voice belonged to the PRB, the Partai Rakyat Brunei (Brunei People's Party).

7. The Partai Rakyat Brunei: "Independence is a Fundamental Right".

The PRB was the first (and remains the only) political party to have won popular support in Brunei. Before the Japanese occupation there had been a few friendly societies, but these had made little or no political impact.[111] After the war signs of a 'Brunei for the Bruneis' movement were evident.[112] Under the British Military Administration

"there was a desire among the few educated Brunei Malays to set up a (political) party to bring Brunei to independence, as the wave of nationalism was burning everywhere in the Malay Archipelago. But in

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111. Matassim bin Haji Jibah, Political Development in Brunei with Reference to the Reign of Sultan Omarali Saifuddin III (1950-67), MA Thesis, Hull, 1983, mentions (pp 25-6) that before the Japanese occupation two branches of Sahabat Pena (Penpal Friendship) were set up in Brunei, one in 1936 and the second in the following year. The main objective was social contact through correspondence. Some of the Brunei Sahabat members sent articles to Malayan newspapers. Following the Japanese invasion in 1941 the society ceased to exist. Awang Matassim also refers to a second grouping, the Kesatuan Melayu Brunei (Brunei Malay Union), formed in the 1930s. Its formation was "to some extent stimulated by Singapore's Kesatuan Melayu (in the 1920s) and, at a later stage, by Inche Ibrahim Yaacob's Kesatuan Melayu Muda. The KMB, however, had no political relations with the other two. Pengiran Muda (later Sultan) Omar Ali Saifuddin (see above, pp 473-6) was President of the KMB at one time. It was officially de-registered in 1957. (Details quoted by courtesy of Awang Matassim, letter to the author, 28 August 1984, para 2).

Brunei patriots sent a representative to the second congress of Malay Associations held in Singapore in December 1940. The five resolutions carried at the meeting all pointed to the "essentially conservative nature of the assembly, to its strong western-educated elitist bias, and to the absence of anything approaching political radicalism" (WR Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism - New Haven, Conn., 1967, pp 245-6).

112. CO 943/1 (File 2, item 1), AW Frisby report 1946, paragraph 10.

Brunei we couldn't (form one) because the State was under military rule. So we tried other means. We set up Barip (see p 477, above) with the aim of social and economic advancement of the Malay community. In fact Barip's main objective was in politics (to get independence)". 113

The British looked with "some mistrust" upon this "tiresome" youth association during its brief existence.[114] It faltered quickly because many members were civil servants who were not permitted to be active in political organizations. Subscription fees were insufficient to finance its activities.[115] There were rumours, also, that the association's president, later a prominent member of the PRB, had mis-appropriated funds. The society, which claimed a membership of thousands, became dormant before the end of 1947.[116] During the public meetings held by Mr Davis in 1948 to explain the reasons behind the transfer of the High Commissionership, these people posed the most pertinent questions. Generally, they preferred to develop closer links with their fellows in Malaya rather than with neighbouring Borneans.

Sheikh Ahmad Azahari (b 1928), who later founded and led the Partai Rakyat, first rose to prominence in late 1952 when he attempted to form a film production company, which was banned by the Government because it was perceived as a "swindle", a cover for a secret society, and a means whereby Sheikh Azahari might "collect funds either for himself or for political purposes".[117] After organizing an entirely

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113. One of the founders of the Barisan Pemuda (Barip), quoted by Matassim, op.cit., p 26.
114. Lady R Peel, letters home, 1946-8 (typescript courtesy of Lady R Peel). Barip was a "virus" which needed to be eliminated.
115. Matassim, op.cit., p 27.
116. Lady R Peel (loc.cit.)
117. CO 1022/396 (item 8), Sir AF Abell to CO, No 32 (saving), secret, 10 March 1953, paragraph 3.

peaceful protest demonstration, Sheikh Azahari was arrested and put on trial (along with some of his fellow "ring-leaders") for taking part in an "illegal assembly". The "savage" sentence of one year's imprisonment imposed upon him by "the learned magistrate" (Mr GAT Shaw) was denounced even by the Straits Budget: "Brunei is likely to make headlines again if its courts and its officials do not move a little more with the times".[118] The sentence remained "harsh" even after it had been halved upon appeal.[119] A Rustication Enactment was passed hastily to deal with 'troublemakers', but the law remained a dead letter.[120]

This film company episode occasioned Sir Omar Ali to announce an intention, in 1953, to make constitutional reforms. The High Commissioner reported that there were

> "signs of a clash between members of the ruling class, who wish to retain a feudalistic State, and the growing and more vocal opposition to nepotism from the ordinary people especially the young intelligentsia...
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> 4. A major source of discontent is the control which is exercised by the British Resident and the High Commissioner over the Sultan in the internal affairs of the State, particularly in the matter of finance. It is widely known that, by the terms of the treaty, the Sultan must accept the Resident's advice in all matters excepting only those of a religious nature. This is widely resented. With the abnormally large sums of money becoming available to the State many Government officers consider that emoluments should be raised in proportion to the revenue, irrespective of qualifications and ability of the holders or the responsibilities of the duties being discharged, and they feel that they have the Sultan's sympathy. The two senior Ministers are agitating for an increase in their salaries. Their basic salary plus allowances and various perquisites, are equivalent to those of a Resident. Their duties

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118. Ibid., item 14, extract from Straits Budget, 12 March 1953.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid., items 16, 18 and 21. Sir GC Whiteley minuted on 10 September 1953 that the Rustication Enactment was very unpopular in Brunei. Mr Gilbert, the Resident, "would like if possible to make use of him (Sheikh Azahari) in the public service, but the Sultan is not at all well-disposed towards him (Sheikh Azahari)". NB. The Rustication Enactment had been aimed specifically at the nationalist leader.

are in the main traditional and, although they are members of the State Council, they are of little assistance to the administration of the State because they are practically illiterate and it is impossible to give them additional duties or responsibilities. The Sultan feels it necessary to support their demands, although I believe that he appreciates that if I gave way in this instance there would be a general demand for higher wages throughout the State. The result is that throughout the Civil Service there is general discontent at the control exercised by the British Administration. If and when the treaty is revised and greater discretion in such matters is allowed to the Sultan in Council, I fear we will see very greatly increased emoluments throughout the whole range of Government servants. Some control over the Estimates will be required for some years if we are to avoid the demoralizing effect of great wealth without discipline.

5. At present the sole aim of most people is to cash in on the State's wealth, and any obstruction is put down to British influence. We are endeavouring, wherever possible, to use local people in Government service but the standard of education in the State is at present so low that it will be some years before the better paid posts can be filled by suitably qualified Bruneis. Both the Government and the oil companies (sic) import technicians, artisans and school teachers from Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaya, but where possible the Government have given them short contracts. We hope that in a few years time suitable local men will be found to take their places. This essential process is represented by some local people as a deliberate policy of the British to keep local people in the subordinate positions". 121

The Sultan had been pressing for a revision of the 1905-6 treaty so that he might obtain "greater responsibilities for the internal affairs of his State"; but Sir AF Abell insisted that "a revision of the treaty cannot be contemplated until His Highness has established a constitution on democratic and acceptable lines".[122] In short, the Sultan was responding very much to British prompting in 1953, whilst pressure from the High Commissioner had itself been given urgency because of the gathering strength of Brunei nationalism. Sir Anthony Abell's comments reveal, also, a lack of confidence in local ministers and civil servants.

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121. Ibid., item 12, Sir AF Abell to CO, No 54 (saving), 13 May 1953, paragraphs 3-5. See also, Brunei Annual Report 1953, p 3; BAR 1954, p 3; BAR 1955, p 3; and BAR 1956, p vi.
122. CO 1022/396 (item 12), paragraph 7.

Before the end of 1953 an alleged conspiracy was discovered and on 6 October three Malays - who had denied the charges - were sentenced to gaol terms ranging from one to two years on counts of conspiracy and sedition. One of the Malays had been involved in the earlier film society debacle. The accused men were allegedly members of a secret grouping which advocated the overthrow of the Brunei administration.[123]

There were no public developments during 1954, but much activity must have been proceeding behind the scenes. After his release from prison Sheikh Azahari began preparations for the foundation of a party. The first attempt (January to March 1955) was abandoned because of "disagreements among the organizers".[124] Later in 1955 Sheikh Azahari attended a conference of the Malayan Partai Rakyat, at which it appears to have been decided to form a branch in Brunei. In January 1956 the Partai Rakyat Brunei published a manifesto[125] and sought registration by the Government. A public meeting, attended by 150 Malays, was held on Sunday 22 January 1956, the anniversary of which was celebrated thereafter as the day on which the party was founded. Legal recognition was refused by the Government on the ground that the party was affiliated to an outside organization. Registration was refused a second time because the party wished to operate on a pan-Bornean basis.[126] The BRB was

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123. Straits Times, 7 October and 8 October 1953.
124. Borneo Bulletin, 15 January and 19 March 1955.
125. Borneo Bulletin, 28 January 1956.
126. Mr JO Gilbert recalls (letter to the author, 12 November 1983, paragraph 3) that the Sultan and Brunei Malays always fought "tooth and nail" against closer association with Brunei's neighbours in British Borneo and refused to budge an inch on this question. This was the reason for the denial of registration to the PRB.

obliged to confine its activities to Brunei, therefore, and was eventually registered on 15 August 1956.

The PRB's manifesto stated that the main purpose of the party was to "oppose all forms of colonialism in the political, economic and social sphere". Sheikh Azahari promised to follow constitutional methods in pursuit of the party's aims and claimed to have no hatred for the British; but independence was "a fundamental right of any people".[127] He added later that the authorities had to realize that "the PRB is here to stay and that it is determined to lead the people peacefully and constitutionally towards self-government". Many Government officials supported the party, he claimed, but were unwilling to jeopardize their careers by joining it.[128]

As early as June 1956 - before registration - the party claimed 10,000 prospective members. Many of the most enthusiastic recruits were Bornean employees of the BMPC[129] and 2,000 non-Malays had expressed interest. In October 1956 a rally held in Brunei Town was attended by 3,000 people and ended with seventeen shouts of merdeka and the clenched fist salute. The party had clearly demonstrated the need for a political organization in Brunei and "far from being politically backward, the people of Brunei are awakening to events around them".[130]

The Government noted that the enrolment of labouring classes in the PRB grew in 1956. There were many "malcontents" among party

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127. Borneo Bulletin, 22 January 1956.
128. Borneo Bulletin, 29 December 1956.
129. Cf. Dato Linton's statements on p 490 (above).
130. Borneo Bulletin, 18 February 1956.

members, mainly dismissed ex-Government servants, "who saw in the party a means of expressing their discontent". The following amongst the "more educated classes" was "very limited". The demand of the party for self-government, in the British view, "must necessarily be a slow process owing to the very limited number of persons of the requisite calibre available". By advocating what the Government claimed already to be doing in the sphere of social services, the party displayed "political immaturity" and "lack of understanding", perhaps designed "to enable the leaders to take credit for the outcome of the Government's development policy, which must inevitably take time to reach fruition".[131]

In considering the rise of political consciousness in Brunei, the first point to establish is that the isolation of the country was breaking down. Before the Japanese occupation communications were very difficult. There were no newspapers, no radio station, no airport, inadequate roads. Few people were literate. Before 1930 the steamship from Singapore stopped at Labuan. As a result to these elements - illiteracy combined with isolation, both from the outside world and of one part of the country from another - the experience of Brunei people did not extend far beyond their own village and traditional way of life. Women remained in even greater seclusion than men: in the 1950s there were still some old women in Kampong Ayer who claimed never to have set foot on dry land. Loyalty was in the first instance to the Sultan, perhaps to a territorial chief, and to the village penghulu and ketuas.

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131. Brunei Annual Report 1956, pp viii-ix.

Dr WR Roff comments, with reference to Malaya, that for the great majority of peasant Malays before the war, "involvement in anything coming under the description saisat (political activity)...was likely to be visited with punishment or at least with severe disapproval. It was none of one's business".[132] Similarly, "the ordinary Chinese did not believe that government could be improved, much less did he believe that good government demanded political activity and a positive commitment on the part of the masses...Traditional Chinese political theory held that government...should be run by those trained for that purpose".[133] Secondly, there was "a remarkable persistence of traditional patterns of social organization" (as we have just seen: p 491, above). Thirdly, Malay society was shielded from the disruptive effects of the new economic order - the oilfield was out of the way in Belait district - and the Sultan and pengirans, like their Malayan counterparts, were happy enough with a status quo which ensured them enormous privileges.[134]

In the 1930s the first students from Brunei to attend the Sultan Idris Training College (in Perak) came into contact with new ideas, particularly from Indonesia. It is surely not coincidental that early nationalist leaders of the Barip and PRB had experience of the wider world beyond the comparatively secluded confines of Brunei itself. (Although Islam was the majority religion in Brunei, few Muslims possessed sufficient wealth to make the pilgrimage to Mecca before the Second World War). In

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132. WR Roff, op.cit., pp 217-8.
133. GP Means, Malaysian Politics (London 1970), p 32; R Dawson, Confucius (Oxford 1981), p 66; and The Times, 20 December 1984, p 8 (column 8, paragraph 2).
134. Roff, op.cit., p 250.

schools loyalty to the throne was emphasized. Extra-curricular activities, such as the boy scout movement (launched in Brunei in July 1934), directed energies into approved conservative channels.

The Japanese occupation destroyed British prestige in Brunei, as elsewhere in South-East Asia, but the damage was limited to some extent (a) because Brunei was reconquered militarily by Allied Forces and the Japanese were clearly seen to have been vanquished; and (b) because an existing nationalist base was lacking in Brunei and so there was no indigenous organization in place which was ready to seize power and declare independence in 1945. The British (and alien Chinese) presence, which had been comparatively inconspicuous in Brunei before the war, became much more obvious in the 1950s and aroused corresponding indigenous resentment.[135]

Further changes took place during the later 1940s and early 1950s. As a result of educational expansion more people were literate. The BMPC issued two newspapers free of charge each Saturday morning. In October 1953 the first English-language commercial newspaper (later with Malay sections) - the weekly Borneo Bulletin - was launched.[136]

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135. If the people of Brunei were better educated than they had been in 1906, they remained, nevertheless, comparatively at a disadvantage when placed next to highly qualified expatriates. Mr W Fish reported in late 1958 that, because of their (comparative) lack of education, "the average Brunei Malay was forced to work as a labourer, while most of the people driving cars...were foreigners. Neither could he fail to notice that they despised him. Education was the only answer to the problem and this was being tackled by top priority in the Development Plan" (Borneo Bulletin, 15 November 1958).

136. Circulation reached 5,500 by 1954 and topped 10,000 by 1957. A separate Malay version was also published. On 15 February 1957 Pelita Brunei, a free Malay-language newspaper, was launched by the Government and had achieved a circulation (fortnightly) of 5,500 by the end of the year.

Earlier in that year a Government Information Service was started. Increasing numbers, even in the remotest villages, tuned in to broadcasts from Singapore, Indonesia and, later, Kuching. The establishment of Radio Brunei, delayed by more urgent priorities of the Development Plan, took place on 2 May 1957. The growing popularity of cinema also fostered knowledge of the wider world.

The outcome of more education, growing awareness of life beyond the confines of Brunei, and the example set by Malaya and other countries, was a heightened political consciousness among Bruneis, which provided the foundation upon which the PRB built. A further fact of paramount importance - perhaps the most decisive of all - was the evidence of oil wealth, in which the people wished to obtain their share. A large proportion of the public had remained comparatively poor, whilst the country in which they lived had become fabulously rich. It was suggested that the rapid shift from poverty to prosperity

"has perhaps been too demoralizing. People so easily take for granted the new schools and hospitals. The workers, proud of their new skills and prospects, resent the Sultan's many relatives, whose undeserved influence would have been taken for granted in the old days". 137

This made Brunei "a breeding ground for discontent".[138]

A final factor was Sheikh Azahari himself, who provided inspiring leadership and articulated the aspirations of the people, without alienating Europeans. Mr Gilbert, for example, though disturbed by evidence of the PRB's links with President Sukarno's Indonesia, "quite

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137. Borneo Bulletin, 10 March 1956.
138. Ibid.

liked" Sheikh Azahari and did not feel in any way threatened by the PRB.

Another former colonial servant, far less well-disposed to the PRB, nevertheless paid the party's leader the following tribute:

"It can be said without contradiction...that (Sheikh) Azahari was a charismatic personality, a spell-binder of a public speaker, and he had enormous appeal to the general public".

To some extent, however, it was a cheap popularity. Mr Bevington, for example, suggests that Sheikh Azahari and his supporters had not really thought through a coherent programme. The party leader would tell the people that all power was in the hands of the British Resident, that vast monies were coming in of which the people were not receiving a fair share, and that "it was time the people took over and ran the show (in order to see) that the monies came to them. Well, (anyone would) subscribe to that".[139]

The PRB was essentially a Malay-Kedayan party, strong in Kampong Ayer and among Kedayan farmers, but with little or no appeal to non-Muslim indigenes, the Chinese, or to the people of Sarawak and North Borneo (whose support was sought by the PRB leadership). The PRB's demand that the Chinese "monopoly" of trade should be broken alarmed the Brunei Chinese, who were a growing and increasingly important section of the population. There was talk of forming a separate party to protect Chinese interests, but nothing came of this; perhaps the Chinese had too much to lose (cf. above, p 479, fn 73). The people of the ulus also

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139. Typescript of a tape recording prepared for the author by courtesy of Mr ER Bevington CMG CEng, p 41.

tended to remain aloof. Nor did Brunei irredentism appeal to citizens of neighbouring territories in British Borneo. The Brunei Malay, according to The Times, "thinks little of his fellows, even his fellow Malays elsewhere and correspondingly the people of neighbouring States fear and dislike him".[140]

8. Towards a Constitution: II (1957-9)

In March 1957 the Sultan announced new plans for the reform of the State Council. The ordinary citizens were to elect ten members of the State Council but not directly: the ten would be chosen by the monarch from twenty two elected candidates. This scheme arose from the failure of the local authorities plan in 1956. Sheikh Azahari, denouncing the proposed reform as a "primitive change" and a "mockery of democracy", demanded that three-quarters of the members of the State Council should be elected directly by the people.[141] At the end of the month, the first annual congress of the PRB drew up a plan of action, including the despatch of a delegation to London to fix a date for autonomy.[142] A British socialist lawyer, Mr WAL Raeburn, engaged as legal and political adviser to the PRB, was to draft a merdeka memorandum for the party to submit to HM Government.[143] The Sultan declined to receive a memorandum from the PRB because he was "a constitutional monarch who took no part in

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140. The Times, 1 July 1957. Hon Sir S Runciman, letter to the author, 25 March 1983; and Mr AJN Richards, letter to the author, 11 April 1983.
141. Borneo Bulletin, 9 March 1957 and 16 March 1957.
142. Borneo Bulletin, 6 April 1957.
143. Borneo Bulletin, 18 May 1957.

politics".[144] Sir AF Abell, however, did agree to meet the PRB leaders. He warned them that a merdeka mission to the Colonial Office would be a waste of money because Brunei was governed, not by the British but by its own absolute monarch. The British expatriates, Sir AF Abell claimed, were not the ruling class, the symbols of colonialism, but public servants, who were there at the Sultan's pleasure. Their functions, he said, were limited to advising and carrying out the routine of government. Hence the PRB would be asking the Colonial Office for something which it was not theirs to give.[145] Despite this warning, the PRB delegation proceeded to London, where they were received at the end of September by the Secretary of State

"with the usual courtesy and matters were discussed, but in brief they were told that any petition or memorandum to do with the political situation in Brunei must be submitted to the Sultan. His Highness would no doubt comment and ask the Secretary of State for his advice". 146

The British and the Sultan between them had the PRB on a regular merry-go-round. In Brunei the party leaders were told that the Sultan was above politics and could not receive their memorandum; in Kuching and London, by contrast, they were told that HM Government could not accept the document either and that any petition concerning the political situation in Brunei would have to be submitted to the Sultan. The latter, for his part, was at once a "constitutional" and an "absolute" monarch.[147] The PRB leaders must have been exceptionally patient if such

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144. Borneo Bulletin, 8 June 1957.
145. Borneo Bulletin, 24 August 1957.
146. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p iv.
147. The status of the Sultan was not legally defined. But he was certainly not a "constitutional" sovereign because Brunei had no constitution, whilst the claim that the monarch "took no part in politics"

official games did not provoke intense wrath and sharpen their determination to have an end to the colonialist system. (Such antics also reflect little credit upon the British authorities). At a rally held in mid-October 1957, Inche Salleh (PRB Vice-President) told the assembled crowd of 5,000 in Brunei Town that, despite the failure of the merdeka mission, it had nevertheless achieved world publicity for the struggle of the Brunei people. The Sultan, he said, had nothing to fear from the PRB. The people must remember the spirit of Mat Salleh (presumably of North Borneo). Inche Salleh appeared to suggest that one day the red and white flag of Indonesia would fly over the whole of Borneo. High officials, he alleged, were tempted by easy living. They were so concerned with motor cars and electric fans, he said, that they forgot the people, to fight for whose rights the PRB had come into existence.[148]

In July 1957 the Sultan announced slight modifications in his local government proposals. By January 1958 urban and rural councils

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patently was nonsense. If His Highness technically was "an autocratic sovereign" (cf. p 461, above), no self-respecting absolute monarch would have tolerated being told by a petty foreign High Commissioner that he should introduce a constitution on democratic lines or that he should accept the 'advice' of an even more petty foreign Resident. What then was the position of the Sultan? One is tempted to suggest that it was anything which it suited His Highness or the British to say it was at any given moment. It may be stated without fear of contradiction, however, that His Highness exercised a power of veto upon any major constitutional changes or policy departures which the British wished to thrust upon him (see above, p 486).

148. Borneo Bulletin, 19 October 1957. (State Councillors, from May 1955, were entitled to free car tax, post and telegraphs, and allowances for board and lodging. Borneo Bulletin, 14 May 1955). Since this time Inche Salleh has accepted the title Pehin from the Sultan and has held high Government office since 1961. The temptations of easy living are rather more difficult to resist, perhaps, than he supposed in 1957.

were to be operating as virtually autonomous bodies. Fifty per cent of the membership was to be elected directly by the people, except in the case of Brunei Town urban council, whose members were all to be nominated. No reason was given for this proposed exception. Government-appointed chairmen of councils would have the power to use a casting vote. Councillors would be given an opportunity to shoulder real responsibility in the handling of their respective council affairs and duties. The election of representatives from the sub-districts to the district councils was to be conducted locally in accordance with "traditional methods" (a show of hands) before the end of 1957 to enable the district councils to function effectively in accordance with the original plan. The Government was to work out a scheme for dividing the various districts into wards, from each of which would be nominated one official member who would sit on the district council with the elected member from the same ward.[149]

Later in July[150] the Sultan published his proposed constitution, which was weighted overwhelmingly in favour of the monarchy. The Sultan was to be Head of State and Head of the Muhammadan religion in Brunei. He was Head of the executive and all executive authority was to be exercised in his name. The State Council was to be replaced by three new ones: Privy, Executive and Legislative. The Executive Council might only be summoned by authority of the Sultan. Its members, both official and unofficial, were to hold their seats during the Sultan's

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149. Borneo Bulletin, 6 July 1957
150. Borneo Bulletin, 27 July 1957.

pleasure, but were required to be re-elected or re-nominated every three years. The Sultan was required to consult the Executive Council, but was empowered to act contrary to the advice of the majority of its members, provided he recorded in writing his reasons for inclusion in the minutes. In addition, any member might require his advice to be recorded therein. Membership of the Legislative Council was to be confined to subjects of Brunei or the United Kingdom aged above twenty-five years. The eleven members from the district councils delegated to sit on the Legislative Council were to be chosen by the district councils themselves, but the appointments were subject to the approval of the Sultan. The legislature might make laws for the peace, order and good government of the State. Any member might introduce a bill or motion. The council might not proceed, however, upon any bill (a) affecting the currency or finances of the State; (b) the provisions of which appeared inconsistent with any treaty or agreement entered into by the Sultan or Her Majesty; (c) relating to defence or public security.

Sheikh Azahari declared that the PRB would boycott the proposed new constitution which "encourages dictatorship in Brunei".[151] The party published a commentary upon the Sultan's proposals. The "autocratic powers" of the monarch, it was pointed out, would include the appointment of the principal ministers and ex-officio members of the Executive Council, and so on. The proposals contained "nothing in the way of a delegation to (the people of Brunei) of a share in the government". Nominated

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151. Borneo Bulletin, 24 August 1957.

members could not speak their minds freely and there was nothing to prevent a Sultan from "packing both Executive and Legislative Councils with sycophants and office-seekers". Finally, "a constitution which depends entirely for its safeguards for the subject on the benevolent forbearance of the sovereign himself is in effect no constitution at all".[152] The party repeated its demand for a State Council, three-quarters of whose members were to be elected directly. It was suggested that the Sultan might renounce some of his proposed autocratic powers. The PRB did not press for complete merdeka; the people would be content to achieve "an early realization of a substantial voice in their internal government, confident that they have amongst themselves enough men of sufficient ability and practical understanding to shoulder the necessary responsibilities".[153]

In November 1957 the elections (by show of hands) to the district councils were again postponed, this time indefinitely. The Resident commented that, politically, this decision of His Highness could be considered

"a most unfortunate incident, as the Partai Rakyat had decided to boycott the elections and of course gained much kudos when they were temporarily abandoned.

...Had this party supported the elections, and had these elections taken place, they would probably have got certain (representatives on the) district councils and been able to air their views in the constitutional and proper manner. The fact that they had decided to boycott the elections would probably have done them more harm than good". 154

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152. Borneo Bulletin, 26 October 1957.
153. Ibid.
154. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1957, p v.

On 9 November 1957 it was reported that 1,700 to 2,000 people had attended a meeting to welcome home from London the empty-handed merdeka delegation. Later in the month the Sultan threatened to scrap the constitution if it was to be boycotted by the PRB. It was essential, he declared, for a solid constitutional foundation to be established first: further progress could follow later. The people must learn to walk before they can run: they must travel slowly but safely. It was "not for us to be too optimistic, proud or boastful or to think that we are strong enough or rich enough to stand on our own". He suggested that the new constitution was trying to take a step forward like a pupil who was still under training. It could be amended and changed later to suit new times. He pointed to development programmes as a sign of good faith. He was not a puppet of the British. The United Kingdom had been a good friend to Brunei, a friendship which had resulted in much progress in the Sultanate. But in time local citizens would take over the posts then held by expatriates (he concluded).[155]

During 1958 the PRB was comparatively quiet. After the disastrous delegation to London in 1957, the party became dormant until 1960-1. In February 1958 Inche Zaini bin Haji Ahmad (b 1935), a senior member of the PRB's Executive Committee, left the party to go to the United Kingdom to pursue his studies in trade union law. The party regarded this as "abandoning his responsibilities" in the struggle against the British.[156] Further disasters followed for the PRB: at the

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155. Borneo Bulletin, 30 November 1957.
156. Borneo Bulletin, 22 February 1958 and 15 March 1958.

end of April seven party officials were charged with failure to furnish particulars of party accounts.[157] In early May Sheikh Azahari resigned as leader of the PRB "in order to safeguard the good name of the party" and because he considered himself unsuitable to act as President".[158] This was Sheikh Azahari's second resignation within five months; on the previous occasion he had cited health reasons.

At the end of the month the party held its annual congress. Sheikh Azahari - apparently back at his post - was severely criticized over party funds, especially the mission to the United Kingdom. The Brunei Government denied entry to Inche Boestaman, leader of the Malayan Partai Rakyat. In June 1958 the administration prevented the PRB from explaining to Government officials in ulu Belait the aims and aspirations of the party.[159] To complete the catalogue of setbacks, Inche Salleh, Vice-President of the PRB, was sentenced to four months' imprisonment (commuted to two) for perjury. He resigned his post in October 1958.[160]

There had been little progress on the new constitution during 1958 because attention was focused on the proposal for a federation of British Borneo, until its final rejection by Brunei in December of that year. In the previous month Sir AF Abell attended a meeting of the State Council at which it was decided that the proposed constitutional changes would have to be referred to the Colonial Office. At the end of December the Sultan announced his objective to make the public service an entirely

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157. Borneo Bulletin, 26 April 1958.
158. Borneo Bulletin, 10 May 1958.
159. Borneo Bulletin, 21 June 1958.
160. Borneo Bulletin, 12 July, 13 September and 4 October 1958.

Brunei one. On 15 March 1959 he arrived in Singapore on his way to London for the constitutional conference. He told the Straits Times that only a few matters remained to be discussed. He was seeking "the powers now vested in the British Government for the administration of my country".[161] The purpose of the proposed constitution was to train his people to play a greater role in administration with a view to internal self-government later. In the Sultan's estimation the time was not yet ripe for merdeka.[162] The conference at the Colonial Office lasted from 24 March until 6 April 1959. There were twenty-one topics to be considered, such as details of the machinery for the establishment of the three new councils. Mr Lennox-Boyd (1904-83), the Secretary of State, insisted that the United Kingdom retain control of foreign policy and internal security. In the modern world it was "impossible to separate danger from without and danger from within".[163] The Straits Times commented that there was "very little danger of Brunei advancing too quickly (towards democracy)".[164] The policy of HM Government was to promote in all colonial territories the greatest practical measure of self-government within the Commonwealth. Mr Boyd took a firm stand on defence questions "in view of Brunei's inability to ensure adequate safeguards for its population and for the security of the Seria oil-fields in the event of external aggression or internal disturbances".[165]

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161. Straits Times, 16 March 1959.
162. Ibid.
163. Straits Times, 25 March 1959.
164. Straits Times, 8 April 1959.
165. Borneo Bulletin, 28 March 1959.

This grave British responsibility would have to be acknowledged. Brunei agreed that general protection must continue. Mr Boyd attached crucial importance for the well-being of the State to the staffing of the various Government departments.

Trends in the period April to September 1959 were the continuing closer association with Malaya, which was part of the Sultan's design to claim Brunei as a Muslim Malay State. Hence it would not be proper for the Government to continue its support of Christian schools. Similar examples were the partial ban on alcohol; the axing of BBC news from Radio Brunei; and a new national flag and anthem. Three hundred Malayans were in Government service and a further hundred were employed by the BSPC. A coincidental feature of 1958-9 was trade depression and unemployment.[166]

9. The End of the Residency (29 September 1959)

On 29 September 1959 Brunei's first written constitution, which adhered closely to the blueprint published in July 1957 (see above, pp 507-8) was promulgated and the country's new flag hoisted. A new treaty, replacing that of 1905-6, was concluded between Brunei and the United Kingdom. At the same time the 'Brunei and Sarawak Separation Agreement' and the 'Overseas Officers Agreement' were signed.

Following the fresh UK-Brunei Treaty of 1959, London continued to be responsible for Brunei's defence and external affairs. Provision

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166. Annual imports into Brunei fell from $107m in 1957 to only $63m in 1959, having reached a peak of $123m in 1953. Exports in 1959 were valued at $310m, of which oil comprised $293m. See, also, pp 549-50 (below).

was made for the appointment of a British High Commissioner, a member of the diplomatic (rather than colonial) service, who would live in Brunei and be available to advise the Sultan, if required, on all matters other than those affecting the Muhammadan religion and Malay custom. The administrative link with Sarawak was severed and Brunei secured "complete internal self-government".[167]

The post of British Resident was abolished and there was instead a Mentri Besar (Chief Minister) appointed by the Sultan, to whom he would be responsible for the exercise of executive authority in the State. The duty of the Mentri Besar was to concern himself only with broad policies, leaving the execution and details of administration generally to his lieutenant, the State Secretary. It was ordained that both these officers must be Malays and Shafeite Muslims. British officials were to remain in charge of the Police, the Special Branch, the Public Works Department and the Department of Education.[168] The "Chief Justice" was also a citizen of the United Kingdom.

The written constitution provided for the replacement of the somewhat discredited State Council by three new institutions: a Privy Council,[169] an Executive Council and a Legislative Council.[170]

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167. CO 824/5 Brunei Annual Report 1959, p 1.
168. The Times, 29 September 1959 and Borneo Bulletin, 26 September 1959.
169. Membership of the Privy Council comprised, apart from the Sultan, six ex-officio members, the High Commissioner, and "such other members as His Highness might appoint". Its function was to advise the Sultan in cases of (a) his prerogative of mercy; (b) constitutional amendments; and (c) appointments to Malay customary ranks, honours, titles and dignities.
170. There were also to be a Public Service Committee and a Succession and Regency Council.

The Executive Council was the most important of the new institutions because most matters of policy, including the estimates (within limits), were referred to it. It could be summoned only by the monarch, it met in private, and considered only matters tabled by the Sultan and Mentri Besar. Presided over by the Sultan, membership comprised the High Commissioner, seven ex-officio members and seven unofficial members (nominated by His Highness). The sovereign was required to consult this council, but was entitled to disregard its advice provided he recorded his reasons in writing.

Sixteen of the thirty-three seats in the legislature - the remainder were nominees of the Sultan - were to be held by directly-elected representatives of the people. Sir Omar Ali pledged to introduce elections to this forum within two years, a promise on which he reneged. (When the ballot was eventually held, in August 1962, the PRB swept up 90% of the poll and all the seats).

In short, the 1959 constitution represented a very cautious advance which transferred overwhelming power into the hands of the monarchy. But the sixteen elective seats on the Legislative Council also gave the people a voice in the running of their country. It was hoped, by the British at least, that the people would receive a training in the procedures of a parliamentary democracy. Mr Boyd declared from afar that HM Government "will always stand ready to help in any way they can to promote the development of Brunei and the welfare of its people".[171] Sir Omar Ali noted that the new order, a tangible proof of

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171. Borneo Bulletin, 3 October 1959.

HM Government's commitment to fostering constitutional development, brought to an end "an era of direct rule by the British Government over the State of Brunei". But there was "no change of heart on the part of my people towards the United Kingdom". The "happy and cordial" relationship would continue and be strengthened. British officers would continue to uphold the tradition of undivided loyalty and true service to the Government of Brunei. The success of the constitution, he added, would depend "on the loyalty of the people (to it), a healthy political thinking, to unstinted service of the State, and to a spirit of goodwill, compromise and co-operation".[172]

The PRB, by contrast, argued that control of their country remained in British hands. The party had not been consulted during the drafting of the new arrangements; and no provision had been made for a general election because "Britain and a few important personages were determined to keep power in their own hands". The PRB remained determined "to press for recognition of the desire for independence". The provision for elections within two years was "insincere and not binding"; the PRB would not be "fobbed off" with such "gifts of candy". The constitution was anti-democratic and designed to safeguard the United Kingdom's economic advantages gained from Brunei. It was inspired by "a desire to perpetuate colonial policy" and should be altered, instead, into "an instrument more in keeping with present international trends and regard for human rights".[173]

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172. Ibid.
173. Borneo Bulletin, 12 December 1959.

10. Summary and Conclusion

In 1946 the goal of HM Government had been to guide Brunei towards independence (preferably in association with its neighbours in British Borneo or as part of a wider British dominion in South-East Asia), as a free democratic country in which all people, irrespective of race or religion, enjoyed equal rights. The people of Brunei, as expressed through the Partai Rakyat Brunei from 1956, favoured complete and early independence and an end to all forms of colonialism. The party also demanded the return to Brunei of North Borneo and Sarawak and the establishment of the Unitary State of Kalimantan Utara; but perhaps the implications of this had not been fully appreciated because in any such new political unit "Malays would have been a minority and Brunei Malays an oppressed minority".[174] The Sultan, for his part, preferred to keep a tight rein on the direction of affairs and to resist British pressure for a constitution on "democratic and acceptable" lines. Despite the fact that only 60% of the Brunei population professed Muhammadanism in 1960, and yet fewer were Malays, he claimed Brunei as a Muslim Malay State,[175] deprecated any closer link with Sarawak, and elected to strengthen bonds with his fellow Sultans and co-religionists in Malaya. If His Highness sought a free hand internally, British protection continued to be necessary to ward off external threats and domestic "subversion". Dr M Leifer comments:

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174. Mr R Nicholl, letter to the author, 31 December 1984.
175. See Mr A Burgess's "embarrassingly accurate" novel about (and banned in) Brunei, Devil of a State (London 1961), p 76.

"My feeling is that independence was not sought because of an underlying sense of vulnerability and that the paternal relationship with Britain was perfectly satisfactory to Sir Omar". 176

Lord Perth, Minister of State at the Colonial Office 1957-62, recalls:

"We (HM Government) kept responsibility for Defence and Foreign Policy as the Sultan so wished and it equally suited us at the time". 177

The PRB, supported by Malays and Kedayans throughout the State,[178] who saw that Brunei had become an extremely wealthy country but felt that they were not receiving their proper share, demanded early independence. State Councillors, in the PRB's opinion, were rich, privileged and out of touch with the people. Even the Sultan, once praised as a popular, temperate and wise monarch devoted to duty, began to appropriate an expanding civil list, to build himself bigger and better palaces in Brunei or overseas, and to spend more of his time outside his own country. (Compared with present-day Brunei, however, there was virtually no royal corruption in the 1950s). Given the PRB's membership of 16,000 by 1957 (26,000 by 1962), the Borneo Bulletin suggested that State Councillors, "mostly old princes of the land", might remember that they were living in a "democratic age" and that sovereignty "lies

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176. Letter to the author, 20 August 1982.
177. Seventeenth Earl of Perth, letter to the author, 31 January 1985.
178. The PRB fully captured the allegiance of the bumipatras, except in ulu Belait. "I don't think it was possible for Government to have handled the PRB much differently from (the way) they did", one correspondent comments. "A stronger approach, to make the party toe the line, is what would have been preferable, but unfortunately the party had been allowed to take root too strongly and a tough line later would have brought forth charges of colonial oppression. It was a pity that a responsible political party did not develop, as in Malaya, when all might have gone well. As it was, the best that could be done was to allow the PRB enough rope to hang itself, which it did in the rebellion of 1962".

with the people".[179] They should acquaint themselves with the people's problems and aspirations. Although Sheikh Azahari had "strong claims to be the real representative of the people of Brunei rather than the Sultan",[180] he was not granted a seat on the State Council until 1962.

Sultan Omar Ali was more cautious than either the British or the PRB. He emphasized that, as Muslims, Bruneis were "slaves of God" and must put their religion above all else. (The 40% of the population who were not Muhammadans did not count, apparently). Education needed to be extended before Brunei was ready for independence. An evolution towards merdeka was the most sensible option.

The British Government adopted a central position. They agreed with the PRB that democracy was desirable, but felt that the party was too impatient for the achievement of its ends. Whereas Sultan Omar Ali, on the other hand, was wise to seek to proceed stage by stage, he appears never to have had any real intention to foster democratic reforms, and HM Government continually urged him to make greater concessions.[181] As proved by the events of December 1962, however, Whitehall's commitment to democracy in Brunei drew the line at the attempted forcible overthrow of the monarch.

Brunei clearly was not ready for full independence in 1959.

In the words of a correspondent of The Times, the country was too diverse

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179. Borneo Bulletin, 20 April 1957.
180. The Times, 10 December 1962, p 10.
181. A former Head of the SE Asia Department at the Colonial Office, Sir John Johnston GCMG KCVO, assures the present writer that "certainly there was a genuine concern in the CO to promote democratic development in Brunei" (letter to the author, 5 February 1985, paragraph 2).

racially, exposed geographically, defenceless militarily and inexperienced politically.[182] Without a single university graduate in 1959, Brunei lacked the trained personnel essential for a diplomatic service, home civil service, army, police, judiciary, hospitals, schools and so on. "It will be many years before he (the Sultan) can find sufficient Brunei staff", one expatriate commented in 1958, "and in the meantime he would be better served by officers on a permanent footing".[183] Mr Gilbert declared in 1957 that, as yet, self-government was "unthinkable":

"It can only be brought about by proceeding step by step, which means that it cannot be accomplished for some years to come. If we try to go too fast and miss one or two steps, this will be felt badly later, as each step is a training step". 184

The Borneo Bulletin suggested that nationalist leaders lacked sufficient political maturity to be entrusted with government.[185] The Times agreed that the PRB seemed to be "trying to leap too many fences at a single bound".[186]

In retrospect, the 1959 constitution was a complete victory for Sultan Omar Ali, although the issue was not so clear-cut at the time. Apart from obtaining autocratic powers within Brunei itself, he achieved two further objectives in the various agreements signed on 29 September 1959. First, his own succession to the throne was regularized; and, secondly, the detested link with Sarawak was cut.

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182. The Times, 2 July 1957. The correspondent was actually referring to British Borneo as a whole.
183. Quoted by courtesy of an expatriate Sarawak Government officer who sometimes visited Brunei.
184. Borneo Bulletin, 11 May 1957.
185. Borneo Bulletin, 23 March 1957 (Editorial).
186. The Times, 14 September 1957.

To take the first point, the regularization of his succession, it was established in the constitution that only lawfully-begotten male patrilineal descendants of Sultan Hashim may succeed, thereby effectively depriving Princess Ehsan of any claim to the throne. Concerning the second point, the abrogation of the link with Sarawak, the Governor of that colony ceased to be High Commissioner for Brunei, and Sarawak officers as such were no longer seconded to serve in Brunei. One expatriate commented as follows:

"Brunei strongly dislikes the Sarawak connection. Although so many Sarawak officers have served the Brunei Government, the only Sarawak people invited to attend the mosque celebrations (1958) were the Governor and two Malays. Any officer seconded from Sarawak is suspect. On the other hand, any Malay from Malaya is welcomed. They would like to sever the Sarawak connection and associate themselves more closely with the Federation.

The one thing certain is that the Sultan wishes to have as little association with Sarawak as possible. He regards Sarawak and North Borneo as territories taken from his predecessors and rightly belonging to Brunei; but Allah in his wisdom and compassion saw to it that the oil was found in the tiny bit of his territories that remain to Brunei. He must use this wealth and the power it gives to the glory of Islam and the strengthening of Brunei and the Brunei Malays". 187

The PRB, for its part, failed to achieve the Unitary State of Kalimantan Utara, but the 1959 constitution at least gave it an opportunity to contest for 16 of the 33 seats on the Legislative Council, and, if Sheikh Azahari had not resigned his seat so precipitously, the party would have actually had a majority thereon after the August 1962 ballot. If the powers of the Legislative Council were severely circumscribed, moreover, a skilful opposition might have used this platform to

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187. Quoted by courtesy of an expatriate Sarawak Government officer who sometimes visited Brunei.

exert considerable moral pressure upon the Sultan to make further concessions to the public. The propensity of His Highness to pose as a constitutional monarch and his professed willingness to make changes as demanded by the times would have rendered it increasingly difficult for him to retain autocratic powers. In this context the rebellion of December 1962 was highly unintelligent because the Sultan, forced to choose between his own overthrow or a royal absolutism, naturally chose the latter.

What, finally, may be said for the British Government? The centralized powers of the Resident were transferred overwhelmingly to the Sultan rather than to the people of Brunei. The provision of elective seats in the legislature might be characterized as an initial training in parliamentary democracy. Citizenship rights had not been obtained for the Brunei Chinese. The Federation of British Borneo, or Brunei's inclusion within the proposed wider British dominion in South-East Asia (Malaysia) failed to materialize. In short, British policy since 1944 had ended in almost total failure. Governmental inefficiency following the importation of officers from Malaya to replace their British counterparts was a contributory factor to the 1962 revolt,[188] which would have cost Sir Omar Ali his throne but for speedy and decisive British intervention. For the third time in fifteen years, His Highness was overwhelmingly indebted to HM Government for his position.

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188. Borneo Bulletin, 5 January 1963. ("The wrong men were in many jobs. The right men were ignored. There was a mad rush to get rid of British expatriates. There was - after 1959 - a running down of what was once a fairly efficient service").

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. Introdnotion

The arrangements made in the UK-Brunei Treaty of 1959 persisted until the end of 1983, when HM Government surrendered responsibility for Brunei's defence and foreign affairs. The Sultanate then became fully independent as a member of the Commonwealth and ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations, viz., Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand). I do not propose to cover the post-1959 period here.[1] Instead, I shall review the Residential Era itself: how was Brunei different in 1959 from what it had been in 1906?

On the eve of the Residential Era Brunei had been approaching extinction: all but a small remnant of its former territory had been lost; the country was bankrupt; disaffection was general in the outdistricts; population was declining; and the powerful Rajah of Sarawak was poised to deliver the final blow. In 1959, by contrast, Brunei had an annual revenue of $130 million and reserves to the extent of $600 million. The institution of social measures in the previous few years ensured that

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1. Cf. inter alia Sir T Dalyell, "Propping up the Sultan" in Venture, Vol 23 No 7 (July-August 1971), pp 8-9. M Leifer, "Decolonization and International Status: The Experience of Brunei" in International Affairs (April 1978), pp 240-58. Finally, articles in the annual publication Southeast Asian Affairs (Heinemann Asia, for Institute of Southeast Asian Affairs, Singapore) especially 1976, 1978, 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1984.

people increasingly received good education and medical care and might anticipate a non-contributory pension when they retired. A road linked one end of the State with the other, reducing to minutes a journey which in 1906 required days of trekking. A $9 million national mosque adorned the capital where, in 1906, there had been only a wooden structure. Even during the last years of the Residential Era Brunei was an island of political peace and calm in the context of South-East Asia as a whole. In late 1958 the Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman (b 1903), suggested that Brunei was the 'Shangri-la of the East':

"You have no trouble here. You have no enemy working from within or without and, above all, you have no communist subversive elements trying to wreck a democratically-governed country". 2

Brunei remained a country of "order and peace" where the people did not have "much of a burden to bear".[3]

2. 'Dying Kingdom' to 'Shangri-la'

First and foremost the installation in 1906 of a British Resident in Brunei was solely responsible for the preservation of the moribund Sultanate. A period of consolidation ensued during the first quarter century of the Residential Era. Further territorial losses (apart from one unfavourable border adjustment) were averted. Brooke influence within Brunei was neutralized. At length the Brunei Government asserted full sovereignty within its own house. The principal failure in this respect concerned Limbang district, Brunei's erstwhile "rice

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2. Borneo Bulletin, 4 October 1958.
3. Ibid.

store and richest asset" which remains in Sarawak's possession to this day; but the loss of this 'river' declined in comparative significance as the years passed, particularly after the discovery of petroleum.

Another feature of Brunei's decline before 1906 had been a fall in population. The poor, shabby and unhealthy capital lost more than half its inhabitants in the second half of the nineteenth century, and particularly after the annexation of Limbang. During the Residential Era this trend was reversed, although the estimated mid-nineteenth century level had still not been regained by 1960. Men who had ventured abroad in search of a livelihood returned to Brunei Town so that the structure of the Malay population there again became more balanced between the sexes.[4]

Before 1906 disaffection had been general in the outdistricts. Approximately half the population of Belait and Tutong was said to have emigrated in the decade before 1904 because of dissatisfaction with traditional Brunei rule. Although these districts accounted for a comparatively small proportion of the total population at that time, Belait was the largest single 'river' in extent; and, of course, it was here than the oilfield was found later. By contrast, throughout the Residential Era, administration by unarmed British officials proceeded

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4. On 30 April 1900 Consul AL Keyser reported: "Of the families who do remain (in Brunei Town), the majority of males are absent for long periods in search of work and food, and to a visitor the town seems mainly populated by women and children" (CO 144/74: item 17694). See also The Times, 23 December 1905: letter to the editor from (? the Rajah of) "Sarawak".

The population theme is covered on pp 5-7, 251-3 and 307-9 (above) and 532-7 (below). See, also, Appendix 6.

smoothly without recourse at any time to significant military force.[5] The low number of prisoners, the virtual absence of strikes, riots and disturbances, and the delayed appearance of a popular political party do not suggest gross oppression by the colonial power.

Once the introduction of a Resident guaranteed the survival of Brunei, the British set about reforming the country.[6] The traditional system of administration, taxation and land tenure, based on kerajaan, kuripan and tulin rights was swept aside. A natural concomitant was the abolition of serfdom and the possibility, for the first time, of land ownership by ordinary people. The British established a new system of impersonal bureaucratic central government and district administration controlled by the Resident, whose writ, unlike that of pre-1906 Sultans, was effective throughout the country. Innovations included a public treasury, a public works department, a police force, a hierarchy of courts, a single legal tender and Brunei's first internationally-recognized postal service. The Residents, as part of a wider Colonial Service, also set an example of incorrupt administration which their local successors after 1959 have found difficult to emulate.[7] Finally, the British Residents, by destroying the territorial power of the pengirans and fostering the prestige of the Sultan, bolstered the monarchy (which had

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5. In May to December 1941, it is true, a battalion of the 2/15th Punjab Regiment was stationed in Belait to supervise the oilfield destruction scheme; and in 1954-61 a "Field Force" of Iban policemen was stationed in Brunei.
6. Theme discussed on pp 21-45, 105-56, 298-307, 346-50 and 452-521 (above).
7. Allegations of corruption, virtually unknown during the Residential Era, have since become common.

been virtually powerless in 1904) and unwittingly paved the way for the royal absolutism of post-independence Brunei.

Another important aspect of the Residents' work was the rescue of Brunei's finances.[8] The pengirans having been relieved of their powers of taxation, the British introduced the principle that State revenue should be used for the public benefit. Accounts were published in the Brunei Annual Reports for all to see how Government money was expended. Throughout the pre-oil era, however, Brunei remained heavily indebted and rigorous economy was essential. Although cession monies, monopolies and tulin revenues, which had been recklessly mortgaged by the pre-Residential administration, were redeemed by means of loans from the FMS, replacement income was never sufficient to enable Brunei to do much more than break even. State revenue - in 1906 a mere $28,173,[9] of which almost half was spent on the allowances to the Sultan and wazirs - reached $165,082 in 1913, then fell back during the Great War, but climbed again to a pre-oil peak of $440,870 in 1927 when the rubber boom was at its height and exploration for oil was gathering pace in Belait. A small surplus was achieved for the first time in 1910 and thereafter, apart from one or two exceptions, revenue always exceeded expenditure. The chief sources of income then were customs duties (which had replaced 'monopolies'), followed by the Government chandu monopoly, licence fees,

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8. Theme covered on pp 18-19, 22-3, 55-6, 157-83, 271-2, 279-81, 311-3, 376 and 378-81 (above). See, also, Appendix 6 (below).
9. This figure does not include "personal account" of $43,941.80, which would bring total receipts up to $72,115.58. Government revenue in the following year (1907) amounted to $51,777.

land rents and survey charges, interest and postal revenue (particularly from the rare issues of new stamps). At the end of 1928 the National Debt stood at $413,000 and was being repaid at the rate of only $6,000 a year; the servicing of the debt, too, proved a major burden. Most of the economic hopes of 1906 had failed to come to fruition and even rubber failed to generate a really substantial revenue for the country before 1932, certainly in comparison with later proceeds from oil.

Alongside the new bureaucracy, much of the traditional order persisted so that Brunei came to have both a 'modern' and a 'traditional' Government. Reference has been made already to the strengthening of the Brunei monarchy. Professor DE Brown adds an interesting insight:

"I have often imagined Brunei society and polity as a complex balloon-like structure, which collapsed in the period Mr McArthur describes (1904), but which only needed to be blown up again to resume its old shape". 10

The survival of the traditional order was assisted by British policy, which aimed to interfere as little as possible with Brunei's social organization beyond reforming the perceived pre-1906 abuses. There was, therefore, "a tenacious persistence of rank" in the Sultanate and many traditional offices were revived, particularly after 1959:

"Throughout the (nineteenth) century there most certainly were tendencies to the dissolution of that system. But, after the turn of the century - even after the British overlords envisaged eliminating important traditional offices, and when in fact traditional offices were to be deprived of almost all content - appointments to traditional offices began to increase again. At present (1970) there are more persons holding traditional office than there were probably at any time in the

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10. Professor DE Brown, letter to the author, 15 September 1983, paragraph 10.

last century".[11]

Some traditional offices were held by individuals who had already achieved distinction in the modern bureaucracy. One example is Pehin Dato Ibrahim bin Muhammad Jahfar, Sultan Omar Ali's secretary, who held no Government office in the 1950s, but the traditional one, from 11 May 1951,[12] of Pehin Dato Perdana Mentri.[13] In other words this revival of traditional honours buttressed the monarchy:

"Although the traditional offices are now (1983) maintained for allegedly ceremonial reasons", Professor Brown explains, "at least three of their features are important in a more-than-ceremonial way: 1) Holders of higher offices are quite powerful and/or close to the Sultan, and have a good likelihood of holding high modern-government office. 2) Receipt of traditional office creates a personal bond of loyalty to the Sultan and makes disloyalty particularly heinous. 3) A stipend goes with the office". 14

Bestowal of traditional titles has been used as a means to secure the allegiance of former PRB activists, such as Pehin Salleh (the party's former Vice-President).

Overall, during the years 1906-32 the demoralization caused by the previous prolonged period of decline - territorial, political, economic and demographic - had been halted and the country had been consolidated and foundations laid upon which subsequent development could be based. The achievements of the pre-oil era may appear to be unspectacular; but they were nonetheless essential for all that. Apart

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11. DE Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate (Brunei 1970), pp 168-9.
12. CO 985/1 Brunei Government Gazette, 15 June 1951.
13. Cf. DE Brown, op.cit., p 114.
14. DE Brown, "Brunei on the Eve of Independence" (typescript, 1983: copy courtesy of Professor Brown), pp 5-6.

from the administrative and financial reforms just mentioned, smallpox and cholera had been effectively eliminated, yaws contained, Government revenue and trade expanded sixfold, and, even in the depression year of 1931 exports were 166% of their 1904 level.

The wealth derived from oil beginning in 1932, has transformed the Brunei Sultanate and it is difficult to exaggerate the contrast between the modern incarnation of the country and its former self in the days before oil. From being a debt-ridden and isolated backwater, the country today boasts a gross national product far higher than Japan's and twice that of the United Kingdom.[15] Quite simply, Brunei is now one of the richest and most rapidly developing countries in the world.

If the export of the first barrel of oil in 1932 marked a watershed in the modern history of Brunei, exceeded in importance only by the country's salvation in 1906 by virtue of the appointment of a Resident, the first decade of the oil era (1932-41) fits awkwardly in the overall scheme of things. In some respects it clearly marked a departure from what had gone before. During those ten years annual Government revenue increased fourfold and, instead of being heavily indebted, substantial credit balances were amassed in preparation for the day when oil ran out. Brunei "acquired a rapid importance and wealth from the discovery of its oil resources" and "the prospect of a new standard of administration and development" improved markedly.

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15. Comparative GNP *per capita* in 1978: Brunei US$10,640, Japan US$7,330, United States US$9,700 and United Kingdom US$5,030. In 1981 Brunei's estimated GDP *per capita* was US$22,000.

Greater attention was turned to infrastructure and social services. Yet this new impetus initially led nowhere because, on 16 December 1941, Brunei was invaded by Japanese forces and during the forty-three months of occupation even the limited gains of the 1930s went to waste. In the light of the rapid advances of the post-war era, moreover, the 1930s seem to belong more to the pre-oil past than to the burgeoning development after 1945.

During the latter half of the 1940s the restored Residential System had to clear up the chaos inherited from the Japanese: to restore decent administration and confidence, to rehabilitate the economy, to rebuild the towns, restore and expand educational and medical facilities and to extend public utilities and roads. By 1953 this phase of reconstruction was declared to be complete and the country was ready to embark on its first five year plan "for the development of the State and for the improvement of its public services". This plan involved the provision of funds totalling $100 million, of which 76.4% had been spent by the end of 1958. In essence the programme aimed to guard against the day when oil revenues ceased, by establishing the infrastructure necessary for commercial enterprises and training the people to run their own affairs. The Partai Rakyat Brunei (PRB), founded in 1956 and guided by the inspiring leadership of Sheikh Ahmad M Azahari (b 1928), immediately won overwhelming popular support. The party sought independence, greater democracy, and a union of 'Kalimantan Utara'. HM Government agreed that these were not unworthy goals, but argued that the PRB was rather impatient and that more time was required to ensure a

smooth transition to merdeka. The Sultan preferred to retain autocratic powers in his own hands and to limit democratic concessions internally, whilst sheltering internationally under the British umbrella.

The policy of the Colonial Office - as formulated in 1944-5, re-stated by Sir A Abell in 1953, and apparently still operative in 1956-7 - ended in failure. HM Government failed to prevent Brunei becoming an autocracy. It failed to secure equal rights for the Chinese. It failed to coax Brunei into an association either with its neighbours in NW Borneo or as part of a wider federation of Malaysia. Instead, the powers of central authority concentrated in the hands of the Resident were inherited by the monarch. The 1959 constitution was Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin's declaration of internal independence from the British. In effect power had been transferred overwhelmingly to the monarch rather than to the people of Brunei.

3 . The People of Brunei in 1959

In 1959 the inhabitants of Brunei,[16] whose numbers had nearly quadrupled since 1911, showed marked diversity in distribution, ethnic grouping, religion and occupation. The people were better educated, more healthy and less poor than their ancestors had been in 1906.

During the Residential Era the population of Brunei quadrupled despite the fact that before 1906 (and perhaps for some time thereafter) it had actually been declining. During the pre-oil era the population remained concentrated in Brunei-Muara district. Brunei Town, with

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16. Theme pursued from p 525 (above).

10,453 inhabitants, remained the only significant settlement in the country in 1931, when more than one in every three people in Brunei still lived in the capital.

In the first decade of the oil era, 1932-41, growth quickened. From 1911 to 1931 total population had increased from 21,718 only to 30,135; but by 1938 the total had advanced to an estimated 37,878 and had reached perhaps 40,000 by the end of 1940.[17] Immediately before the Japanese occupation the population, if anything, had begun slightly to decline because of the contraction of the BMPC's activities and the oil denial scheme. In 1946, when the Residential System was restored, the inhabitants were estimated to number 48,000; but only 40,657 (or 40,670) were enumerated in the census taken in the following year. These figures appear to suggest that little or no population growth took place during the years 1940 to 1947 and that in the interval a notional seven thousand people were either (a) killed ; or (b) had emigrated from Brunei; or (c) had not migrated to Brunei as they might have done had the population trends of the 1930s been maintained from 1940 to 1947. The lack of population growth was most probably due to factor (c) just mentioned: i.e. immigration had been much reduced because of the war.

By 1960 the population had more than doubled (to 83,877) since 1947. In other words, whereas 36 years (1911-47) had seen an increase of 87%, only thirteen years more (1947-60) were required for a further increase of 106%. Or, whereas the average annual rate of increase was

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17. CO 537/1628 Dr AGH Smart (1882-1964), "Report on Medical Activities and Problems in British Borneo", 15 January 1946, p 6.

Table 24. Brunei: Distribution of Population by District 1911-60

District	1911		1931		1960	
	Number	%age	Number	%age	Number	%age
Brunei-Muara	15,910	73.2	18,281	60.7	37,511	44.7
Tutong	3,423	15.8	5,651	18.75	10,710	12.8
Belait	1,126	5.2	3,897	12.9	31,708	37.8
Temburong	1,259	5.8	2,306	7.65	3,948	4.7
TOTAL	21,718	100.0	30,135	100.0	83,877	100.0

Sources: (a) CO 531/3 (34002) Sir A Young to CO, No 10, 28 September 1911, enclosing WH Lee-Warner to Young, 17 May 1911 (Brunei Census Report 1911). The figure for Belait may be a slight underestimate.

(b) JL Noakes MBE, Sarawak and Brunei: A Report on the 1947 Census (Kuching 1950).

(c) LW Jones, Report on the Census of Population Taken on 10 August 1960 (Kuching 1960), p 23.

only 1.75% in 1911-47, it was 5.7% in the years 1947-60.[18]

In terms of distribution, the balance of population had swung to Belait district and away from the capital and its environs (see Table 24, above). Whereas Brunei-Muara district had accounted for almost three quarters of the total population in 1911 this had been reduced to only 45% by 1960. By contrast, Belait, the district with the fewest inhabitants in 1911, accounted for almost two-fifths of the population by 1960, a proportion exceeded only by Brunei-Muara. A majority of immigrants into Belait came originally from outside the Sultanate, but there was also a substantial measure of internal migration: subsistence farmers

18. Today, 1985, Brunei's population is in excess of 200,000.

tended to take up temporary work in the oilfield to earn sufficient money for a particular purchase and then returned to their homes. It will be noticed that throughout the Residential Era the proportion of total population in Tutong and Temburong remained comparatively stable, although the numbers living there more than trebled.

Factors, apart from immigration, which contributed to overall population growth, included a higher rate of natural increase (particularly among immigrant Chinese), itself assisted by the elimination of killer epidemics, such as cholera and smallpox, the improvement of living conditions brought about by better housing and sanitation, and the vast improvement and extension of medical facilities. The advance of midwifery and infant welfare is reflected in the fact that, whereas almost one in every two infants perished in 1927, by 1959 the ratio, though still unacceptably high, had fallen to less than one in ten. Brunei had an extremely youthful population after the Second World War: in 1960 children aged less than fifteen years accounted for 46% of the whole. This demographic fact is of importance in connection with the rise of the Partai Rakyat Brunei, because it means that about half, probably more, of the population had no personal recollection of the Japanese occupation and still more had no direct knowledge of a Brunei without oil wealth. Few people were alive to remember pre-Residential Brunei. During the 1950s, therefore, Residents faced the difficulty of satisfying rapidly rising popular expectations.

Although the population had nearly quadrupled during the Residential Era, a large proportion of people continued to live in

urban areas. Mr McArthur's scheme for the creation of a land capital[19] to replace Kampong Ayer had only been half-fulfilled: building had indeed taken place on terra firma but the decline in the population of the River Village, though continuing throughout the pre-oil era, was eventually reversed after 1931. Far from disappearing, Kampong Ayer began to expand, so that by 1960 13,237 lived over the water compared with only 9,702 in the land capital. Concomitantly, the new wealth generated by oil had permitted the embellishment of the State capital, typefied by the national mosque, opened on 26 September 1958. In short, the regeneration of the capital mirrored the regeneration of the country as a whole.

From the 1920s Brunei Town, hitherto the only appreciable settlement, found itself rivalled increasingly by the new oilfield townships of Seria and Kuala Belait. After the discovery of oil the population of Kuala Belait increased from 1,193 in 1931 to an estimated 5,000 in 1938. After falling to 3,981 in 1947 it rose again to 8,936 by 1960.[20] Seria grew more rapidly: too insignificant to be recorded in the 1931 census, it contained 5,525 inhabitants in 1947 and 18,100 by 1960.[21]

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19. Theme discussed on pp 187-90, 194-6, 210-11, 226-7, 232-3 and 401-2 (above).

20. CA Vlieland, A Report on the 1931 Census and on Certain Problems of Vital Statistics (?London 1932), Table 16. CO 824/2 Brunei Annual Report 1938, p 5. JL Noakes MBE, Sarawak and Brunei: A Report on the 1947 Population Census (Kuching 1950), p 249. LW Jones, Brunei: Report on the Housing Census Held in Four Towns, May-August 1960 (Kuching, 1961), p 2.

21. Noakes, loc.cit.; and Jones, loc.cit.

The head offices of the BMPC, formerly in Labi, were established in Kuala Belait in 1929. In the same year local government headquarters had also been transferred to Kuala Belait (from Kuala Balai). During the 1950s, Kuala Belait-Panaga-Seria, orderly and pleasant-looking, seemed a very model of modern town-planning; but there were uglier aspects, such as over-crowding in houses and a notorious slum in Seria at Well 22.[22]

The means of travel affected settlement patterns and national unity. Originally, choice of dwelling place was determined by the use of rivers as communications (and also as the "water supply, bath and drain"), hamlets and padi farms being established at intervals along the banks. Political oppression had modified this pattern somewhat before 1906 when some people retreated into the jungle in order to escape the attentions of their rapacious Brunei overlords.[23] (This trend was repeated during the Japanese occupation).[24] From the mid-1920s roads became decisive in determining settlement in rural areas: villages away from highways tended to decline and even to disappear, whereas fresh kampongs sprang up in ribbon developments along the new routes. Road frontage enhanced the value of land and swelled the national exchequer's receipts from land rents.

Since communications remained comparatively poor in Brunei throughout the Residential Era, each district tended to develop in isolation from others. The contrast between Belait and Brunei-Muara

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22. Borneo Bulletin, 13 September 1954, 18 December 1954, 8 June 1957 and 21 June 1958.
23. FO 572/39 MSH McArthur, "Report on Brunei in 1904", paragraph 28.
24. (RHO) Mss Pac s71 (File 5) KEH Kay to CFC Macaskie, 31 December 1945 (Report on the first six months of the BMA, paragraph 3).

became particularly marked.[25] Even before the discovery of oil, the pagan, low-status padi-farmers of Belait contrasted with the Muslim, non-agriculturist Malays of the capital. To the isolation of Belait and the racial and religious distinctiveness of the inhabitants there, was added, from the 1920s, the gathering pace of oilfield development, which enhanced the contrast between the industrial lifestyle of Belait and the subsistence lifestyle of Brunei-Muara district. Although communications between the two districts improved, the latter remained distinct. To all intents and purposes Belait was a private fief of the oil company and had more in common with the oilfield extension across the border in Sarawak than with Brunei Town. The BMPC provided all the amenities which the Brunei Government originally was unable to afford; and in the 1950s its services were better in some respects that those provided by the administration. Most of the inhabitants were non-indigenous; Seria and Kuala Belait were essentially oil company towns, built, inhabited and serviced mainly by the BMPC and its staff or by enterprises dependent upon the BMPC for their existence. In the 1950s jealousy arose between the 'spendthrift' capital and the 'wealth-creating' oilfield; people in the latter complained of lack of Government funds apportioned to the district.[26] Mr Bevington, Commissioner for Development

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25. Theme pursued from pp 309-11 and 312 (above).
26. Borneo Bulletin, 7 June 1958, 21 June 1958 and 27 September 1958. The Bulletin suggested that its own proposal for the removal of a sand bar across the mouth of the River Belait was obstructed because some State Councillors did not wish to lavish funds upon Belait district. Mr ER Bevington assures the present writer, by contrast, that the scheme was dropped because it was opposed by the BSPC. The removal of the Belait bar, by permitting access to Belait of ships with a heavier draught, would have cut the cost of living in the oilfield by obviating the necessity for transshipment at Labuan. See p 447 (above).

1954-8, denies that the capital received favourable treatment.[27] Another observer comments that differences between life in the western end of the State and that at the eastern end were, and remain, considerable:

"There is a (distance) of about seventy miles between Brunei Town, the capital, and Kuala Belait, sufficient to mean that usually people don't jump into their cars too often for a spin to the other end of the State. The difference is that at Kuala Belait and Seria the great bulk of the population are employed by the oil company or are associated with the oil company in one way or another and Government interference or connection is minimal. Whereas at the other end of the State everything smacks of the Government. The contrast was much greater (in former days) when travelling between the two ends of the State was very difficult, there was no through road, and most of the travelling had to be done on the beach at low tide. Even the telephone hardly ever worked...Life is much freer and more westernized in Belait than is true in Brunei Town for these reasons..But strangely the local people are not too keen on life in the oilfield". 28

In short, the development of the oilfield did not <u>create</u> differences between Belait and Brunei; but it did greatly exacerbate them. Sultan Omar Ali met a warm welcome, nonetheless, when he became the first monarch in living memory officially to visit Belait in 1955;[29] but it was as though he were on a foreign tour.

If a geographical polarization had developed between Belait and Brunei districts,[30] there was a further polarization between the <u>bumipatras</u> (indigenes) and immigrants (see Table 25, overleaf). The

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27. Text of tape recording made for the author by courtesy of Mr ER Bevington CMG CEng, 10 August 1983, p 42. ("I think the money was very evenly and reasonably spread on the whole").
28. Letter to the author.
29. <u>Datuk</u> RN Turner, letter to the author, 16 February 1983, remembered that Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin had paid a private visit to Belait during his (<u>Datuk</u> Turner's) tenure as Assistant Resident (1940-1).
30. Tutong and Temburong remained in the shadow: Khoo Soo Hook comments that the lack of development in Temburong was due to "difficulties of terrain and accessibility". The district had no basis for development, such as oil in Belait. Khoo Soo Hook, "Agricultural Land Use" in Khoo Soo Hook <u>et al.</u>, <u>Brunei in Transition</u> (Kuala Lumpur 1976), pp 87-8.

Table 25. Brunei: Population by Ethnic Grouping 1911-60

Group	1911	1947	1960
Malays	11,554	16,748	45,135 (a)
Kedayans	4,931	6,723	
Dusuns	1,069	2,759	
Belaits	1,097	716	
Tutongs	1,667	2,431	
Ibans	-	1,332	
Muruts	563	298	
Chinese	736	8,313	21,795
Indians	44	436	
Europeans	20	394	
Others	37	520	16,947
TOTALS	21,718	40,670	83,877

Note: (a) "Malays and other indigenous"

Sources: Brunei censuses 1911, 1947 & 1960.

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proportion of indigenous people declined markedly from 96.3% of the total in 1911 to only 70.6% in 1960. Distinctions between indigenous Brunei groups gradually became less well-defined as a result of a tendency to masuk Melayu, i.e. to become Muslim and therefore to "enter the Malay race". A similar process occurred in other ways: inhabitants of ulu Belait, for example, tended to become Ibanized, especially after the Pacific War, whilst some Dusuns adopted the Chinese way of life upon intermarriage.

The largest immigrant grouping was formed by the Chinese,[31] insignificant numerically in 1906, who comprised a quarter of all inhabitants by 1960. They came "in the manner of immigrants", the men first. After a while, they began to settle and their wives came to join them.[32] Intermarriage with the non-Muslim indigenous population was not unknown; and in such circumstances the wife tended to adopt the Chinese way of life. As a result the structure of the Chinese section of the population became more balanced: in 1931 there were only three women for every ten men but by 1960 the proportion was more than eight to ten. At the latter date about half the Brunei Chinese had been born there.

In terms of numbers other immigrants (Ibans, Indians and Europeans) remained comparatively insignificant. But the oilfield, with 800 Europeans in 1953, contained "one of the largest and most compact European communities in SE Asia". Its influence was "immense".[33]

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31. Theme pursued from pp 12-13, 40-2, 52, 159-62, 251-2, 307-9, 329-30, 336, 414-16, 454, 463 and 477-80 (above).
32. LW Jones, Report on the Census of Population Taken on 10 August 1960 (Kuching 196?), p 36.
33. Brunei Annual Report 1953, p 7.

The tide of immigration modified the religious character of Brunei. The 1960 census revealed that only 60% of the population professed Muhammadanism, the official State religion. The balance consisted predominantly of Chinese Confucians, with an admixture of Christians (8%) and non-Confucian pagans.

Despite the declining proportion of Muhammadans, Islam enjoyed qualitatively a revival in Brunei during the Residential Era.[34] When the Resident was first appointed most Brunei Malays were "Muhammadans of a mild type",[35] many of whom never attended mosque even once a year.[36] In 1906, indeed, there had been only one mosque in the country, a wooden structure dating from 1902, which itself had been built with British assistance.[37] Considerable mosque building took place during the Residential Era: four were built in 1911, three in 1928-9 and, of course, the national mosque was completed in 1958. Immediately after 1906 there appears to have been only one imam, Haji Mohidin, described as "one of the hardest worked men" in Brunei, administering the civil Muhammadan law dealing with betrothals, marriages and divorces, and settling rights to property.[38] In 1913, however, the imam, whose conduct had been "far from satisfactory", was removed from office "on the petition of several

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34. Theme continued from above, pp 9-10, 11, 13-14, 106-7, 128, 132, 136, 140-1, 145-6, 251, 325, 417, 444, 474, 476, 500, 513, 514, 517 and 519.
35. P Blundell, The City of Many Waters (London 1923), p 46.
36. Ibid., p 142. The rite of circumcision was not carried out in Brunei in the "wholesale fashion" that obtained in Malaya (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1911, p 12).
37. FO 572/37 p 32; and McArthur, "Report", paragraph 55.
38. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1911, p 12. The reporter added that "a larger number than usual" went to Mecca, including the first pilgrims from Temburong. Women were more keen than men to undertake the haji.

kampongs", and was succeeded by Khatib Abdul Rajak. The latter took the title Tuan Kathi and proved "energetic and straightforward".[39] In his court, which dealt with all religious matters, he had authority to impose fines not exceeding ten dollars. By 1941 the Resident had established a Religious Affairs Department, which employed - apart from the kathi - a dato imam, tuan imam, four khatibs (preachers), five mudims (muezzins), ten imams (leaders of prayer), a process server, and a bilal (muezzin).[40]

After the Japanese occupation the Islamic revival became more pronounced, representing perhaps a search for a Bruneian identity and a re-affirmation of traditional values. In 1958 Major T Harrisson DSO commented that during the previous ten years Islam had been

"regenerated from a condition almost of apathy, into an active, potent high level part of the country's effort and conscious re-orientation, regurgitating a version of the past". 41

The then kathi, who influenced the Sultan more than anyone, [42] imposed an increasingly strict interpretation of Islamic law in the 1950s. This trend - characterized by one critic as "religious fanaticism"[43] - is indicated by the strengthening of ties with Muslim Sultanates in Malaya rather than with Brunei's predominantly non-Muhammadan Bornean neighbours; the abolition of Government subsidies to Christian mission schools; a prohibition on public consumption of alcohol; the imposition of Muslim

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39. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1913, p 8. See also, Blundell, op. cit., pp 102-3.
40. CO 717/145 (File 51535) Brunei Estimates 1941, p 32 (item 20).
41. T Harrisson, "Some Origins and Attitudes etc" in Sarawak Museum Journal (June 1958), p 315.
42. Mr JO Gilbert CMG, letter to the author, 20 February 1983, p 2. For a list of Kathis, see Appendix 4.10 (below).
43. Borneo Bulletin, 21 March 1959.

taxes, such as the zakat and fitrah; and the denial of equal status to settlers, particularly those of Chinese origin. In 1954 a State Custom, Religion and Welfare Department was established under the Pengiran Pemancha.[44] By the last decade of the Residential Era Islam had become "deeply rooted" in the majority of Malay families, all religious festivals and observances being faithfully kept.[45]

In the case of Belaits and Tutongs, Islam remained a "thin veneer" for "essential paganism" as late as 1938. Improvements in communications and the resultant breakdown of the physical isolation of Belait and Tutong produced a greater sense of belonging to a wider Muslim Malay community by the 1950s. But a reading of Pehin Ibrahim's "Brunei Adat" (first published in 1948)[46] suggest that, even in the case of Malays, belief in superstitions, charms and omen was by no means extinct. The Kedayans, too, though "devout Muslims" continue to practise ancestor worship. The performance of such rights, we are assured, is "a traditional function inherited from the ancestors, in the context, today,

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44. See pp 471 and 495-6 (above).
45. CO 824/4 HJ Padmore, Triennial Report on Education 1955-7 (August 1958), p 48. How far Islamization represented a genuine popular movement and how far it was artificially created from above for political purposes would make an interesting study in itself. The initial manifesto of the Partai Rakyat Brunei, for example, makes absolutely no mention of religion (Borneo Bulletin, 28 January 1956). Professor DE Brown warns, moreover, that the policy of Islamization may backfire on the royal family: many Brunei Muslims, he says, "believe that hereditary kingship is anti-Islamic. The rulers of Brunei (in 1983) seem to have their eyes on the Saudi Arabian model of Islam, but if there were a free expression of Muslim thought in Brunei, alternative models would find their adherents" (DE Brown, "Brunei on the Eve of Independence" - typescript 1983, pp 9-10. Copy courtesy of Professor Brown).
46. Reprinted in Brunei Museum Journal 1969, pp 5-9. See, also, Blundell, op.cit., p 46.

of being a Muslim".[47] The purpose of ancestor worship was the maintenance of social cohesion.

Other indigenous peoples - Muruts, Dusuns, Ibans, Orang Bukits - remained predominantly animists, but those converted to Islam would have ceased to call themselves by their former title. As early as 1911 a number of Muruts adopted Muhammadanism and the hope was expressed that this conversion would conduce to the physical as well as the spiritual salvation of a dying race. (The ranks of Muruts had been thinning because of their partiality to tapai. The Koran, on the other hand, discourages alcohol consumption). The number of those calling themselves Muruts declined from 563 in 1911 to 298 in 1947.

Christianity also made its presence felt, but mainly among immigrants. In the early 1930s both Anglican (SPG) and Roman Catholic (Mill Hill) missions established schools in the country, and, after the Japanese interlude, there followed a rapid expansion of Christian education. In the 1950s many Brunei Chinese embraced Christianity, but the teachings of Confucius continued to predominate. Finally, it was suggested in the 1960s that Christianity was making "more headway than Islam in modernizing the Dusuns and Ibans".[48]

Diversification of religion was accompanied by diversification of occupation.[49] The division of labour extended from Chinese traders to Kedayan farmers and Malay Government employees, fishermen and crafts-

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47. PM Shariffuddin, "Makan Tahun - The Annual Feast of the Kedayans" in Brunei Museum Journal 1970, p 61.
48. Zaharah Haji Mahmud, "Spatial Prognosis of the Rural Population", in Khoo Soo Hook et al., op.cit., p 10.
49. Theme pursed from pp 10-13, 15, 200-2 and 253 (above).

men. Those Chinese who remained in Brunei on the eve of the Residential Era were few in number, but comprised the chief traders, shopkeepers, money-lenders and revenue farmers.[50] Subsequently Chinese provided skilled artisans for the oilfield and also made up the general businessmen of the Sultanate. As Mr Jones, the 1960 censor, noted:-

"The Chinese settle in and near the towns and in the more fertile areas, disliking the remoter places, and become smallholders - growing not rice but commercial crops - market gardeners and traders. Their industry and business acumen make them of value to the country, but they do not assimilate, keeping their own customs, language and characteristics to a marked extent". 51

Obtaining Brunei citizenship was and remains virtually impossible,[52]

and the Chinese businessman largely gave up hope of acquiring it, so

long as they were allowed to pursue their business ends:

"He feels that as long as he keeps a low profile, he can lead a pleasant and profitable life and this suits him". 53

There were such good profits to be made in Brunei, in other words, that discrimination was tolerated by the Chinese. In the 1950s some Chinese "resented" the Sultan's "obvious dislike" of them, but no trouble was allowed to surface (thanks, it is said, to the influence of Mr George Newn Ah Foott, the Chinese representative on the State Council).[54]

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50. Shopkeepers tended to be Hokkiens, whilst tailors and timber workmen were Khehs.

51. LW Jones, Report on the Census of Population Taken on 10 August 1960 (Kuching n.d.), p 27.

52. Except for those who make "a show of acceptance of the Islamic faith" or give "the right presents to the right people" (C Hollingworth, "Independence: Problems of a Brave New Brunei" in Telegraph Sunday Magazine, 5 February 1984, p 21).

53. Letter to the author, 10 May 1983.

54. "He (Mr Ah Foott) was much of an elder statesman and looked very old", one contemporary recalls. "The Chinese revere age. Mr Foott was the father of the community and the Chinese put pressure on any of their number who looked like upsetting the apple-cart. They have devious ways

The Brunei Chinese congregated in limited areas. In 1960 94.6% of them lived in Brunei-Muara and Belait districts, where a public could be found to trade or buy produce. People of Chinese race comprised 44.6% of the inhabitants of Belait.

During the Residential Era the trend in employment in Brunei was towards expansion in the secondary and tertiary spheres and a diminution of the primary sector.[55] In 1921 agricultural occupations accounted for three-quarters of total employment compared with only one-third in 1960. Fishing and padi-planting declined in relative importance as sources of employment although the number of fishermen remained little changed. On the other hand the secondary sector enhanced its share of total employment, reflecting the expansion of building and construction work after 1945 and the growth and complication of administration and the provision of new services such as education and health. Commerce also attracted an increasing number of persons after 1945; personal services and entertainment declined in relative importance, though they made a considerable gain in numbers.

Slightly more than half (55.5%) of the population were "economically active" in 1960 (86% of men and 20% of women aged over 15). The working population included 472 employers, 15,236 employees, 6,308 "own account workers" and 2,814 family workers. Many wives worked part time. In farming households, the extent to which a wife worked on the

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of so doing" (Mr ER Bevington, letter to the author, 2 September 1983, paragraph 4).

55. This matter has been dealt with by Voon Phin Keong, "Employment and Labour" in Khoo Soo Hook et al., op.cit., pp 183-221.

farm depended upon the number of children in her care. In 1960 45% of the economically-active population was engaged in agriculture either full or part-time. Of the economically-active population engaged in the non-agricultural sector, 36% were directly employed in the PWD as wage earners of one category or another.

New crops such as rubber did much to modify shifting cultivation and provided cash in what otherwise would have been a subsistence household. In many agricultural families, wage-earning had tended to become the main source of income. The bulk of the farming activities then devolved upon the womenfolk. The plantation system even with regard to rubber did not make any impact in Brunei and the commodity was grown predominantly in smallholdings. There was no record of an appreciable incidence of absentee landlordism or of tenancy.

Total employment figures constituted 35% of the population in 1947 and 30% in 1960. The decrease in 1960 was possibly due to the higher proportion of children aged less than fifteen in the total population.

High wages paid by the oil company and Government discouraged incentives in developing alternative industries in the private sector which was probably not in a position, initially, to offer similar wages. Hence potentially large employers, such as timber-planting and sawmilling, and small-scale industries were largely absent.

The population was also better educated in 1959 than it had been at the beginning of the Residential Era.[56] Literacy, which was

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56. Theme pursued from pp 13, 197-8, 292-8, 325, 350-1, 357-60, 412-23 and 484-5 (above).

virtually non-existent in Brunei in 1906, had reached about 8-9% in 1931, 26% in 1947 and 48% in 1960. There were differences, however, between the literary rates of men and women, young and old, bumipatras and non-indigenes. The percentage of literate men jumped from 42% in 1947 to 64% in 1960, the percentage of literate women from 8% to 29.5%. Similarly, 74% of the 10-14 age group (85% of boys and 63% of girls) and 62% of the 15-19 age group were literate in 1960, compared with only 13% of those aged 55 years or more. Finally, in 1960 only 42% of Malays aged over nine years could read and write, compared with 72% of Chinese. Many of the latter acquired their learning outside Brunei.[57]

Apart from being better educated, the populace was also more affluent by 1960. The value of imports - $0.25 million in 1916, $1m in 1925, $2.8m in 1938 - had reached $93m in 1955 and $107m in 1957, before falling back to $63m in 1959, principally because of a vast decrease in imports of manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment following the completion of many of the development programmes. In the early years of the Residential Era imports had comprised principally necessities of life, such as foodstuffs. After the Second World War imports of consumer goods, such as watches, furniture, clothing, road vehicles, electrical machinery, cosmetics, cotton fabrics, jewellery, musical

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57. By 1971 69.4% (78.4% of men, 58.8% of women aged above nine years) were literate. Of the 10-14 age group 92.4% were literate. Two-thirds of Malays and over 80% of all Chinese were literate. No less than 23,575 people (out of a total population of 136,256) were literate in English. People with university degrees - nil in 1959 - numbered 668 in 1971 (State of Brunei, Report on the Census of Population 1971, Bandar Seri Begawan, ?1973).

instruments, phonographs, and records and other manufactured articles showed vast increases. Consumption of coffee, tea, alcohol, tobacco and meat also rose. Land prices rocketed: $15,000 could be commanded for an acre of poor rubber seedlings in the mid-1950s in certain areas.

The first car was introduced into Brunei in 1924. By 1959 there were 2,036 private cars and 1,607 other vehicles, including taxis, land rovers, trucks and buses (cf. p 501, fn 135, above).

The expansion of Brunei's postal service (founded in 1906) is another index of development during the Residential Era. The number of postal articles handled in Brunei totalled 45,887 in 1925; 239,382 in 1938; 654,389 in 1947; and 2,171,900 in 1959.

Living conditions had also improved, judging from the results of a 1960 census of housing in four main urban areas: Brunei Town (land section only: i.e. excluding Kampong Ayer), Seria, Kuala Belait and Tutong.[58] Before the Pacific War, shophouses in Brunei Town were semi-permanent, i.e. built of timber and billian shingle roofing; they had bucket latrines, electricity and piped water. Government buildings were of the same type, the hospital being the only permanent building in 1931. In 1945 temporary atap shophouses sprang up along the river banks and close to the ruins of the former town. Government buildings, offices and quarters were built similarly. As trade picked up the temporary shops were dismantled and a few rows of permanent shops were constructed in 1948. The number steadily increased thereafter until all the makeshift

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58. This section is based upon LW Jones, Brunei: Report on the Housing Census Held in Four Towns, May-August 1960 (Brunei 1961).

structures had disappeared. Almost all the shophouses were built with State aid in the form of loans of up to 90% of the cost with repayment over 30-35 years at 3-4%.

Under the Development Plan, 1953-8, temporary Government buildings were demolished as soon as permanent ones were ready. Many private individuals living in the land capital also improved their style of living and built houses of a semi-permanent nature in accordance with local regulations. All shophouses and Government quarters were supplied with electricity and piped water.

Seria had more permanent buildings in 1960 than any other town in British Borneo. The company quarters were supplied by the BMPC. In Kuala Belait there were sixty concrete shophouses as well as schools, markets and Government buildings and quarters. The town was furnished with electricity and water bought by the Government from the BMPC and resold to the public. In Brunei Town (land section) 28% of buildings were permanent (including shophouses), with an average of 5.4 persons per permanent house. In Kuala Belait, 70% of houses were semi-permanent.

Half the houses in the land capital were detached. In Seria two-thirds of 3,728 dwellings were attached, an unusual pattern for Borneo. In all types of house there was an average of 5.3 occupants but the figure was higher for shophouses because of the extended family.

Nearly all dwellings surveyed, 94%, had the use of piped water; and, of this number, eleven out of every twelve had piped water inside the house. In Seria 95% of dwellings were supplied with electricity (cf.

Brunei Town, land section, 89%; Tutong 86%; and Kuala Belait 79%). Of the 36,253 inhabitants of the four prinoipal land towns, 90% had the use of electricity. Most householders (85% of 8,091) did not own their accommodation.[59]

What about Kampong Ayer, which was not included in this census? "For hundreds of years they (the River Villagers) have been used to instant disposal of rubbish or nightsoil through the windows or floors", Mr Bevington commented. "Their houses are cool - the wind blows all round, all over and underneath. And they are by no means all slums... Some people are building very neat houses (albeit eye sores by dint of their corrugated iron roofs), and have potted plants flowering on the verandah: they are as houseproud as any European housewife. The houses are criticized because they look dirty and are not painted. But the Brunei Malay is no fool: he knows that his house is built, in many cases, of the finest hardwood and needs no paint. And if he does paint it, in eighteen months the paint will be mildewed and look shabby and he will have to go to the expense of painting it again, and again etc. And an unpainted house is not necessarily a dirty house; although to European eyes it may look shabby, to Malay eyes it does not".[60]

It is difficult to make poor conditions in Kampong Ayer an accusation against the Residential System because the people living there had been offered repeatedly the opportunity to take up better accommodation

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59. By 1980 annual Government revenue was $4,000 million Brunei dollars (with which the Malayan dollar had been replaced). In 1978 the country had 40,000 automobiles but only 358 miles of road. Education and health were free. Electricity, petrol, rice, sugar and rents were heavily subsidized and interest-free loans were available for houses, cars and television sets (Time: The Weekly Newsmagazine, 17 July 1978, p 19). Substantial recent infrastructural developments include a deep water port, an international airport, an earth satellite, and 18,000 telephones (by 1979). A national airline and colour television service were introduced in 1975. House servants from abroad are common. The proportion of hajis and hajjahs in the population has soared (DE Brown, "Brunei on the Eve of Independence", pp 4-5; typescript courtesy of Professor Brown). But today there is still "some malnutrition in the villages though nowhere near as prevalent as in other countries of the region" (Christian Science Monitor, 11 January 1984, p 16). The present Sultan of Brunei is the richest man in the world.

60. ER Bevington, The Economy and Development of the State of Brunei (June 1956), pp 46-7. Copy courtesy of Mr Bevington CMG CEng.

elsewhere. If they remained in Kampong Ayer, that was their choice. Government efforts since 1959 to persuade River Villagers to move to terra firma have been little more successful.[61]

4. Brunei: A Sultanate Regenerated

In retrospect, the introduction of a Resident in 1906 was vital in giving Brunei new life. Indeed, this was the principal reason why a British presence there was at all tolerable to Brunei Malays. Immediately after 1906 the decline of the pre-Residential Era was halted and, after a period of containment and consolidation, substantial development became possible because of the vast wealth derived from the petroleum industry. Even in the years 1906-32 the people's standard of living was improved by the elimination of governmental abuses which had obtained before 1906, the introduction of rubber, the eradication of traditional scourges such as cholera and smallpox, the containment of yaws[62] and malaria, and the provision of the first schools, hospitals and roads. The country's system of government was reformed on modern bureaucratic lines. Publication of annual reports indicated a recognition that the government was accountable publicly for its policies. Appointments to traditional offices were

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61. See above, p 402 (footnote 51).

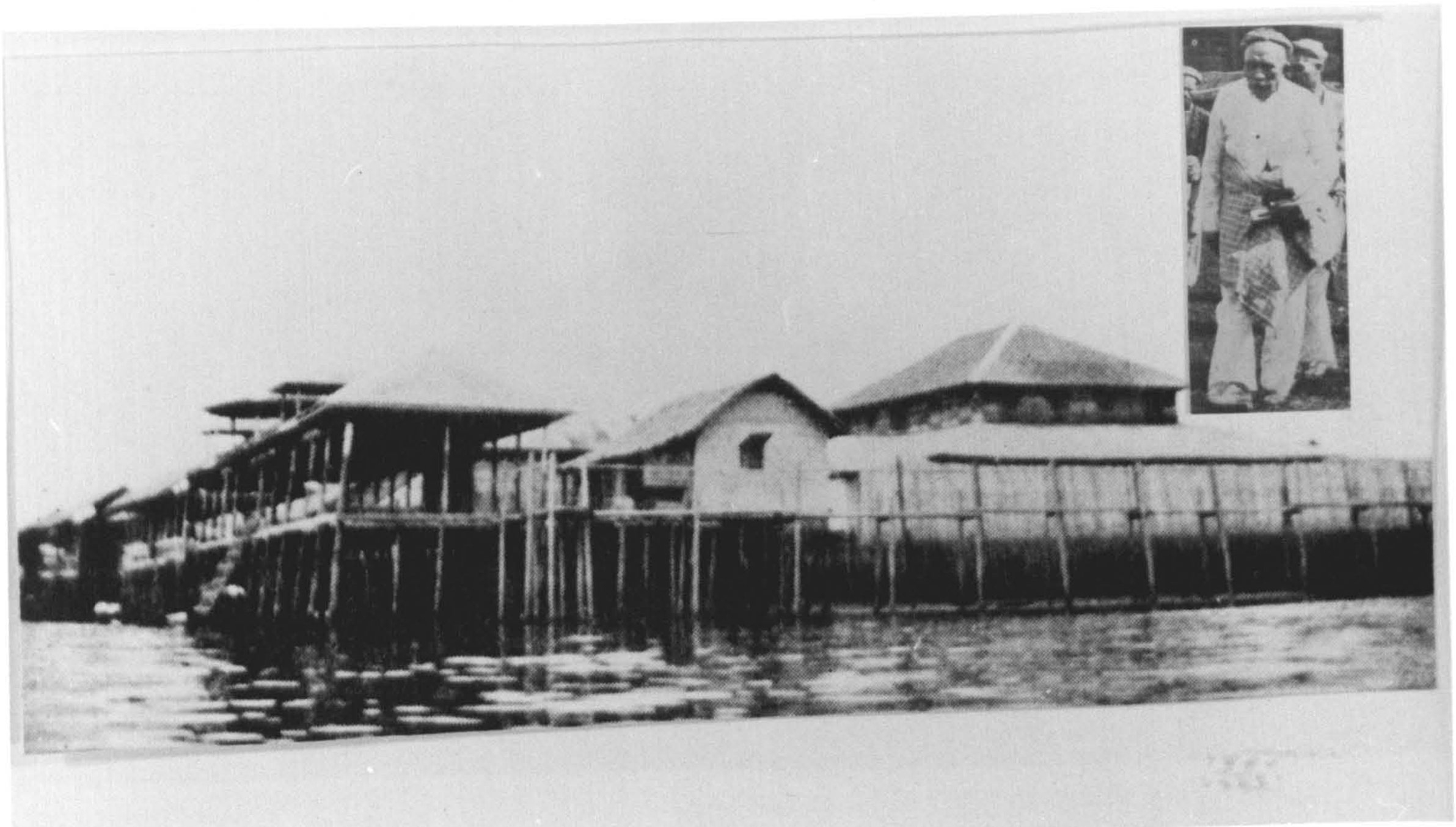
62. Evidently the importance of the elimination of yaws has not been sufficiently emphasized by the present writer. Dr OE Fisher, writing in the later 1930s, commented: "Yaws, formerly common, is now rapidly disappearing due to extensive treatment campaigns with NAB injections. This is rather a pity as nothing did more to advertise and popularize western medicine than the cure of yaws by a single injection" (Dr OE Fisher, "Brunei" in University of Leeds Medical Society Magazine 1937, p 2: my emphasis added. Print by courtesy of Dr Fisher).

also revived, though the offices themselves had been "deprived of almost all content". Brooke influence was eliminated within Brunei and, although the Government failed to recover Limbang, the importance of the loss of that district declined with passing years. Brunei ceased to be an indeterminate empire and became instead a modern nation-state with clearly-defined borders and notions of the division between an indigene and an 'alien'. The country's finances were rescued in the pre-oil era; then the discovery and exploitation of petroleum brought unprecedented wealth and, from the 1930s, opened up "the prospect of a new standard of administration and development". Smooth progress towards modern statehood was disrupted, however, by the Japanese occupation and the subsequent need for reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The post-war improvement of health and education, the extension of communications, the provision of old age and sickness pensions, the elimination of malaria, the sharp reduction of infant mortality, the extension of electricity and water supplies, all contributed to a better life for the people. The later 1950s also witnessed the introduction of broadcasting, the construction of an airport, the completion of a highway from the capital to the oilfield, the building of the national mosque, and the institution of measures for the preservation, extension and mechanization of traditional industries, such as fishing, padi-planting and rubber tapping. At the same time the public had become awakened politically and demanded an increased share in the running of their own affairs. (Freedom of association was guaranteed during the Residential

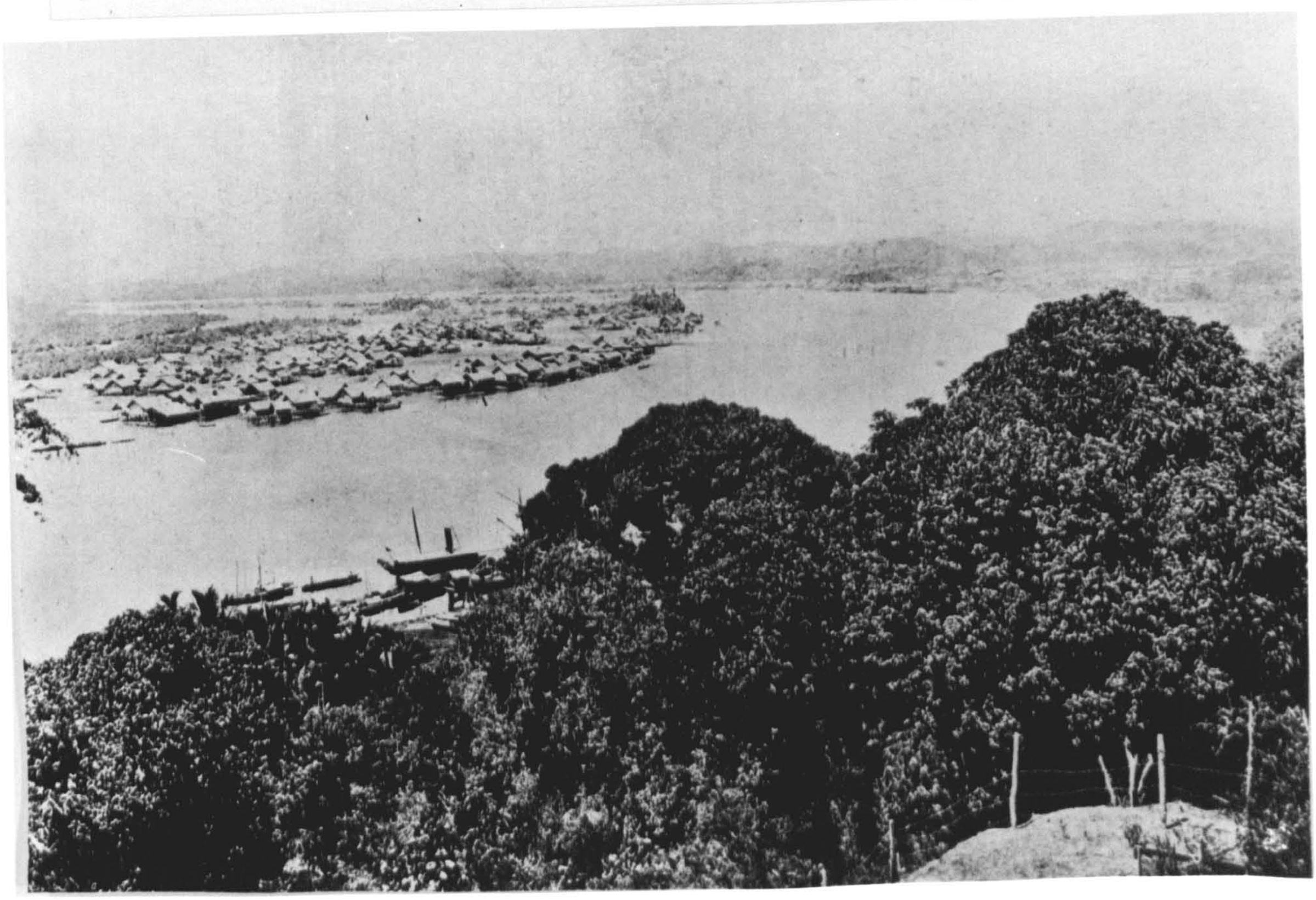
Era; and press censorship was markedly less rigorous than it has since become). Although power was transferred overwhelmingly to the monarchy in 1959, some provision (sixteen elective seats out of thirty three on the proposed Legislative Council) had been made for popular participation. In short, a comparison between the condition of the country in 1906 (bankrupt, enfeebled and moribund) and in 1959 (wealthy, vigorous, booming and awakened) leaves little doubt that Brunei was, indeed, a Sultanate regenerated.

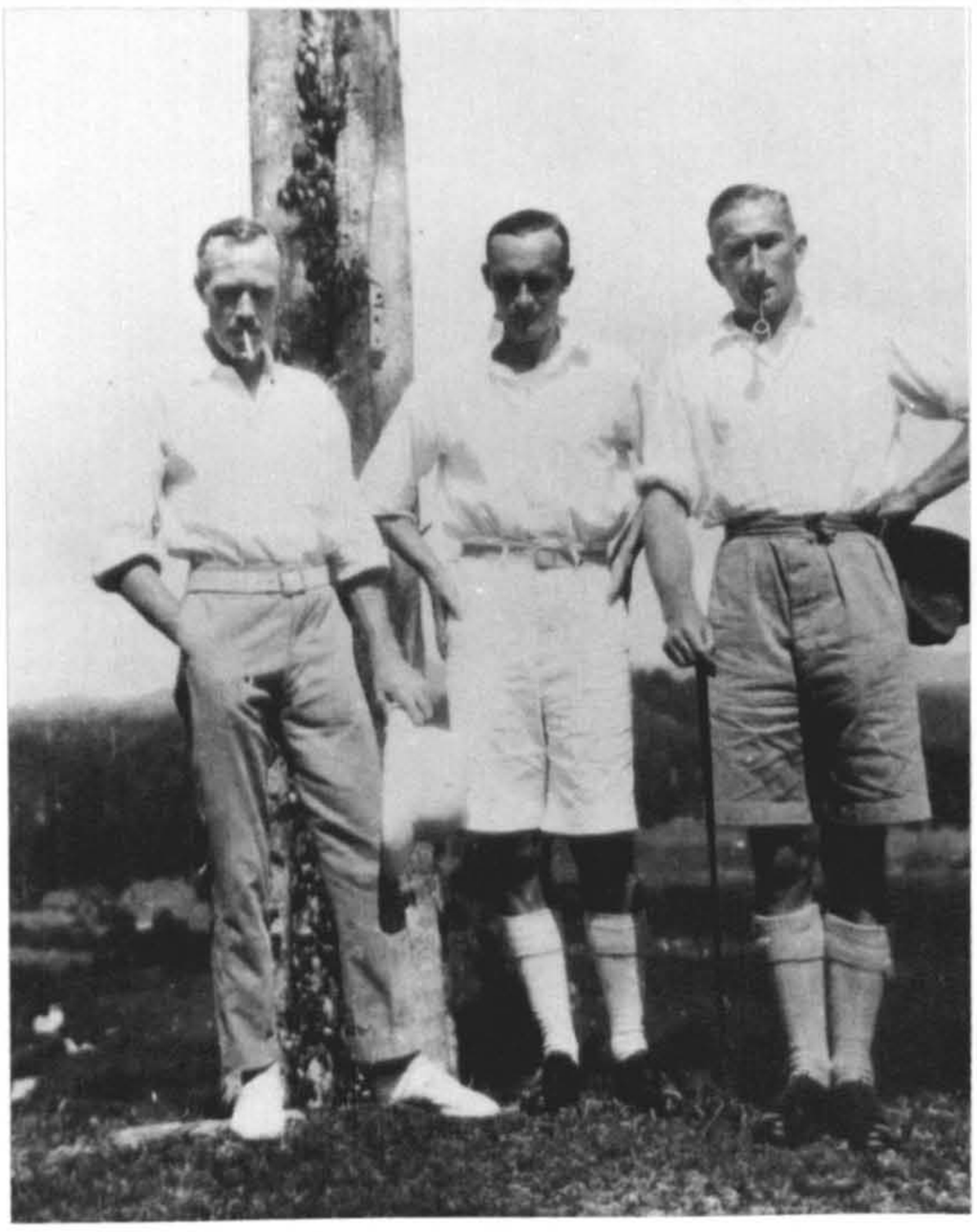
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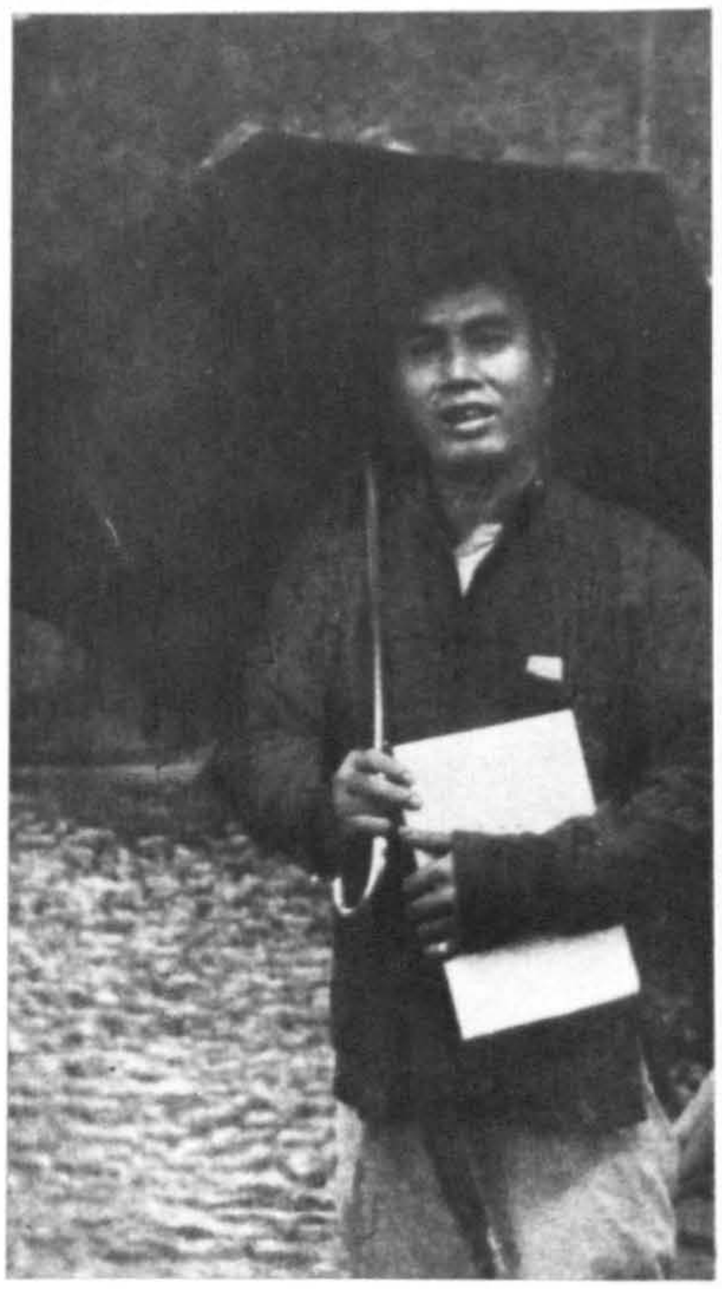


1.1 (Above) The palace of Sultan Hashim (pre-1906) with an inset of His Highness (reigned 1885-1906).

1.2 (Below) Brunei Town in 1908.







2.1 (Above, left) Messrs PAB McKerron (BRB 1928-31), JG Black (BRB 1937-40) and EO Bruce (Resident of Limbang) in c1930.

2.2 (Above, right) Mr Cheok Boon Siok (Chinese businessman).

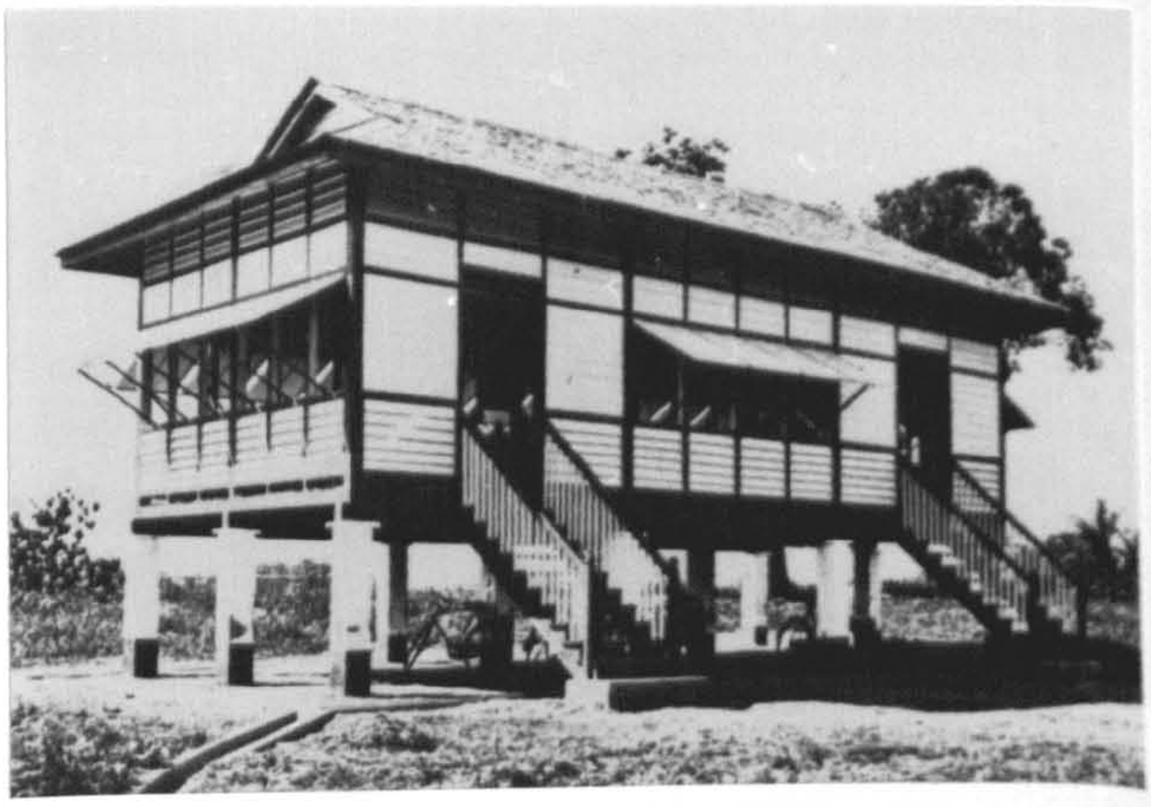
2.3 (Below, left) Dr Emil Braendlin, the Swiss geologist credited with the discovery of the Seria oilfield.

2.4 (Below, right) Messrs ER Bevington CMG CEng (b 1914), State Commissioner of Development 1954-8 and GT Myles (b 1912), State Engineer 1953-9.

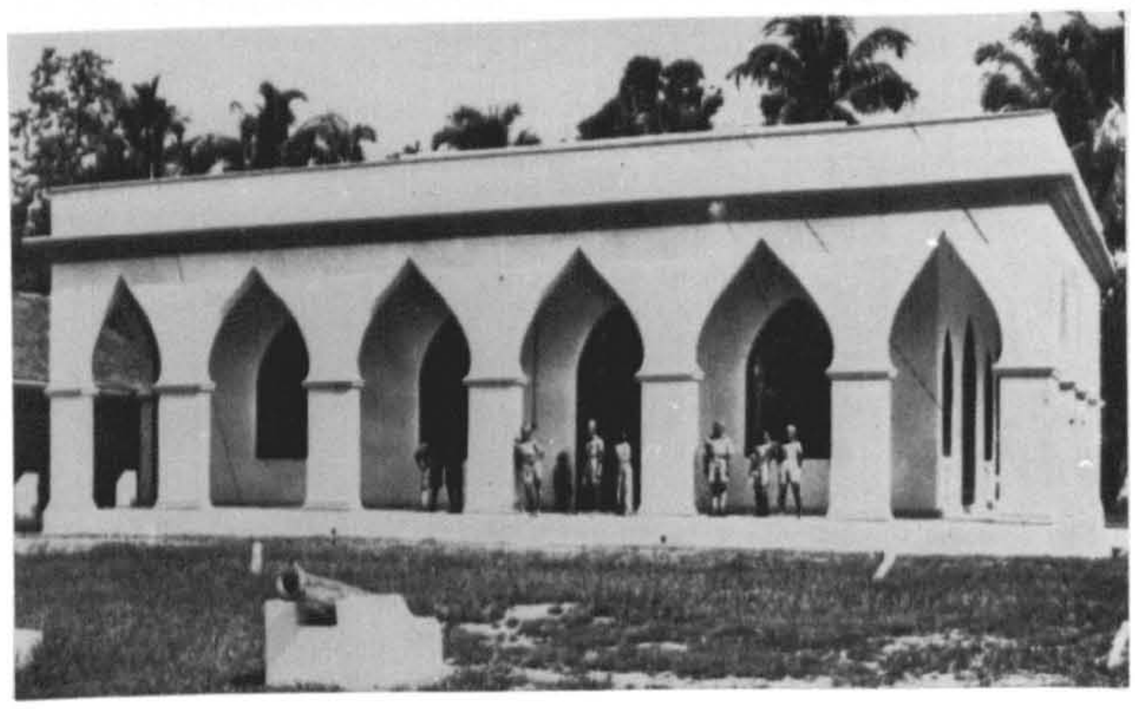








3.1 (Above, left) The beach road between Tutong and Seria in 1949.
3.2 (Above, right) A rural school in 1938.
3.3 (Below, left) The State Council Chamber in 1938.
3.4 (Below, right) Brunei silversmiths just after the occupation.









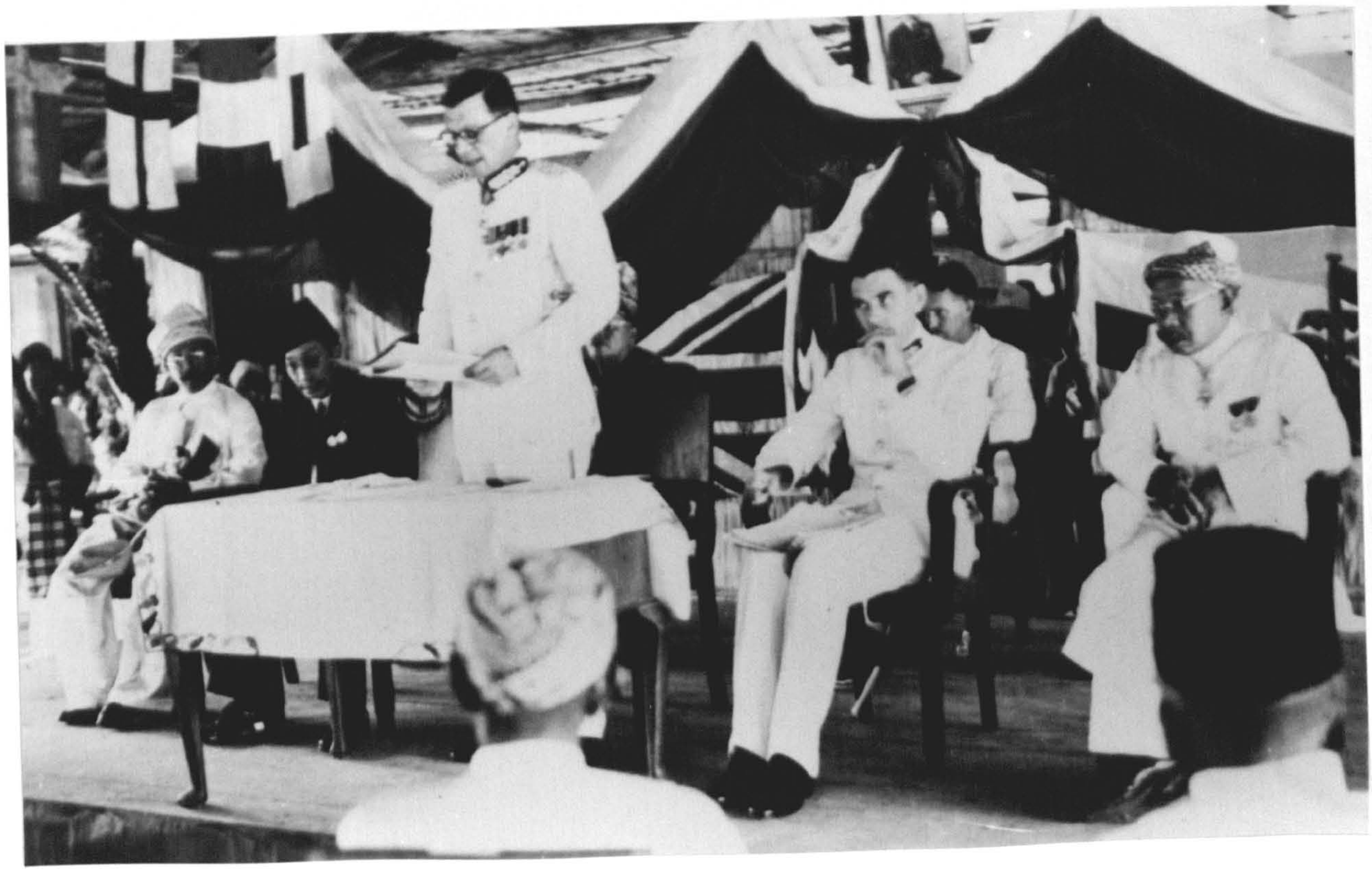
4.1 (Above, left) Oil wells fired by the retreating Japanese, 1945.
4.2 (Above, right) Training SRD guerrillas, 1945.
4.3 (Below, left) One more Japanese surrenders!
4.4 (Below, right) Mr CFC Macaskie (CCAO 1945-6).

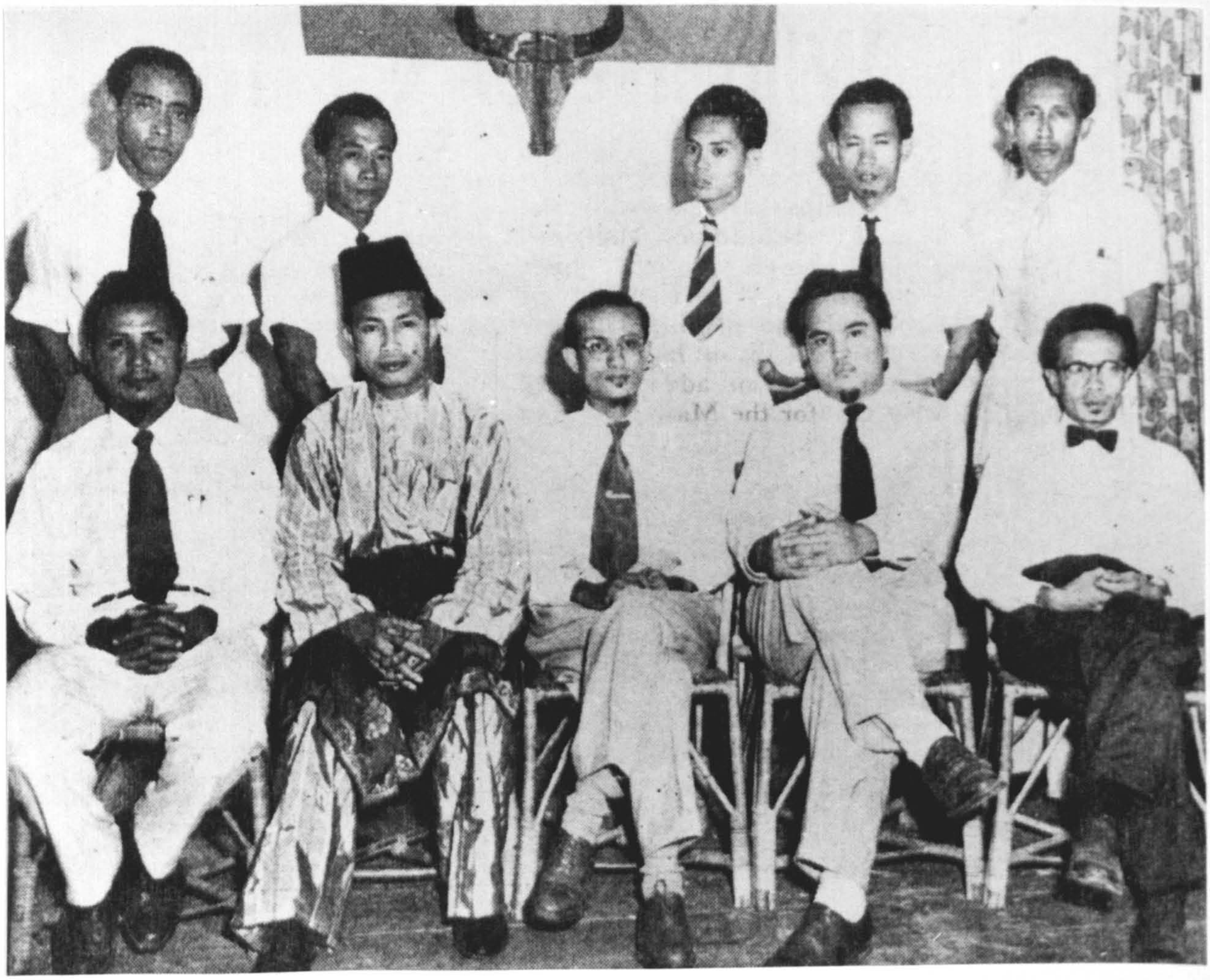




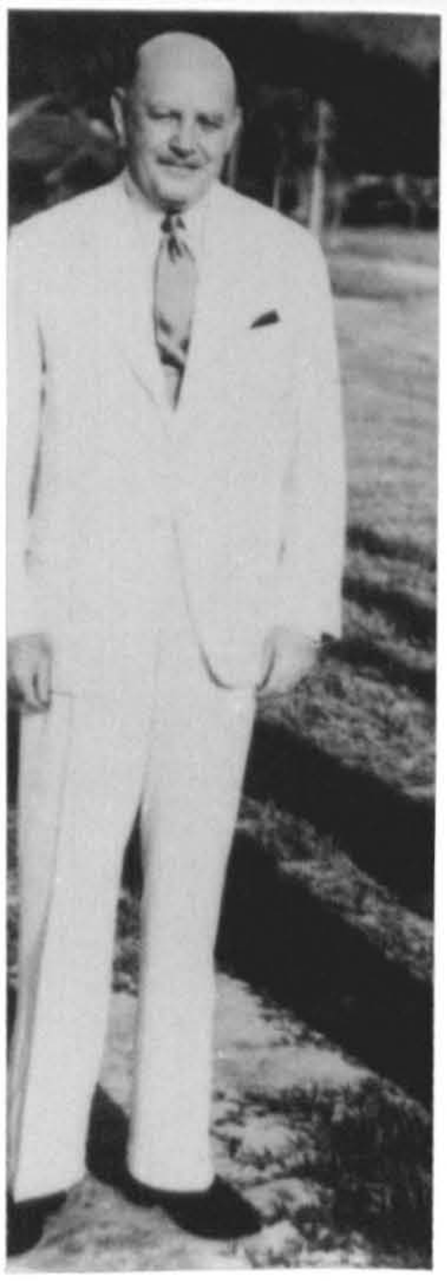


5.1 (Above) The State Council in session, 1947.
5.2 (Below) The transfer of the High Commissionership, 1948.





6.1 The Executive Committee of the Partai Rakyat Brunei in October 1956. Seated from left to right are Inche Yasin Affendy, Inche Salleh, Sheikh Azahari, and Haji Zaini.





7.1 (Above, left) Mr EEF Pretty (BRB 1923-8 and 1948-51).
7.2 (Above, right) Sir GE Cator (BRB 1916-21).
7.3 (Below) Sir AF Abell (High Commissioner 1950-9).





8.1 (Above) The visit of the Secretary of State in 1955.
8.2 (Below) The opening of the new air terminal at Brunei Town in May 1957: from left to right, Mr RH Morris (Controller of Civil Aviation), Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin III, Mr JO Gilbert (BRB 1953-8) and Sir F Fressanges (C-in-C, Far East).





9.1 (left) Rajah Sir Charles Brooke with his sons in about 1888.
9.2 (below) The British Residency building in Brunei Town (c 1930).



APPENDICES

Appendix 1.1 The UK-Brunei Treaty of 1905-6

Supplementary Agreement between Great Britain and Brunei respecting British Protection over the State of Brunei. Signed at Brunei, 3 December 1905 and 2 January 1906:

WHEREAS His Highness Sultan Hashim Jalilul Ahamal-din, son of His late Highness Sultan Omar Ali Saifu-al-din, Ruler of the State of Brunei and all its dependencies, is desirous of being fully protected by the British Government and wishes for the assistance of that Government in the better administration of the internal affairs of his country,

AND WHEREAS His Highness trusts that the British Government will ensure the due succession to the Sultanate of Brunei,

NOW THEREFORE His Highness has represented to His Majesty's Government that the Treaty made on the 17th of September 1888 does not give him sufficient protection, and the Sultan and His Majesty's Government have accordingly entered into the following Supplementary Agreement:

1. His Highness will receive a British Officer, to be styled Resident, and will provide a suitable residence for him. The Resident will be the Agent and Representative of His Britannic Majesty's Government under the High Commissioner for the British Protectorates in Borneo, and his advice must be taken and acted upon on all questions in Brunei, other than those affecting the Muhammadan religion, in order that a similar system may be established to that existing in other Malay States now under British Protection.

2. All existing Agreements made between the British Government and the Government of Brunei are hereby confirmed and maintained except insofar as any of them may conflict with the present Agreement.

(Signed) JOHN ANDERSON

Signatures and seals of

HIS HIGHNESS THE SULTAN OF BRUNEI
THE PENGIRAN BENDAHARA
THE PENGIRAN PEMANCHA

Source: Brunei Annual Report 1946, p 82.

(b) Letter of Assurances, subsidiary to the 1905-6 Treaty:

DG Campbell and MSH McArthur to HH the Sultan of Brunei, n.d. (c3 December 1905):

After compliments:

With reference to our friend's expressed intention of entering into an agreement with the British Government on the lines of the draft agreement which our friend has already discussed, we write to inform our friend that we are empowered by His Excellency the High Commissioner to give our friend assurances on the following points.

(i) The cession monies hitherto paid by the Governments of Sarawak and British North Borneo in respect of territories ceded to them will be left to our friend, to the Pengirans Bendahara and Pemancha, and to other Pengirans who now receive shares, no changes being made as regards these revenues.

(ii) All the other revenues of Brunei, such as poll tax, payments for monopoly rights and the like, will go to the Government of Brunei.

(iii) The Government will give to our friend a yearly allowance of $12,000 or $1,000 a month, and will give to each of the Pengirans Bendahara and Pemancha a yearly allowance of $6,000 or $500 a month.

(iv) In the future, as soon as the actual expense of the administration of Brunei is fully ascertained, the amounts of these allowances will be liable to revision.

(v) A sufficient tract of land shall be reserved round the sites of the residences of our friend, the Pengiran Bendahara and the Pengiran Pemancha free of all rates, charges or rents.

(vi) No judicial powers may be exercised and no decision on any matter may be given in Brunei unless it purports to be with the approval of the Sultan and the Resident.

Source: CO 273/312 (691 05-6) Enclosure 'B'.

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(c) Further letter of assurances, supplementary to the 1905-6 Treaty:

DG Campbell and MSH McArthur to HH the Sultan of Brunei, n.d.

After compliments:

In continuation of our previous letter to our friend we write again on the subject of the allowances of $6,000 per annum each to

Pengiran Bendahara and Pengiran Pemancha. These allowances will take the place of all their tulin and kuripan receipts; but if in the future it is found that their tulin receipts exceed the amount ($6,000 a year) now arranged, the amount will be increased in each case to a sum equivalent to the tulin rights taken over.

Source: CO 273/312 (691 05/6) Enclosure 'C'.

APPENDIX 1.2

THE MUARA DAMIT NEGOTIATIONS 1920-1924

1. Introduction

In this appendix attention is focused upon the negotiations between Brunei and Sarawak in 1920 to 1924 for the recovery, by Brunei, of the Brooke-held fiscal and land rights in Muara District (see above, pp 67, 85-93, 96-8, and 102-3). Muara Damit, the scene of the Rajah's coal mining operations, is that part of the mainland opposite Muara Besar, an island about three miles long at the mouth of the River Brunei. The inhabitants of Brooketon, the small settlement which had gathered round the Rajah's colliery, comprised almost entirely those who sought a livelihood at the mine, plus a nucleus of Chinese shopkeepers.

2. The Rajah's rights in Muara Damit

In 1906 to 1907 the second Rajah, Sir Charles Brooke, had been obliged to surrender those powers which he appeared to be exercising without legal authority in Muara Damit, such as the designation of one of his officers as "Administrator of Brooketon", the exercise of Sarawak jurisdiction and the employment of Sarawak police there, and the opening of a Sarawak post office in the district.

In 1920 the Brooke family retained the coal monopoly, which was not due to lapse until 1962. They also held revenue farms in Muara Damit and the right to collect land rents, as conceded by Sultan

Hashim in the first two clauses of an agreement which he made with Mr Cowie on 12 January 1887, and subsequently assigned to the Rajah:

"1. We (Sultan Hashim) have leased to (the Rajah) all the (tax) farms of Muara Damit which he is authorised to hold, viz., the spirit, opium, curry stuff, tobacco, tea and other articles on which we have power to farm in the aforesaid district. He may hold them now in the Muara Damit from Mengsalut to Plompong Point, from Plompong Point to Kapabarasan westward, cutting across inland from Mengsalut along the sea shore. The said (Rajah)...may sell the above mentioned articles in the district. He may fix his own price on the above articles.

2. We authorise the (Rajah) to collect, receive and demand house, garden and quit rent throughout the aforesaid district, on any people or tribe living on the land in Muara Damit. But (the Rajah has) no power over, likewise, the land and the district besides to demand, collect and impose rent on land". 1

In 1907 the Rajah had established that the phrase "and other articles" gave him the right to impose a gambling farm, after this had been disputed by the Colonial Office. The British Government, for its part, had asserted the right of the Brunei Government to levy a duty on coal exported from Muara Damit, although this would not be imposed immediately because the mines were being run at a loss. (The Rajah did not concede the point). Finally, if the Brookes wished "to use land anywhere in Muara Besar for the purpose of making coal sheds or houses for coolies", they were entitled "to occupy one hundred fathoms of the land, and... (also to) put up wharves".[2]

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1. CO 144/64 (7548) Translation of an agreement between Sultan Hashim and Mr WC Cowie (later sold to the Rajah), dated 18 Rabil Akhir 1304 AH (12 January 1887), clause 1. In return the Rajah paid $500 annually. This sum appears to have been compounded before the beginning of the Residential Era. Concerning the coal monopoly, the Rajah paid $2,000 for mines in Muara Damit and $1,200 for every mine he might open in Brunei outside Muara Damit and east of the River Tutong.
2. CO 144/71 p 98. Translation of an agreement between Sultan Abdul Mumin (r1852-85) and Mr WC Cowie (later assigned to the Rajah), dated 13 March 1882, clause 13.

3. Trial Balloon

In 1907 the Colonial Office had decided to await the death of Rajah Sir Charles Brooke, who was then seventy-seven years of age, before attempting to recover his fiscal and land rights in Muara Damit. (There was no intention to disturb his coal monopoly). Sir Charles survived until 1917. Immediately after his demise, the High Commissioner - Sir Arthur Young - was invited by Whitehall to review outstanding questions between Brunei and Sarawak.

Sir Arthur thought that these disputes could be divided into two categories: (a) the private commercial rights inside Brunei acquired from time to time by Sir Charles Brooke; and (b) the rights of administration of outlying districts of the State which he had from time to time usurped.

After careful consideration and reference to the Resident (Mr GE Cator) and Mr McArthur, Sir Arthur concluded that the latter category - especially the recovery of the Limbang - was the most pressing and important issue. The High Commissioner's efforts in this respect proved unavailing. With regard to the first category, Sir Arthur thought that the private rights of the family of Sir Charles Brooke were not matters of urgency "now that the State has a settled Government capable of preventing their being used for political purposes". The rights were an 'annoyance' and 'hindered the development of the State', he claimed, but they were not of such importance as to demand that any special effort should be made to arrive at a settlement of them <u>en bloc</u>. Their recovery could wait to be dealt with as separate individual adjustments, as and

when opportunities occurred.[3]

The first such occasion arrived within a few years. In 1920 the third Rajah, Vyner Brooke, was negotiating with Mr James Hatton Hall, a British merchant, for the sale of the Brooketon mines. Since 1917 these mines had actually been profitable for the first time in the history of their ownership by the Brooke family, but the post-Great War depression caused the price of coal to slump and other considerations - such as the increasing difficulty of winning the mineral because of geological complications - seem to have contributed to the Rajah's decision that the time had come to sell his property.

In January 1920 a Mr Mungo Park made an inspection of the mines with a view to making a report about them for Mr Hall. "Every assistance was given to Mr Park", the Resident of Limbang reported, "and all the plans of the collieries were put at his disposal".[4] In the July of 1920 Mr Hall paid another visit to the Brooketon mines, but by the July following the deal had been cancelled,[5] for reasons which shall now be seen.

The proposed sale of the mines to Mr Hall - considered by the Brunei Resident to be an undesirable character[6] - had alarmed the High Commissioner (now Sir Laurence Guillemard). He thought it was "advisable that steps should be taken to safeguard the interests of Brunei, in the

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3. CO 531/11 (10824) Sir A Young to CO (Borneo, Secret) 29 December 1917, paragraphs 3-4.
4. CO 604/7 Sarawak Gazette, 1 March 1920, p 63.
5. CO 604/7 Sarawak Gazette, 1 September 1920; and CO 604/7 Sarawak Gazette, 1 September 1921. Mr Hall complained later that the employment of this geologist was very expensive and caused him a great loss, particularly since the deal fell through (CO 852/76 File 6: Mr Hall to CO, 7 December 1937).
6. See above (p 162) and below (Appendix 1.3).

event of any contemplated alienation of (the fiscal and land) rights to a third party".[7] With the approval of Rajah Vyner, Sir Laurence Guillemard authorized Mr Cator to enter into preliminary negotiations with the Sarawak authorities for the resumption of their rights in Muara Damit. The Rajah promised, meanwhile, that no alienation would be made to a third party without the consent of HM Government.

Mr Cator set out what he considered to be fair terms in a letter to Rajah Vyner dated 31 August 1920. With regard to land, he suggested that in lieu of the present agreement, the Rajah might accept a title under the Brunei Land Code for the area referred to in clause two of the 1887 agreement. Such a title would confer "a permanent, transmissible and transferable estate interest and occupancy".[8] Alternatively the Brunei Government would, on payment of demarcation fees, issue each permit holder a separate title and would give to the Rajah a title for the balance of the land. The title would carry the same conditions as to rent, cultivation and so on as the permits they replaced.

Mr Cator suggested, secondly, that the revenue farms and the right to create monopolies should be transferred to the Brunei Government. All articles imported for the use of the mine or mine employees might be admitted duty free: and some other arrangement to protect the mining or the owner of the mining rights, might be reached. Duties would be levied at the rates prevailing in the rest of Brunei. Chandu would become a Government monopoly. In return, Mr Cator suggested that the

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7. CO 531/15 (21524) Guillemard to CO, Brunei (confidential), 4 April 1921, paragraph 3.
8. Ibid., Cator to Rajah Vyner Brooke, 31 August 1920, paragraph 5 (A).

Government of Brunei should pay annually to the Rajah

"either a sum equal to the average revenue which Your Highness (the Rajah) has derived from the rights...during the past five years or the net proceeds of the import duties and sales of chandu, whichever amount is the less. It is necessary to insert this last provision because, in view of the policy of the Imperial Government, revenue from chandu is a very uncertain factor". 9

Mr Cator did not allude to the gambling farm which existed at Brooketon under the terms of the agreement (of 1887) because

"it is the policy of the Brunei Government gradually to abolish licensed gambling and when this is effected in the rest of Brunei I shall have to seek Your Highness's assistance to terminate the practice at Brooketon". 10

In other words, the farm was valueless. As we shall see, however, the Brunei Government would have cause to rue this stipulation in Mr Cator's letter.

The Rajah did not receive the document until his arrival in England at the end of 1920. In March 1921 the Sarawak State Advisory Council in London requested a meeting with the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office to discuss the matter.[11] Since the latter had not been informed of what was afoot, they were baffled about what the Sarawak Council could mean, and were, therefore, somewhat annoyed with the new High Commissioner (Guillemard).[12] After an exchange of correspondence, however, the Colonial Office obtained the relevant details.

On 22 April 1921 Mr Harold Beckett (acting first class clerk in the Colonial Office) met Mr Willes Johnson (legal adviser of the

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9. Ibid., paragraph 5 (C).
10. Ibid., paragraph 7.
11. CO 531/15 (11018) Mr Rowlett (Secretary to the SSAC) to CO, 5 March 1921.
12. CO 531/15 (14456) minute by Mr Beckett, 29 March 1921.

Sarawak Council. Mr Beckett thought that the British Resident's letter had been designed to get the Rajah to say what he wanted. Mr Johnson now told him that the Rajah did not wish to make a "sordid money transaction of it

"and after emphasizing the general benevolence and self-sacrificing character of the Rajah, he (Mr Johnson) came out with the suggestion that the adjustment should be of a territorial character - i.e. he wanted the Temburong" (the isolated eastern wing of Brunei). 13

Mr Cator characterized this proposal as "preposterous".[14]

Mr Gent, a junior CO clerk at this time, thought Brunei had two cards to play which would assist the Rajah in his intention, if any, of "drawing in his hand <u>vis-à-vis</u> Brunei": (1) the right to impose export duties on coal; and (2) the right to stop the Rajah's gambling farm at Brooketon in accordance with the law of the country. Mr Gent considered that the proposal to permit all articles for use in the mines to be admitted duty-free would be a questionable concession. In the hands of an unscrupulous owner this privilege

"might be made to cover a variety of articles never intended by the Government of Brunei. It might seem better, perhaps, to undertake not to impose any export duty on coal...". 15

At a meeting with Mr Beckett at the Colonial Office on 9 May 1921, Mr Cator was strongly of opinion that Brunei could not make any territorial concession as a return for the surrender of the Rajah's rights in the Muaras. Mr Hall was an "inveterate picker-up of bargains in Borneo", he added, and if he (Mr Hall) got hold of the farms would

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13. CO 531/15 (18063) minute by Mr H Beckett, 22 April 1921.
14. CO 531/15 (20892) minute by Mr GEJ Gent, 29 April 1921.
15. CO 531/15 (21524) minute by Mr Gent, 7 May 1921.

probably cause the Brunei Government a lot of trouble.

Although Mr Cator had ceased to be British Resident of Brunei two months beforehand, he was authorized by Whitehall in May 1921 to negotiate with the Rajah, but directly and not through the Sarawak Council, which HM Government refused to recognize.[16] The Secretary of State (Mr WS Churchill), whilst fully appreciating the Rajah"s desire to make the settlement of this question of the basis of a friendly adjustment rather than a monetary bargain, feared that - apart from the much greater value of the Temburong (which contained three large rubber estates and large reserves of timber, jelutong and sago) - he could not agree to any cession of Brunei territory in return for the Rajah's rights at Muara Damit.[17]

In July 1921 Mr Cator opened negotiations with the Rajah's representative, Mr HF Deshon (1857-1924). The latter claimed that the agreements held by the Rajah empowered him to collect export duties as well as import duties. Mr Cator demerred, pointing out that the original documents would not support this interpretation and that, whereas the Rajah had never exercised the "right", the Brunei Government had claimed, and was exercising, it. The Rajah, moreover, had raised no objection to the imposition of the coal tax from 1 January 1921 as he surely would have done had he supposed the sole right to levy export duties lay in his hands.[18] Mr Cator gathered the general impression that the Rajah was not

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16. CO 531/15 (14456) minute by Mr Beckett, 29 March 1921; and CO 531/15 (21524) minute by Beckett, 10 May 1921.
17. CO 531/15 (21524) minutes by Messrs Beckett (10 May), Collins (11 May) and Grindle (13 May 1921).
18. CO 531/15 (35297) Cator to CO, 14 July 1921, paragraphs 2-3.

averse to a settlement on a monetary basis and that agreement ought to be possible.

By late October 1921 a preliminary compact had been achieved. The Rajah declined to alter his position concerning land, i.e. he did not wish to exchange the rights he derived from clause 2 of the 1887 agreement (see above, p 562) for a title under the Brunei Land Code. Mr Cator thought this was not of much importance because the land in question was a peninsula and did not affect land settlement in the rest of Brunei. The Rajah was prepared, however, to transfer "all his trade and farm rights" in return for a reduction from $16,148 to $10,000 in the annual cession monies paid by Sarawak to the Brunei Government.[19] These terms were confirmed in an exchange of letters between Mr Cator and Mr Rowlett, the Secretary of the Sarawak Council. The latter agreed that Mr Cator had stated correctly the terms which had been agreed and that "a formal deed" would have to be evidenced "to avoid doubt hereafter".[20] The only reservation made by Mr Rowlett - which was accepted by Mr Cator - was that the Brunei Government should undertake not to discriminate in any taxation between the inhabitants (including the Rajah) of the region in question and residents in the rest of Brunei adversely to the former.[21]

The state of negotiations at the end of 1921, therefore, is plain. The Rajah had undertaken to surrender <u>all</u> his trade and farm rights in Muara Damit in return for a reduction of $6,148 in the

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19. CO 531/15 (53556) Cator to CO, 26 October 1921, paragraphs 4-5.
20. <u>Ibid.</u>, Cator to SSAC, 20 October 1921; and SSAC to Cator, 21 October 1921.
21. <u>Ibid.</u>, SSAC to Cator, 25 October 1921.

amount of cession money annually to be paid to the Brunei Government. The Rajah's land rights in Muara Damit, on the other hand, remained unaffected.

4. The Second Stage

On 9 March 1922 the High Commissioner reported that the Brunei State Council had accepted the terms negotiated by Mr Cator, including the reservation expressed by Mr Rowlett. Sir Laurence did not anticipate the closure of the mines, so the proposed arrangement would result in financial gain to the Brunei Government as well as to the extinction of the Rajah's rights. Finally, the High Commissioner suggested that time would be saved if the necessary legal instrument were drawn up and executed in London: the Rajah was expected in the United Kingdom during the coming summer.[22]

Mr LA Allen, who had succeeded Mr Cator as British Resident in Brunei, estimated that the annual value of the rights to be given up by the Rajah was $12,000. The most important of these was the chandu monopoly, worth $8,000 at the time, but likely to be considerably reduced in the future because of Imperial policy (see above, pp 172-5).[23]

By autumn 1922 the Colonial Office's legal advisers, Messrs Burchells, had prepared a draft deed of surrender, which they proposed, with CO approval, to submit to the Sarawak Council.[24]

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22. CO 531/16 (16990) Guillemard to CO, Brunei (confidential), 9 March 1922, paragraphs 2-5.
23. Ibid., memorandum by Mr LA Allen, 1 January 1922.
24. CO 531/16 (47451) Burchells to CO, 22 September 1922, paragraphs 2-4.

Mr Beckett pointed out that, in view of Whitehall's refusal to recognize the Sarawak Council, this course of action was impossible.[25] Hence the Colonial Office suggested to Messrs Burchells that the same end could be obtained and the difficulty avoided if Mr Innes - a member of the Malay States Information Agency - were to write to Mr Rowlett (or Mr Willes Johnson) saying that he had been requested to act for the Government of Brunei in the negotiations, enclosing a copy of the draft Agreement and asking if there were any points which required further consideration.[26] Messrs Burchells suggested that it would simplify matters if the Rajah's solicitors - Torr and Company - were to be asked, which would be the ordinary course of business.[27] The Colonial Office agreed.

Meanwhile, Mr FS James, the lieutenant High Commissioner, reported that the Sarawak Government was inviting tenders (for up to six years in advance) for the Brooketon farms,[28] and urged that the cession should be concluded before the end of 1922, when the existing tax farms were due to expire. Mr James noted that the opium 'farm' - held by the Sarawak Farms Syndicate - was not included in the tender notification: it was to be clearly understood that all the claims of the Syndicate up to 31 December 1922 (from which date, Mr James suggested, the current arrangements should terminate) would be settled by the Rajah

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25. Ibid., minute by Beckett, 28 September 1922.
26. Ibid., CO to Burchells, 4 October 1922.
27. Ibid., Messrs Burchells to CO, 5 October 1922.
28. CO 531/16 (52516) Mr (later Sir) FS James (1870-1934) to CO, Brunei (confidential), 22 September 1922, paragraph 2.

and the rights of the Syndicate would cease from the date of the cession (hopefully 1 January 1923).[29]

The process of transfer then entered a rough stretch. The Rajah's solicitors claimed that the gambling farm was not included, pointing to the statement, mentioned above, in Mr Cator's original letter to the Rajah, dated 21 August 1920. Mr Deshon claimed, further, that the opium monopoly was not included either and that this had been understood both by the British Resident and himself. Mr Deshon stated that the opium and gambling farms had never been specifically mentioned in the negotiations and his view was that they were matters apart from other monopolies and duties. It was abundantly clear, the solicitors claimed, that this was correct because the compensation offered was manifestly inadequate to cover the gambling and opium farms. Nor was the question of compensation to the Sarawak Farms Syndicate taken into consideration as the representatives of the Rajah were not aware, when the discussions took place, that the opium farm was under lease.[30] In a subsequent letter, Torr and Company warned that the Sarawak Government could not undertake to be responsible for any claim which the Sarawak Farms Syndicate might have if opium rights were to be included in the surrender.[31] The Rajah also gave instructions for new leases for the arack, gambling and pawn rights to be granted, terminable at the end of 1923, "in order to avoid discontent among the colliery labour force".[32]

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29. Ibid., paragraphs 2-5.
30. CO 531/16 (54433) Torr and Company to Messrs Burchells, 31 October 1922.
31. CO 531/17 (777) Burchells to CO, 3 January 1923.
32. CO 531/17 (964) Burchells to CO, 4 January 1923.

Mr Cator, on learning that the inclusion in the transfer of the opium and gambling farms was now being disputed by Sarawak, reasserted that the negotiations were for all the trade and farm rights at Brooketon and referred to the exchange of letters between himself and Mr Rowlett in October 1921, where confirmation of this view could be found.[33]

The High Commissioner endorsed Mr Cator's version and suggested that, in view of the correspondence, the Sarawak claim was "somewhat of a surprising nature".[34] With regard to Mr Cator's letter to the Rajah in August 1920 - in which it was said that the gambling farm was to be dealt with separately - Sir Laurence claimed that this communication was "purely in the nature of a ballon d'essai, inviting negotiations as to the possibility of the transfer to Brunei of the Rajah's land and trade rights at Brooketon".[35] (It might be observed that, in the proposed agreement, the Rajah's land rights - which had been mentioned in Mr Cator's letter of 20 August 1920 - were to be excluded; hence the Rajah was claiming the best of two worlds). Sir Laurence drew Whitehall's attention to the fact that the position as regarded gambling in Brunei underwent a change between August 1920 and October 1921, when the preliminary negotiations were brought to a conclusion. The Brunei Gambling Enactment, brought into force on 1 January 1920, allowed the Resident to exempt certain houses or localities from its provisions.

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33. CO 531/17 (11816) minute, n.d., by Mr Cator.
34. CO 531/17 (11816) Guillemard to CO, Brunei confidential, 4 February 1923, paragraph 4.
35. Ibid., paragraph 9.

During 1920 certain gambling rights were issued in the capital and elsewhere, but from the beginning of 1921 all licences had been abolished, with the farm at Brooketon, and but for the negotiations with Sarawak, the Government of Brunei would have approached the Rajah during 1922 to assist in terminating this anomaly.[36] (Hence Mr Allen, the British Resident in Brunei, had not included the value of the gambling farm in his estimate of the worth of the Brooketon farms).

Mr Gent at the Colonial Office argued that the Rajah's Council had known Vyner Brooke possessed the right to farm opium revenue and had agreed to transfer "all the trade and farm rights without reservation" at Brooketon in return for $6,148 annually. With regard to the gambling farm, the Sultan as Sovereign retained the right to legislate for the whole State: hence the 1887 agreement, under which the Rajah held the gambling farm, could be overridden though compensation might have to be paid.[37]

Mr A Ehrhardt, a legal adviser at the Colonial Office, took a tougher line. There could be no doubt, he said, that all the farms had been included in the proposed transfer and that the Sultan would be unable to recognize any leases or other disposals of any of those rights which might have been granted or made by the Rajah since the agreement was arrived at by Messrs Cator and Rowlett or to consent to the renewal or extension of any lease or licence at present in force in connection with any of them and called upon them to execute the surrender at an early date.[38]

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36. Ibid., paragraph 10.
37. Ibid., minute by Mr Gent, 9 March 1923.
38. Ibid., minute by Mr Albert Ehrhardt KC (1862-1929), 13 March 1923.

Mr Beckett requested an opinion concerning whether the gambling and opium farmers were entitled to compensation.[39] Mr Ehrhardt believed that such monopolies were subject to the power of the supreme legislative authority to regulate their exercise or to abolish them. Compensation should depend on the circumstances of the particular case: for example, the amount paid for the monopoly, the length of time the monopoly had been enjoyed, the profits received, the capital expended, and so on. The Rajah's lease did not amount to a grant in perpetuity. It merely provided for the commutation of the annual grant for a lump sum. The power of the Brunei legislative authority to deal with the subject of the leases was specifically recognized.[40]

5. The Final Stage

On 1 May 1923 a meeting was held between the solicitors of the Rajah and the Colonial Office. The Sarawak side contended that Mr Rowlett's letter to Mr Cator in October 1921 had been written under a misapprehension and, this being so, it did not bind the Rajah. Messrs Burchells could not accept this view, but requested - if it was being seriously advanced - that it should be put in writing. This was done.[41]

The Colonial Office's solicitors were of opinion that the correspondence between Messrs Cator and Rowlett in October 1921 would not constitute a contract legally enforceable unless it could be proved

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39. Ibid., minute by Mr Beckett, 14 March 1923.
40. Ibid., minute by Mr Ehrhardt, 16 March 1923.
41. CO 531/17 (23716) Messrs Burchells and Company to CO, 10 May 1923, paragraphs 3-5; and Messrs Torr and Company to Burchells, May 1923.

that Mr Rowlatt was authorized by the Rajah in writing to make such a contract on his behalf.[42] The Rajah then expressed his willingness to surrender the opium and gambling rights provided he received extra compensation.[43] He was prepared to resume negotiations on this basis and on the understanding that the Brunei Government would not increase the export duty on coal. The Rajah intended also to give up the piece of land on Muara Island granted to him under Article 13 of the coal lease of 13 March 1882.[44]

Mr Ehrhardt observed that although the Cator-Rowlatt agreement of 1921 had been provisional it had not been intended that the instrument to be drawn up giving effect to it should differ from the terms which had been agreed. He contended, therefore, that the position now taken up by Sarawak was untenable.[45] The Colonial Office also denied the contention (which had been made by the Sarawak solicitors) that the lease of 15 January 1887 (a) forbade the Government of Brunei placing import duties on machinery etc for the Brooketon mines or (b) limited the amount of export tax that Government could place on coal.[46]

A new advance appeared possible in June 1923. The Rajah was apparently of opinion that if the fiscal rights were to be surrendered it ought to be on the footing that no import duties on "machinery, materials etc" for the Brooketon mines should be imposed and that the export duty on coal of 25 cents per tone should not be increased without

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42. Ibid., Burchells to CO, 10 May 1923, paragraph 6.
43. Ibid., (Torr to Burchells).
44. Ibid., (Torr to Burchells).
45. Ibid., minute by Ehrhardt, 19 May 1923.
46. Ibid., minutes by Grindle (23 and 26 May) and Gent (23 May 1923).

his consent.[47]

In an undated memorandum, written by Mr Ehrhardt at the Colonial Office, probably in March 1924, it was stated that

"on 23 October 1923 the High Commissioner reported that after protracted negotiations locally, it was impossible to arrive at any agreement on conditions which Brunei could accept". 48

By February 1924, however, (when the new leases for the gambling, arack and pawn farms would have lapsed - see above, p 572) Sarawak was ready to agree to sign the terms settled with Mr Cator but wished "to refer to points as to import duties on machinery and export duties on coal".[49]

In a despatch dated 27 March it was reported that agreement had been reached between the Brunei Government and the Rajah, presumably on the basis of the draft deed of surrender drawn up in 1922. The High Commissioner remarked that

"the signature of this agreement marks the very satisfactory elimination of a long-standing cause of friction between the Brunei Government and ...the Rajah". 50

6. Finale

The Rajah retained his coal and land rights in Muara Damit. The colliery remained open until 30 November 1924 when all mining ceased (although winding down operations continued until the following April). On 31 December the same year the Rajah's monopoly of coal rights within

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47. CO 531/17 (30224) Burchells to CO, 16 June 1923.
48. CO 531/17 (59411) memorandum by Mr Ehrhardt, 04 March 1924.
49. Ibid., minute by Mr Beckett, 25 February 1924.
50. CO 531/18 (18928) Guillemard to CO, Brunei (confidential), 27 March 1924, paragraph 3.

Brunei lapsed.[51] (Perhaps the Rajah closed his mine in a fit of pique). Many of the inhabitants of Brooketon removed to Miri and Sadong in Sarawak, abandoning their houses and gardens.[52] The village was gradually overrun by jungle; and when the Honourable Sir Steven Runciman visited the site in the late 1950s there was "little to show where Brooketon once stood".[53]

After 1924 the Sarawak Residents of Limbang continued to visit Brooketon periodically in order to look after the Rajah's land rights and to check that his bungalow was maintained in a proper state of repair.[54]

This situation continued until 1931-2. In order to mark the occassion of the termination of the minority of the Sultan of Brunei and his assumption of full sovereignty (September 1931) the Rajah announced his intention to surrender his remaining rights in Muara retaining only an area of approximately 151 acres of land in which his house was situated.[55]

The formal deed of surrender was signed by the Rajah on 25 January 1932 and by the Sultan on 10 March of that year.[56]

The action of the Rajah caused "the liveliest satisfaction throughout Brunei" and "enhanced the friendly relations which now exist

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51. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1925, p 6.
52. CO 604/11 Sarawak Gazette, 1 February 1926, p 44.
53. S Runciman, The White Rajahs: A History of Sarawak 1841-1946 (Cambridge 1960), p 194.
54. For example, CO 604/13 Sarawak Gazette, 1 June 1928, p 123.
55. CO 717/91 (File 92359) Sir C Clementi to CO, UMS (Brunei) confidential, 3 May 1932, paragraph 3.
56. Ibid., paragraph 4.

between the two Governments". In his acceptance speech, the Sultan (Ahmad Tajuddin) described the gift as "one of inestimable value" and a tangible sign of friendship.[57] The Colonial Office noted the surrender of the land with satisfaction.[58]

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57. Ibid., paragraph 5.
58. Ibid., CO to Clementi, 20 June 1932.

APPENDIX 1.3

EB MAUNDRELL: THE BRITISH RESIDENT MURDERED!

1. Introduction

In February 1915 Mr FW Douglas[1] was replaced as British Resident in Brunei by another officer of the MCS (Malayan Civil Service), Ernest Barton Maundrell. Born in 1880, Mr Maundrell joined the MCS in 1903, following an education at Repton and the University of Cambridge. By 1907 he had become acting Secretary to the Resident of Negri Sembilan and, before being posted to Brunei, he had risen to the rank of Second Assistant Colonial Secretary in the Straits Settlements. In this appendix, I shall examine the circumstances of his untimely death in the Sultanate. But, first, an account of his term of office there.

2. Background

At the beginning of 1915 the post of British Resident in Brunei was separated from that of Labuan, with which hitherto it had been combined. Mr Douglas continued, however, to run both offices until 19 February 1915, when Mr Maundrell assumed the responsibilities of British Resident in Brunei. At the same time the appointment of an

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1. Francis William Douglas (1874-1953). MCS 1895-1929. 1913-15: Acting Resident, Labuan and Brunei. 1922: Acting DO, Klang. 1923: Controller of Rubber Exports, Malaya. 1927-9: Acting Resident, Perak. 1929: Secretary to Sultan of Selangor, who awarded him the title of Datuk in 1937. 1942-5: interned by the Japanese in Singapore. Convert to Muhammadanism. Died 21 December 1953. Obituary in Malaya (February 1954) p 106.

Assistant Resident was discontinued and the Superintendent of Monopolies was superseded by a Treasurer and Superintendent of Customs. Mr EG Goldfinch - "a pompous little man", formerly a police officer[2] - who had acted as Superintendent of Monopolies before going on leave in 1914, returned in January 1915 to act as Treasurer and Superintendent of Customs.[3]

Almost immediately upon arrival in Brunei, Mr Maundrell - like so many of the early Residents - was laid low with an attack of fever and had to spend some time in hospital.[4] Two months later the journalist of Sir Charles Brooke's annual visit to his outstations, including Brooketon, reported:

"Very few and unimportant events took place and all seemed recovering in trade and prosperity after the last two years of slackness. Mr Maundrell dined on board the Zahora (the Rajah's 'yacht') in Brunei (Town)". 5

Subsequent visitors included the Auditor-General, Mr H Marriott, for the annual audit in June; and the Secretary to the High Commissioner, Mr WG Maxwell, who arrived during the following month.

Apart from its tragic ending, Mr Maundrell's term of office was largely smooth and uneventful:

"The year (1915) was one of quiet progress", he commented, "and beyond a rise in the cost of commodities, the peaceful life of the kampongs was little disturbed by the (Great War)". 6

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2. Dato WH Doughty (1886-1971), interviewed by Professor DE Brown (late 1960s). Tape recording, courtesy of Professor Brown.
3. In May 1919 Mr Goldfinch departed to take up the appointment of Harbour Master in Labuan; the Resident assumed his former duties in Brunei. Mr Goldfinch eventually retired in about 1933 and remained on the Brunei pension list as late as 1948. His daughter, who appeared in 1916, was said to have been the first European child to be born in Brunei. (Two Eurasians were enumerated in the 1911 census; ten in the 1931 census).
4. CO 604/5 Sarawak Gazette, 1 March 1915, p 53.
5. CO 604/5 Sarawak Gazette, 1 May 1915, p 98.
6. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1915, p 12.

The clerical and subordinate staff, the Resident added, had worked well.

The padi crop of 1914/15 season was almost entirely destroyed because of drought from December to March. Planting for the ensuing season was "rather more extensive than usual"; but once again the crop was spoiled, this time by torrential rain at harvest time. As a result rice imports were heavy, only just below $100,000 in 1916 (38.79% of total imports). This was more than counter-balanced, however, by the growth of rubber exports. The first plantations had reached the tapping stage during 1914; and a rise in price which occurred in late 1915, led to considerable areas being planted up, principally by smallholders. In Brunei district 62 new land titles covering 406 acres were registered in 1915: these were chiefly smallholdings in the Kiulap, Kota Batu and Baru Baru Island. In addition there were 112 applications for land, ranging from five to thirty acres each. A further step was made in the settlement of the Kedayan question: the headman of the Kedayans at Kampong Kiarong, with some twenty of his followers, accepted title to land. The backlog in Tutong district was cleared, but the inhabitants of Belait were not yet disposed to take out surveyed titles for their sago plots.

There were only two meetings of the State Council during 1915 (five in 1916); and no legislation of outstanding significance was enacted. Police strength stood at 35 (22 Malays and 13 Sikhs) in both 1915 and 1916; they were commanded by a European Chief Inspector stationed in Labuan. Except for a corporal at Muara, all the Sikhs were stationed at Brunei Town, the outdistricts being policed by Malays. Police Constable No 27

will assume particular importance in this story. There was one murder at Rempayoh in 1915.[7] At Muara, where there was a considerable Chinese population, several petty thefts and burglaries were reported. A further murder occurred in March 1916.[8]

The Malay vernacular school, established in the capital in 1912, was attended by about forty pupils, including a few of the younger pengirans; but it had to be closed for a few weeks in May and June because of the difficulty in finding a suitable successor to the late school master, Awang Yahya, whose early death from phthisis was much regretted because he was a competent Government servant. A start was made, in 1915, with vernacular education at Muara, an allowance being made to a local Malay, who opened a school for about a dozen boys in his own home.

The general health in most districts was 'good', apart from "a certain amount of diarrhaea and fever in wet weather". In Belait, however, a good deal of sickness from fever and beri-beri was prevalent during the extensive rains of November and December 1915. In the following year there was "an unusual amount of fever and dysentery with sporadic outbreaks of chicken pox in Brunei and Muara".

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7. The victim of the murder was a Malay lad, aged 14, employed as a servant to a Dyak dresser on the oil concession. On 18 October 1915 he was found decapitated in the dresser's house. No trace of the dresser or of the missing head was ever found: it was supposed that the dresser - a stranger to the district - (if he was the perpetrator of the deed), must have lost his way in the jungle and perished.

8. In March 1916 a Chinese labourer, Mr Joo Chai, was murdered in the house of his employer, Mr Ah Kiew, in ulu Belait. It was alleged that the murder was committed by paramours of Mr Ah Kiew's wife and another woman (both natives of Belait) but the evidence at the trial was insufficient and contradictory.

A lapau was built for the Sultan; and a school house with teacher's quarters was ready for occupation by January 1916. A definite start was made with a bridle path from the capital to Tutong and Belait. In Temburong district, further bridle path construction was undertaken.

Looking back upon the whole of the first decade of the Residential Era (1906-15), Mr Maundrell concluded:

"The first half of this period saw the redemption, by means of the FMS loan, of nearly all the monopolies and private rights of taxation and the settlement of the tulin claims to land, while the revenues of the State gradually rose, till at last in 1910 they showed a surplus over the annual expenditure. An impetus was meanwhile given to industry and agriculture. Revenue peaked in 1913 but there seems every justification for the belief that the normal resources of the State, as hitherto exploited, are sufficient to provide for an economical and simple system of administration and for gradual development, while the payment of the interest on the loan, by which the early reforms were financed, was secured by cession monies payable by the neighbouring States and were brought in by the Brunei Government from the ceders or their heirs.

Should the hopes of finding a remunerative oilfield in Brunei be realized, ampler revenues will remove many difficulties and accelerate development, but whether progress be gradual, or rapid, I think it may be said with confidence that during these ten years have been laid good foundations for the renewed prosperity in Brunei, a prosperity to which the rakyat, free to enjoy the fruits of his labours, and the pengiran, forgetting in his new interest his regret for lifeless claims, may alike contribute". 9

This report was dated 5 April 1916. Less than two months later, Mr Maundrell was dead.

3. The Murder (18 May 1916)

The official report of the events leading up to the murder ran as follows:

"2. It appears that on 18 May a Sikh Police Constable, Mr Vir Singh, attempted about 7 p.m. to murder another Sikh constable who

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9. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1916, pp 12-13.

was on guard with him. Fortunately, his rifle misfired. He then escaped. The Sergeant and other Police searched for him without success till about 11 p.m. when the Sergeant informed Mr Maundrell.

3. Mr Maundrell, though well aware of the risk he was running (he warned the men at the cutch works to be on their guard) attached less importance to his own safety than to the danger to which others would be exposed to if a madman with a rifle were left at large all night. He therefore decided to head a final search himself. The night was dark and it was raining.

4. The squad of Police who accompanied him carried only one Snider carbine, unloaded on Mr Maundrell's instructions. They met Mr Vir Singh on a path about 600 yards behind the Government Offices. Mr Maundrell called on him to surrender and he (Mr Vir Singh) fired two shots, the second of which struck Mr Maundrell in the head, killing him instantly". 10

The Brunei Annual Report 1916 contains slight variations, possibly following evidence which came to light during the subsequent trial of the murderer:

"On the night of 19th May (sic), one of the Sikh constables on Treasury guard - Mr Vir Singh - attempted, possibly under the influence of drink, to shoot one of his fellow constables. His rifle misfired and he then ran away carrying his rifle and ten live rounds into the gardens at the back of the office. Mr Maundrell at once went out with a party to arrest him. They met Mr Vir Singh at a turn of a narrow path and he immediately fired two shots, one of which passed through Mr Maundrell's head, killing him instantly". 11

4. Results

What happened next? Thanks to the energy of Sultan Muhammad Jemalul Alam - who may himself have been murdered in 1924 - PC No 27 (Mr Vir Singh) surrendered at noon on the following day at the Police Station.

Meanwhile Mr Maundrell's body had been taken to Labuan. On the 19th he was buried in the Protestant cemetery on the island "with every

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10. CO 273/441 (31085) report signed by Dato E Roberts from a draft by Mr GE Cator (BR Brunei 1916-21), 22 May 1916, paragraphs 2-4.
11. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1916, pp 5-6 (my italics).

mark of affection and respect from all classes and nationalities". Not less than two hundred people were present at the funeral.[12]

Mr Cator's report continued as follows:

"9. As Brunei was left temporarily without a European Government officer, I decided to go over with the Chief Inspector of Police and take charge. We arrived about 3 p.m. and I at once visited the Sultan and informed him that I had come to give what assistance I could. Everything was quiet, though evidence was not lacking that there would have been a panic had the murderer been at large a second night". 13

Sir Arthur Young (the High Commissioner) commented that the late Resident was

"an officer of very high character, he carried out his duties thoroughly and conscientiously and never spared himself...

4. The courage displayed by him on the occasion of his death was of a very high standard, and I desire to record how deeply the Government Service and myself regret the loss of an officer whose career gave every promise". 14

The obituary in the Straits Times, dated 22 May 1916, disclosed that Mr Maundrell had been head cadet of his year (1905). The writer then degenerated into hagiography:

"(During his stay in Brunei) he (Mr Maundrell) rapidly won the confidence of the pengirans, while his patience, justice and generosity gained the warm affection of the various tribes. Quiet, pure, unswerving from the high standard of duty which he always kept before him, he was a devoted son, a perfect friend, and a valuable civil servant. His life was unassuming, but those who knew him intimately had the privilege of friendship with a nature always ready unstintingly to give, a hand always ready to help, and a sympathy ever quick to comfort". 15

"Such a nice man", agreed Mrs Kortright, wife of a Sarawak officer in Baram. "These Sikhs are a treacherous lot", she claimed.

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12. As note 10, paragraphs 5–8.
13. Ibid., paragraph 9.
14. Ibid., Young to CO, No 196 (Straits Settlements), 2 June 1916, paragraphs 3–4.
15. Straits Times, 22 May 1916.

"I wish we had not quite so many as police in Miri, but I think Frank (Mr Kortright) has them pretty well in hand".[16]

The murderer, for his part, was tried before "His Honour" Sir John Bucknill (1873-1926), Chief Justice of the Straits Settlements, and sentenced to death. After confirmation by the State Council of this penalty, the Sikh was executed on 2 September.

"This was the first occasion" - thus Mr Cator in the Brunei Annual Report 1916 - "on which a judge of the Supreme Court of the Colony had sat in Brunei and the solemnity and dignity of the proceedings made a great impression". 17

The late Resident was survived by a brother and two sisters, one of whom was an invalid.[18]

5. Conclusion

The foregoing relies only on the official version of events. In the absence of other evidence, it is impossible to say how reliable this is. It is noticeable, however, that after the murder no armed British presence was necessary in Brunei; no warships of the Royal Navy

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16. (RHO) Mss Pac s74: Mrs K Kortright to "Aunt Annie", 13 June 1916.
17. Brunei Annual Report 1916, pp 5-6.
18. The brother was Mr HS Maundrell of The Dingle, Reigate, Surrey. Learning of the existence of the handicapped sister, Sir Arthur Young "considered the case in Executive Council...and consulted the unofficial members of the Legislative Council resident in Singapore. All are of opinion that a grant should be given to the invalid sister on the same terms and conditions as laid down in the Royal Warrant for the sister of an officer ranking as a captain killed in action". Sir Arthur suggested, therefore, that approval should be obtained from the Crown Agents for an annual allowance of £50 to the sister so long as she should remain unmarried (CO 273/442: 45480: Young to CO, SS confidential, 25 August 1916). This was done (CO 273/443: 56996).

appear to have visited the Sultanate; and no repressive legislation was enacted in the immediate (or long-term) aftermath of the tragedy. Indeed, the 'executive' consisted only of the Resident and the Treasurer. This does not suggest widespread and deeply-rooted antagonism on the part of the Brunei people for the Residential System.

Sikhs continued to be employed as policemen in Brunei until 1920, when the Straits Settlements' detachment of Labuan and Brunei Police Force was withdrawn from Brunei, and a separate, all-Malay Brunei Police Force established on 1 January 1921. The murder of Mr Maundrell may have added to suspicion of Sikh policemen; but this suspicion was not sufficient to make the withdrawal of the Sikhs an <u>immediate</u> priority.

Some important questions remain. For example, how far did Mr Vir Singh receive a fair trial? There were no lawyers in Brunei, so who acted as defence counsel? Secondly, why was there no appeal? Finally, it might be argued that the sentence was even more barbarous than the original crime: for, whereas Mr Vir Singh presumably shot his victim on the spur of the moment, his own judicial murder by the British was cold-blooded and pre-meditated.

APPENDIX 1.4

THE HATTON HALL CASE 1903 - 1907

1. Introduction

In order to relieve his desperate poverty, Sultan Hashim (r 1885-1906) raised money for his immediate needs by granting concessions, mainly to Chinese merchants, in the most reckless fashion, and usually for very inadequate consideration.[1] In this way he sold either monopolies or the right to collect import duties on almost every conceivable thing. Sometimes he sold the same concession to several different people and left them to settle it among themselves. After January 1906, however, the concessionaires were compulsorily expropriated by the incoming Resident in order to raise a revenue for the new Government. Although modest compensation was paid, there was little if any protest from the former Chinese concessionaires.

There were two exceptions to this general pattern. First, the British Rajah of Sarawak, Sir Charles Brooke, was permitted to retain his monopoly of fiscal rights in Muara Damit;[2] and, secondly, Mr James Hatton Hall - "a pioneer in Brunei and North Borneo" running "a general merchant business"[3] - who held the sole right to import a certain kind of

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1. See above, pp 31-2, 42-3, 52, 55-6, 160-4, 166 and 168-72.
2. See above, Appendix 1.2 (pp 561-79).
3. His own description of himself (CO 852/76: File 6). Little is known about Mr Hall: none of the present writer's correspondents could recall the name. I guess that he was born in c1880. He appears to have first arrived in North Borneo in 1903 and was still in business there as late

tobacco into Brunei and who did protest - vehemently so - after he had been expropriated. This appendix deals with the latter case.

2. The Tobacco Monopoly

The story begins, not in Brunei, but in neighbouring North Borneo. At the beginning of this century were was a certain Dusun tobacco known as sigep bilai ("tobacco in twists") because that was the form in which it was sold. Governor EW Birch of North Borneo (1901-3) sought to encourage the cultivation of this crop in order to give the hill tribes more occupation and thereby to reduce disquiet. Hitherto the Dusuns had brought the tobacco down to the coastal fairs, walking for distances which took them several days to cover, and were compelled either to part with their produce to Brunei traders at the prices the latter offered or to carry their heavy loads back to the mountains. Mr Birch pointed out to the chiefs the advantages of extended and more intelligent cultivation; of more perfect curing; and of building up

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as 1937. In 1904 he held two concessions in Lawas district: the sole right to export (a) birds' nests and guano; and (b) timber (CO 144/79: 9789). When the Rajah took control of Lawas district during the following year, these rights were summarily abolished. Mr Hall founded the Gumbang Pasang (or Berakas) rubber estate near Brunei Town and the limited liability company which he established later to run the property (Brunei United Plantations Ltd) survived until 1953. He owned further estates in North Borneo; and in 1912 he was involved in projects to build a power station and ice plant in Jesselton (CO 144/80: 5578; and CO 874/334). He announced plans in November 1914 to establish a general shop-house at Miri (CO 604/4 Sarawak Gazette, 16 November 1914, p 255). Finally, in 1920-1 and again in 1937 he attempted unsuccessfully to purchase Brocketon colliery.

Mr Hall had links with members of the British Establishment, such as Sir W Holland MP, first Baron Rotherham (1849-1927).

outside markets. The Governor advised the Dusuns to get rid of make-weight and to sell their tobacco by weight. By agreement with the chiefs and producers, minimum prices were fixed for the three grades of this tobacco at which traders had to buy from the producers. It was also agreed that traders should not sell at more than twice the amount they paid. These arrangements were then embodied in a special law and the duty on imported Dutch tobacco raised in order to protect the local industry in North Borneo.[4]

Mr Hall established in business at Jesselton in January 1903. About this time he obtained from the North Borneo Government the sole right to purchase and export sigep bilai. This monopoly was cancelled, however, by the BNBC's court of directors. Mr Birch riposted by publishing a notification forbidding the sale of the tobacco to anyone not having a licence to purchase it; and the only such licence was issued to Mr Hall.[5]

The latter then attempted to "corner" the market by obtaining the monopoly of import into Brunei, where most of the tobacco was sold. By a concession dated 4 April 1903 Sultan Hashim assigned to Mr Hall for a period of five years, the exclusive right to import into Brunei and sell sigep bilai, subject to the payment of twelve dollars' import duty on every pikul.[6] In August 1904 this concession was extended for a further ten years, i.e. until 1 May 1918.[7]

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4. CO 144/78 (9953) memorandum by Sir EW Birch, March 1904, paragraphs 1-18; also in FO 12/127 p 133ff.
5. FO 12/127 p 15, Mr G Hewett to FO, 10 January 1904.
6. CO 144/80 (40567) petition from Mr Hall to the High Commissioner, 21 August 1906, paragraph 3.
7. Ibid., paragraph 4. Mr McArthur reported that "in 1904 while I was in

Mr Hall had paid nothing for his concession. The 'consideration' was his guarantee that import duty - which the Sultan had been unable to collect because of smuggling - would be paid. The Brunei monarch received a sum of about $3,000 - paid partly at the time of the original grant and partly at the time of its extension - as an advance on account of the duty which would become due in the future.[8] Mr Stubbs, at the Colonial Office, challenged Mr Hall's explanation on the ground that

"the monopoly was already farmed out before Mr Hall came on the scene and the monopolist would, of course, in his own interests, do his best to prevent smuggling. Being a Chinese, he would be better able to do so than a stranger like Mr Hall, and indeed it appears that there was a great deal more smuggling in Mr Hall's time than before". 9

The effects of Mr Hall's double monopoly appears to have come first to the official attention of HM Government in January 1904 when Consul Hewett reported that complaints had lately been made to him in Trusan, Limbang and Brunei concerning the high price of Javanese and Sumatran tobaccos imported into Labuan, which was proving "a considerable hardship to the poorer classes...who are unable to afford the better kinds of tobacco".[10] Mr Hall explained to the consul that the higher import duties imposed in December 1903 was intended to promote his company's interest and protect their monopoly. As regarded the notification of higher import duties, Mr Hewett could see

"no objection to its application as far as British North Borneo is con-

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Brunei...(the Sultan) frequently stated that he only let the monopoly because of Mr Hall's importunity" (CO 144/80: 40567). Mr Stubbs agreed that this was more than likely: the Sultan had been living on sago refuse at the time, according to Mr McArthur (CO 531/1: 35081).

8. CO 144/80 (40567) McArthur to Hall, No 92, 2 April 1906, para' 4.
9. CO 531/1 (35081) minute by Mr Stubbs, 15 October 1907.
10. FO 12/127 p 15: Hewett to FO, 10 January 1904, paragraph 1.

cerned but its publication in Labuan has proved an undoubted hardship in that colony, and in the Brunei and Sarawak rivers as well, and it appears to me that the policy of taxing a Crown Colony and imposing a hardship upon the poorer classes in the two neighbouring States in order to promote the interest of a single firm in British North Borneo is open to objection". 11

Upon being approached by HM Government, Mr Birch retorted that he had raised the duty to protect an indigenous industry in North Borneo and the fact of the monopoly of import into Brunei was also "unobjectionable" because

"it secures the Sultan his import duty, prevents smuggling of which the Sultan bitterly complained to me in writing, and cannot raise prices (because) Brunei is Mr Hankey's chief market and as a man of business he is unlikely to spoil it". 12

(Mr Hankey was the lieutenant of Mr Hall).

Mr Stubbs commented that the Colonial Office "may safely take up the position that the matter is not of sufficient importance for us to worry the (British North Borneo) Company about it";[13] and there the matter rested until 1906.

3. The Cancellation of the Monopoly (April 1906)

From January 1906 all monopolies in Brunei were gradually cancelled by the incoming Resident. Monopolists were awarded in compensation their original purchase money less an amount proportionate to the number of years their monopoly had been held already. Mr Hall received no compensation, therefore, because he had paid nothing for his

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11. Ibid., paragraph 7.
12. CO 144/78 (9983) memorandum by Mr Birch, paragraphs 18-20; also in FO 12/127.
13. CO 144/78 (9953) minute by Mr Stubbs, 21 March 1904.

concession in the first place.

On 1 March 1906 the Resident officially informed Mr Hall that his concession would be cancelled with effect from 10 April forthcoming.[14] Mr McArthur hoped "the finances of Brunei will admit of reasonable compensation being paid for such cancellation"[15] and made several attempts to elicit from Mr Hall how much consideration he had given for the monopoly.

On 2 April Mr Hall was repaid the money which he had lent to the Sultan, less an amount due on account of the tobacco already imported. This totalled $1,301.64.[16] Mr Hall at one stage also claimed interest on the money advanced, but he agreed to waive this demand.[17]

Even here Mr Hall had been cheating the Sultan, because he altered the form in which the tobacco was imported so that he paid only about one third of the usual duty. The rate was twelve dollars for each pikul. But the tobacco was not actually weighed. A certain number of the 'twists' (bilai) in which it was made up was regarded as making a pikul and duty was paid accordingly though, as a matter of fact, these bilai did not weigh so much. Mr Hall abandoned the bilai form in favour of flat cakes and paid duty only on the real weight. Mr Stubbs claimed that this was not only sharp practice but had the effect of nullifying Mr Hall's subsequent claim for compensation:

"The concession was for...'tobacco in twists'. Therefore when he aban-

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14. CO 144/80 (40567) McArthur to Hall, 1 March 1906.
15. Ibid., McArthur to Hall, No 16, 16 February 1906, paragraph 2.
16. Ibid., McArthur to Hall, No 92, 2 April 1906, paragraph 9.
17. Ibid., Hall to McArthur, 10 April 1906.

doned the twist form, Mr Hall was importing an article for which he had no concession. He ceased to exercise the right to import sigep bilai and therefore there is the less reason for compensating him for being deprived of it". 18

4. Mr Hall's Appeal to the High Commissioner

Having failed to obtain satisfaction from the British Resident in Brunei, Mr Hall submitted a petition (drawn up by Messrs Drew and Napier, solicitors, of Singapore) to the High Commissioner in August 1906.[19] Mr Hall claimed compensation, not upon the basis of the original purchase money, but upon that of anticipated profits during the twelve years his lease had yet to run when it was cancelled. He said that, until the end of 1905, he had imported into Brunei and sold 138 pikuls of sigep bilai at prices ranging from $160 to $190 per pikul, the maximum price fixed by the concession being $200.[20] He claimed an average gross profit per pikul of $125, equivalent to $520 a month. His expenses in connection with trading (including import duty) were, he said, $100 per month. His net profits therefore were claimed to be just over $420 monthly. On the basis of a monthly profit of $400 Mr Hall anticipated that in the twelve years his concession would have had to run, he might expect total profits of at least $57,600 (144 X $400). This figure was likely

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18. CO 531/1 (35081) minute by Mr Stubbs, 15 October 1907.
19. CO 144/80 (40567) petition drawn up by Messrs Drew and Napier on behalf of Mr Hall, 21 August 1906.
20. It might be pointed out that during Mr Birch's time it had been agreed that the buyer of sigep bilai should not sell it at more than twice cost price. Since the cost price of the best quality tobacco was only sixty dollars per pikul, Mr Hall should not have sold it for more than $120 per pikul (compared with the $160-190 at which he claimed to have sold his stock).

to be an underestimate, moreover, because the cost price of tobacco was falling and the reformed administration would put an end to smuggling, which was rife, thereby massively increasing Mr Hall's proper share of the market. Mr Hall did not wish to be greedy, however, and was prepared to accept compensation on the basis of $400 a month.[21]

Mr McArthur was able to demonstrate that Mr Hall had grossly exaggerated his profits. The Resident agreed that the quantity of tobacco sold was substantially as claimed.[22] But investigation revealed that after obtaining the monopoly Mr Hall had engaged an agent (Mr WW Boyd) in Labuan and a salesman (Muhammad Yusuf) in Brunei.[23] Inche Yusuf was paid $65 a month, Mr Boyd an unknown amount. Mr Hall also remunerated two revenue watchers in Brunei at the rate of $48 per month. These expenses alone amounted to more than the $100 monthly claimed by the petitioner. But the Resident reported, further, that on 30 March 1905 Mr Hall had entered into an agreement with a Chinese trader. Mr Ong Jee Seng, who became his local agent until 15 December 1905, when Inche Yusuf was re-appointed. Mr Hall claimed that he had cancelled the agreement because he found that Mr Ong was conniving at the smuggling. Mr Ong, on the other hand, stated that he himself cancelled it because Mr Hall's tobacco was mouldy and absolutely unsaleable.

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21. CO 144/80 (40567) petition, paragraphs 5-7.
22. Ibid., memorandum by Mr McArthur, paragraph 4.
23. Mr Boyd, the Harbour Master in Labuan, was dismissed in 1904 for embezzlement. Inche Yusuf was subsequently employed on Mr Hall's rubber estate at Berakas, where he (Inche Yusuf) rifled the safe. Later he was involved in an attempt to defraud the BNBC.

The Resident also produced a document purporting to show that Mr Hall sold his stock to Mr Ong at the rate of only $110 per pikul, less 5% commission. Mr Hall, therefore, was incorrect in saying that he sold his tobacco during this period at prices ranging from $160 to $190 and his estimate of profits was, accordingly, also unreliable.[24]

What were his profits? The three grades of Dusun tobacco cost respectively, sixty, forty and twenty-five dollars per pikul. Mr Hall never claimed to sell the first grade, though he endeavoured unsuccessfully until March 1905 to sell the lower grade at the price of the highest. Supposing Mr Hall bought grade two at $40 per pikul, he would incur also export duty of $5 from North Borneo, freight $5, and import duty into Brunei of $12, making a cost price of $62. By the arrangement with Mr Ong the maximum profit Mr Hall could have made per pikul was $48; less than half the amount the petitioner was claiming. (Mr McArthur had failed to take account of Mr Ong's 5% commission. Given that 5% of $110 is $5.5, Mr Hall's maximum profit per pikul was $42.50, i.e. $48 less $5.5).

But even this lower profit Mr Hall found impossible. Mr Ong reported within three months that his stores were musty and unsaleable. Mr Ong told the Resident that his arrangement with Mr Hall was modified as to price and that by mutual arrangement Mr Ong paid from 15 June to 15 December 1905 $100 per month to Mr Hall as a fixed charge for the agency and bought tobacco wholesale from him at prices ranging from

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24. CO 144/80 (40567) memorandum by Mr McArthur, paragraphs 5–6.

$60 to $80 per pikul. Mr McArthur concluded:

"The making of these arrangements, my knowledge of which is not suspected by Mr Hall, shows, I think, conclusively that Mr Hall has given an exaggerated statement of his monthly profits prior to 1 January 1906". 25

As further evidence of the mouldiness of Mr Hall's tobacco, there was not only the word of the Sultan and the Resident, but that of Mr Hall's own agent, who, in a case in court, adduced as convincing proof that certain tobacco was smuggled and not, as the defendant said, bought from Mr Hall, the fact that it was not mouldy.

Mr McArthur pointed out, further, that Mr Hall was wrong to assume that the Government of Brunei would have taken steps to prevent smuggling had the concession remained in force. In letting out a monopoly, the Sultan freed the Government from any such responsibility.[26]

Mr Hall drew the attention of the High Commissioner to an offer which he, Mr Hall, had received of $300 per month for a lease of the rights granted by the concession. This offer was contained in a letter dated 15 February 1906 from Mr Swee Cheng of Labuan to Mr Hall. The latter submitted that this offer showed the monthly value of the rights to be not less than that placed there by the petitioner as a basis of compensation since an adequate margin had to be allowed for the lessee's profit.[27] The Resident replied that Mr Swee Cheng - the Labuan and Brunei opium farmer - made his offer probably because he expected the change in administration to result in greater prosperity. Further, Mr Hall had failed to annex to his petition a copy of correspondence with

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25. Ibid., paragraph 8.
26. Ibid., paragraph 14.
27. Ibid., Mr Hall's petition, paragraph 7.

Mr McArthur, which showed that Mr Hall was already aware of the proposed cancellation of his monopoly, the only question at issue being the amount of compensation due. Mr Hall had had an interview with Mr McArthur on the subject as early as 28 December 1905. As soon as the Resident heard of Mr Swee's offer, he issued a notice cancelling Mr Hall's monopoly.[28]

Mr Hall pointed out, finally, that he had suffered further loss because of the stock left on his hands following the cancellation of his concession. He would not be able to sell the stock at greater than half the price paid and submitted that he should be reimbursed the other half ($1,846.50). Thus Mr Hall sought (a) $57,600 for the loss of future profits; and (b) $1,846.50 for loss of stock in hand at the date of cancellation.

With regard to the second part of this claim, an incredulous Resident failed to see why the petitioner should receive anything of the kind. Mr Hall, he pointed out, was at liberty like anyone else to sell sigep bilai in Brunei subject to the payment of import duty; all he had lost was the sole right to do so. If his tobacco was of good quality he would be able to stand competition; if, on the other hand, it was mouldy and unsaleable, this would simply confirm all the complaints levelled against him. Indeed, Mr Hall subsequently dropped this second part of his claim.

With regard to the principal claim, i.e. compensation for loss of potential profits, the Resident urged that Mr Hall should not be

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28. Ibid., McArthur's memorandum, paragraph 15.

compensated on this basis. Mr McArthur claimed that registration of concessions in the Labuan consulate prior to 1906 had not implied Foreign Office recognition of such privileges. There was no difference between Mr Hall and other speculators whose monopolies had been abrogated on grounds of public policy:

"If compensation is paid to Mr Hatton Hall on the basis of prospective profits, all the Chinese monopolists who have received payment in accordance with the instructions given me on assuming my duties in Brunei will consider themselves aggrieved, while those whose monopolies have not yet been paid for, will claim on the same basis as Mr Hatton Hall". 29

Sir John Anderson upheld the Resident and rejected Mr Hall's petition. When the documents were forwarded to Whitehall (enclosed in a despatch dated 10 October 1906), Mr Stubbs had no doubt that the supplicant had been correctly treated and the Colonial Office could wait until he protested.[30] Mr GV Fiddes, a more senior official, agreed, but warned that it could be "the beginning of a cup of troubles...It seems to me arguable that the concession was given for valuable consideration - the regular receipt of import duty - and that Mr Hall has a claim to compensation".[31] This point was developed by Mr HB Cox, Legal Under-Secretary, who believed that prima facie Mr Hall "has a claim to compensation and that compensation should be settled, not by the Sultan's advisers, but by some impartial tribunal".[32] Mr CP Lucas, the Assistant Under-Secretary, understood that concessions given by Malay rulers were by no means continued by their successors and that the concessionaires

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29. Ibid., paragraph 18.
30. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 6 November 1906.
31. Ibid., minute by Fiddes, 7 November 1906.
32. Ibid., minute by Cox, 7 November 1906.

knew the risk they were running. (This principle was not applied to the Rajah's fiscal rights in Muara Damit, however). Mr Lucas added:

"I do not want to admit any claim to compensation on the part of this man or to interfere in any way unless we are driven to it. He was clearly engaged in something little short of swindling. I would therefore say nothing as to a tribunal at present". 33

Sir FJS Hopwood, the Permanent Under-Secretary, was not impressed by the Resident's handling of the case:

"My fear is that Mr McArthur has not managed the correspondence very well. He refers to compensation for the thing, and I should have thought that the act of cancellation should have been that of the Sultan". 34

5. Mr Hall's Appeal to the Secretary of State

Meanwhile, Mr Hall had taken his case to Mr H Sowler of the Manchester Courier. Mr Hall's advocate submitted a petition towards the end of July 1907 in which he argued that there was legal consideration for the monopoly since Mr Hall undertook to pay the regular import duty - in other words, minuted Mr Stubbs, he undertook to do in return for the concession what he was bound to do without it:

"This may be good English law", Mr Stubbs continued, "but I submit that it is not good sense, and if we are to act on law, divorced from sense, I submit that the law should not be English law, which has no place in Brunei (cf. pp 143 and 462, above), but Malay law, under which Mr Hall's claim is worthless, because a Sultan cannot be sued and also because... no Sultan is bound by concessions granted by his predecessor". 35

Even if it was admitted that Mr Hall had claims on this ground

"he would still deserve no consideration owing to the use he made of his

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33. Ibid., minute by Lucas, 10 November 1906.
34. CO 531/1 (26519) minute by Sir F Hopwood KCMG KCB, 1 August 1907.
35. Ibid., minute by Stubbs, 27 July 1907.

concession...(which) he used...to the detriment of the public, trying to force upon them mouldy tobacco of a low grade at the price of the best". 36

In short, Mr Hall had "not the shred of a moral claim". Mr Stubbs hoped, further, that the suggestion of a tribunal would not be entertained seriously, because the effect on Brunei would have been deplorable:

"There were an enormous number of concessions...The concessionaires have quietly taken what was offered them. If a tribunal were set up they would all clamour for the re-opening of their cases in hopes of getting more. Whether they got more or not, the enquiries would cost a great deal of money which Brunei has not got and has little chance of getting. Moreover the prestige of the Resident would be destroyed and he wants all the prestige possible; he has a hard enough time as it is owing to Sir Charles Brooke's intrigues. Further such a tribunal could only be composed of men familiar with Malay custom. These men are only to be found in the FMS and Sir John Anderson has, of course, acted already on the advice of those FMS officers best qualified to deal with such cases". 37

Mr Fiddes pointed out that the appellant might be ruined by the cancellation and Mr Cox reiterated his opinion that there should be a tribunal.[38] Mr Lucas, however, considered that it would be

"disastrous if we begin giving compensation or setting up a court to consider compensation claims. I think...we had better have Mr Sowler ...and Mr McArthur here, and hear Mr McArthur about Mr Sowler's claims. ...I want to give the appearance of enquiry and to avoid giving compensation if possible". 39

This decision was taken before the end of July 1907. On 1 August the matter was brought up separately with Mr WS Churchill, then Parliamentary Under-Secretary, by Sir W Holland MP,[40] but this did not alter the plan. On 28 August 1907 Mr Sowler came to the Colonial Office with his father-in-law (Sir W Holland), and discussed the question with

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36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., minutes by Fiddes and Cox, 29 July 1907.
39. Ibid., minute by Lucas, 30 July 1907.
40. CO 531/1 (27413) Sir W Holland to Churchill, 31 July 1907. See also p 590 (fn), above.

Messrs Lucas, McArthur (home on leave) and Stubbs. It became clear that no agreement could be reached so it was arranged that Mr McArthur should write his comments on Mr Sowler's memorandum, that Mr Sowler should rejoin and that the matter should then be put before the Secretary of State, Lord Elgin, for final decision.

At the interview Mr McArthur advanced the view that the concession was not valid because it bore only the chop of the Sultan whereas to be valid it required in addition those of the wazirs. Mr Sowler argued that Mr Hall could not be expected to know that anything more was needed than the chop of the Sultan, whereupon Mr Stubbs countered that if Mr Hall accepted a concession without full enquiry as to the formalities needed, he did so at his own risk.[41]

In his second memorandum, dated 2 October 1907, Mr Sowler conceded the point. He contended instead that the requirements of the constitution were ignored and that concessions with only the Sultan's chop were the rule. He adduced as evidence the case of a grant of sovereign rights in the Lawas district to the BNBC, under the impression that this transferred the territory in full sovereignty:

"When Lawas was transferred to the Government of Sarawak, the Rajah was requested by the British Government to compensate a Mr Brooke-Johnson in the sum of £2,000 for certain revenue farm privileges which he had obtained, not from the ruling Sultan but from a chief who did not possess sovereign rights over the district. Mr Johnson's rights may have differed in nature from that obtained by Mr Hall from the ruling sovereign, but the principle of compensation for cancellation on change of Government stands". 42

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41. CO 531/1 (35081) minute by Stubbs, 15 October 1907.
42. Ibid., Sowler to Lucas, 2 October 1907, paragraph B.

Next Mr Sowler invited attention to the "extremely remarkable fact" that only in September 1907, when the question of compensation had been brought to the attention of the Colonial Office,was the power of the Sultan to grant the concession to Mr Hall brought up.[43]

In a semi-official letter to Mr Stubbs dated 7 October 1907 Mr McArthur contended that the Lawas analogy was mis-stated: Mr Brooke Johnson was not compensated for trading rights: he was serving the tulin Government of Lawas, not of Brunei, under an agreement which provided that he was to get 10% of all the revenue collected. The fact that the Rajah had to compensate him "showed that the agreement was between the tulin chiefs and not what is meant by the technical English phrase 'sovereign rights'.[44] With regard to Mr Sowler's second point, the Resident reiterated that registration by the consul before 1906 did not imply recognition. Indeed, the invalidity of all concessions of monopolies was the basis upon which it was decided to resume them.[45]

Mr Stubbs concluded that Mr Hall had been justly treated:

"He joined the crowd of concession hunters who were trading on the indigence of an aged and unfortunate Sultan and if in this not very reputable pursuit he has not gained quite so much as he expected, I do not think that there is any need to compensate him". 46

Mr Cox still feared that Mr McArthur's letter of 16 February 1906 (in which, then unaware that Mr Hall had paid nothing for the monopoly, he promised compensation to the merchant) hampered the Colonial Office

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43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., McArthur to Stubbs, 7 October 1907.
45. Ibid., marginal note by McArthur on Sowler to Lucas, 2 October 1907. See, also, FO 572/39 McArthur, "Report", paragraph 42.
46. CO 531/1 (35081) minute by Stubbs, 15 October 1907.

and that the case might be taken up by Parliament. But he agreed that after a tribunal had been set up, compensation should be minimal.

"It is objected that if we pay Mr Hall, we shall have to pay others more deserving. This is unfortunate, but does not seem to me to be a valid argument - still less one which we could see in Parliament". 47

Lord Elgin, however, saw little danger on this score: Mr Stubbs had shown that the concession was not technically valid (as it had not the chops of the wazirs as well as that of the Sultan) and

"if we add that no real consideration was given, that the concession is clearly not in the public interest, and that the concessionaire has already made a profit out of selling mouldy tobacco, I think we need scarcely fear the House of Commons taking up so bad a case". 48

Mr Sowler, accordingly, was informed of this decision by a letter from Mr Cox dated 25 October 1907, and there the matter ended.

6. Conclusion

By accepting this decision, and not taking the case to court, Mr Hall tacitly conceded the Colonial Office's verdict that he had been engaged in "something little short of swindling" and had no claim to compensation for the loss of his tobacco monopoly.

Apart from the light it casts upon the dubious proceedings of a British businessman in Brunei, the case of Mr Hatton Hall underlines the favourable treatment accorded to Sir Charles Brooke. For, if, as claimed by Mr Lucas, concessions given by Malay rulers were by no means continued by their successors and that concessionaires knew the risk

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47. Ibid., minute by Cox, 16 October 1907.
48. Ibid., minute by Elgin, 19 October 1907.

they were were running, why was this principle not extended to the rights held by the Rajah in Muara Damit? And why did it not extend to commercial rights (such as the Rajah's coal monopoly or the Island Trading Syndicate's cutch concession) or even to cessions of territory? If Mr Hall had been less obviously a rogue, his case might have raised some rather awkward questions for the Brunei Government.

Finally, the set of papers relating to this case was one of the few to be minuted personally by the Secretary of State during the Residential Era.

APPENDIX TWO: LISTS OF SENIOR BRITISH OFFICIALS

Appendix 2.1 United Kingdom: HM's Principal Secretary of State for Colonies (1906-59)

1	Jun 1895 - Oct 1903:	J Chamberlain (1836-1914)
2	Oct 1903 - Dec 1905:	A Lyttelton (1857-1913)
3	Dec 1905 - Apr 1908:	Earl of Elgin and Kincardine (1849-1917)
4	Apr 1908 - Nov 1910:	Marquess of Crewe (1858-1945)
5	Nov 1910 - May 1915:	L Harcourt (1863-1922)
6	May 1915 - Dec 1916:	A Bonar-Law (1858-1923)
7	Dec 1916 - Nov 1919:	W Long (1854-1924)
8	Nov 1919 - Feb 1921:	Viscount A Milner (1854-1925)
9	Feb 1921 - Oct 1922:	WS Churchill (1874-1965)
10	Oct 1922 - Jan 1924:	Ninth Duke of Devonshire (1868-1938)
11	Jan 1924 - Nov 1924:	JH Thomas (1874-1949)
12	Nov 1924 - Jun 1929:	LS Amery (1873-1955)
13	Jun 1929 - Aug 1931:	S Webb, Lord Passfield (1859-1947)
14	Aug 1931 - Nov 1931:	JH Thomas (1874-1949)
15	Nov 1931 - Jun 1935:	Sir P Cunliffe-Lister, Lord Swinton (1884-1972)
16	Jun 1935 - May 1937:	M MacDonald (1901-81)
17	May 1937 - May 1938:	W Ormsby-Gore
18	May 1938 - May 1940:	M MacDonald (1901-81)
19	May 1940 - Feb 1941:	Lord Lloyd (1879-1941)
20	Feb 1941 - Feb 1942:	Lord Moyne (1880-1944)
21	Nov 1942 - Aug 1945:	Hon OFG Stanley (1896-1950)
22	Aug 1945 - Oct 1946:	GH (Lord) Hall (1881-?1965)
23	Oct 1946 - Mar 1950:	A Creech-Jones
24	Mar 1950 - Oct 1951:	J Griffiths (1890-1975)
25	Oct 1951 - Jul 1954:	O Lyttelton, Viscount Chandos (1893-1972)
26	Jul 1954 - Oct 1959:	A Lennox Boyd, Viscount Boyd of Merton (1904-83)

Appendix 2.2 High Commissioner for Brunei (1888-1959)

(a) Governors of the Straits Settlements, ex-officio:-

1	1888-93	Sir Cecil Smith GCMG (1840-1916)
2	1893-99	Sir Charles Mitchell GCMG (d 1899)
3	1901-03	Sir Frank Swettenham GCMG (1850-1946)
4	1904-11	Sir John Anderson GCMG (1858-1918)
5	1911-19	Sir Arthur Young GCMG (1854-1938)
6	1919-27	Sir Laurence Guillemard GCMG KCB (1862-1951)
7	1927-29	Sir Hugh Clifford MCS GCMG GBE (1866-1941)
8	1930-34	Sir Cecil Clementi GCMG (1875-1951)
9	1934-41	Sir Shenton Thomas GCMG OBE (1879-1962)

(b) Governor-General of Malaya and Borneo, ex-officio:-

10	1946-48	Mr Malcolm MacDonald OM PC (1901-81)

(c) Governors of Sarawak, ex-officio:-

11	1948-49	Sir Charles Arden-Clarke (1898-1962)
12	1949	Mr DG Stewart CMG (d 1949)
13	1950-59	Sir Anthony Abell KCMG DKDP (b 1906)

*

Acting High Commissioners included the following:-

1	1889 & 1890	Sir F Dickson KCMG (?1838-1891)
2	1895, 1898 & 1899-1901	Sir A Swettenham KCMG (1846-1933)
3	1903-4 & 1906	Sir W Taylor KCMG (1848-1931)
4	1911	Sir E Brockman KCMG (1865-1943)
5	1914	Mr RJ Wilkinson CMG (1867-1941)
6	1919-20	Sir FS James KCMG (1870-1934)
7	1925	Mr ES Hose
8	1934	Sir A Caldicott KCMG Kt Bach CBE (1884-1951)
9	1936	Sir AS Small KBE CMG (1887-1944)
10	1940	Mr SW Jones CMG (1888-1962)
11	1949 & 1950	Mr CW Dawson CMG (b 1896)
12	1954	Mr CJ Thomas (b 1902)

Appendix 2.3 Secretary to High Commissioner (1906-41)

1	Aug 1903 - May 1907:	O Marks (1866-1940) CMG 1922
2	May 1907 - Jan 1912:	Sir C Severn (1869-1933) KBE CMG
3	Jan 1912 - Apr 1914: ? 1916 - ? 1916:	Sir H Marriott (1873-1929) KBE CMG
4	? 1915 - ? 1915: ? 1917 -?Aug 1919:	Sir WG Maxwell (1871-1959) KBE CMG
5	Aug 1919 - Apr 1920:	H Mackray (1877-19??)
6	Apr 1920 - Mar 1921:	AS Haynes (1878-1963) CMG OBE
7	Mar 1921 -?Feb 1923:	ME Sherwood (b 1884) MBE
8	Feb 1923 -?May 1926:	Sir AF Richards GCMG, 1st Baron Milverton (1885-1978)
9	?May 1926 - Jul 1931:	JD Hall (1877-1961) CMG
10	Jun 1928 -?May 1929:	JV Cowgill (1888-1959) CMG MC
11	Jun 1931 - Jun 1931:	Dato EEF Pretty SPMB CMG (1891-1967)
12	Jun 1937 -?Feb 1942:	R Irvine (b 1894) MC

Note: H Bathurst (1887-1930) was the substantive holder of the post in 1929-30, but in fact he never took it up, continuing as Director of Labour.

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Appendix 2.4 British Resident, Brunei (1906-59)

Transferred to Table 2 on page 112 (above)

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Appendix 2.5 Assistant Resident, Brunei (1906-14; 1931-59)

(A) Stationed in Brunei Town (1906-14)

1	May 1906 - May 1907:	FAS McClelland (1873-1947)
2	May 1907 - Jun 1908:	JC Sugars (1875-1918)
3	Jun 1908 - Feb 1910:	BO Stoney (?1882-1910)
4	Mar 1910 - May 1911: Jan 1913 - Jul 1914:	WH Lee-Warner OBE (1880-19??; retd 1928)
5	Mar 1911 - Jan 1913:	EA Dickson (1876-1956)

(B) Stationed in Kuala Belait (1931-41; 1946-9)

6	Jan 1931 - Sep 1931:	TF Carey (1903-66)
7	Oct 1931 - Sep 1933:	RC Gates (b 1906)
8	Aug 1933 - Apr 1935:	A Glencross (b 1908)
9	Apr 1935 - May 1936:	DA Somerville (1908-74)
10	Mar 1936 - May 1938:	H Hughes-Hallett (retd 1941; ex-RAF)
11	May 1938 - Apr 1940:	ECG Barrett CMG (b 1909)
12	May 1940 - Dec 1941:	Datuk RN Turner SPDK CMG (b 1912)
13	Jul 1946 - Jan 1947:	Major CJ Briscoe
14	Jan 1947 - Dec 1947:	MH Wood
15	Dec 1947 - Mar 1949:	DCI Wernham
16	Mar 1949 - Oct 1949:	I Harper (b 1918)

(C) Assistant-Resident, Brunei Town (cr 1949)

	Oct 1949 - Jun 1950:	I Harper (contd)
17	Sep 1950 - Oct 1951:	P Scanlon (b 1924)
18	Oct 1951 - Apr 1952:	RG Keech
19	Apr 1952 - Apr 1953:	MM McSporran (b 1926)
20	Apr 1953 - Oct 1954:	JT Weekes (1922-1964)
21	Oct 1954 - Jan 1956:	Capt RH Morris OBE (b 1915)
22	Jan 1956 - Jun 1958:	DL Bruen OBE (b 1922)
23	Aug 1958 - Sep 1959:	Dato WI Glass (b 1926)

(D) Second Assistant Resident, Kuala Belait (cr 1949)

24	Oct 1949 - Mar 1951:	RCS Bell
25	Mar 1951 - Nov 1953:	GAT Shaw
26	Nov 1953 - Feb 1954:	HPK Jacks (b 1913; retd 1960)
27	Feb 1954 - Jul 1956:	Pehin Dato PA Coates PSNB SPMB DSLJ OBE PHBS PJK
28	Jul 1956 - Dec 1957:	G Lloyd-Thomas (b 1918)
29	Jan 1958 - Aug 1958:	TM Ainsworth (b 1920)
30	Aug 1958 - Sep 1959:	Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Omar MBE (b 1906)

APPENDIX THREE: LISTS OF BRUNEI DEPARTMENT HEADS (1906-59)

Appendix 3.1 Brunei: Chief Police Officer (1906-59)

(A) Straits Settlements Police, Labuan and Brunei Detachment (1906-20):

1	?Jan 1906 - Jul 1917:	HG Crummey
2	Jul 1917 - Dec 1920:	GA McAfee

(B) Brunei Police Force (1921-59)

	Jan 1921 - Nov 1928:	GA McAfee
3	Nov 1928 - Sep 1937:	TE Murphy
4	Sep 1937 - Dec 1938:	TF Brown
5	Dec 1938 - (a) :	W Dawson
6	(a) - Dec 1941:	W Martin
7	Jul 1946 - Feb 1948:	HJ Spinks
8	Feb 1948 - May 1949:	TH Allen
9	May 1949 - May 1950:	W Phillips
10	Jun 1950 - Aug 1950:	RW Large (1912-c?1969) MC SC
11	Aug 1950 - Mar 1953:	Dato PE Turnbull QPM 1957 (1914-83).
12	Mar 1953 - Dec 1954:	AC Eatrell KPM CPM (b 1910)
13	Jan 1955 - Mar 1956:	JGC Kirby-Turner
14	Mar 1956 - Sep 1959:	(b) Dato AN Outram CPM 1952 QPM 1962 (b 1917)

(C) Acting Chief Police Officer:

15	Jan 1921 - Sep 1921:	Chief Inspector Mann
16	Feb 1925 - Oct 1925:	AV Cockle
	Mar 1931 - Feb 1932:	HJ Spinks
	Apr 1934 - Apr 1935:	TF Brown
17	Sep 1950 - Sep 1950: / Dec 1954 - Jan 1955:	TF Stone
18	Sep 1959 - Dec 1959:	KS Leeston-Smith

Notes (a) Mr Martin took over from Mr Dawson not later than March 1940.
(b) Dato Outram remained in the post as late as 1965.

Before 1941 the CPO Brunei was seconded from the Straits Settlements Police Force but after 1948 they tended to be seconded from Sarawak instead.

Appendix 3.2 Brunei: State Engineer (1906-59)

1.	Jan 1906 - Oct 1921:	E Roberts (?1866-1948)
2	Oct 1921 - Sep 1922:	HMS Haughton (1874-1954)
3	Sep 1922 - ? 1926:	Inche Awang bin Haji Hanafi
4	? 1926 - Jan 1927:	WH Hofland
5	Jan 1927 - ? 1930:	CE Tull
6	? 1930 - Apr 1931:	n.a. (supervised by Head of PWD/FMS)
7	Apr 1931 - Jun 1932:	supervised by Resident.
8	Jun 1932 - Oct 1934:	P O'Connell
9	Oct 1934 - Jan 1936:	EN Pinnock
10	Jan 1936 - Jan 1937:	RH Johnston
11	Jan 1937 - Apr 1938:	EW Houston
12	Apr 1938 - ? 1940:	FV Murdock
13	?Mar 1940 - ? :	A Inglis
14	? - Dec 1941:	AV Paterson
15	Jul 1946 - ? 1948:	NA Photiades
16	? 1948 - Aug 1949:	JA McLeod
17	Aug 1949 - Dec 1949:	K Natarajan (Acting)
18	Dec 1949 - May 1951:	JJ Howard (b 1922)
19	May 1951 - Aug 1952:	MA Gurr
20	Aug 1952 - Jan 1953:	WN Watterson
21	Jan 1953 - Apr 1959:	GT Myles (b 1912)
22	Apr 1959 - Sep 1959:	AEG Moore

Note: For a few months beginning in May 1956 LH Hyett was Acting Head of the Public Works Department.

Appendix 3.3 Brunei: State Medical and Health Officer (1906-59)

(A) Brunei and Labuan 1906-29

1	Jan 1906 - Sep 1907:	Dr Adamson (d 1912) *
2	May 1908 - Jan 1925:	Dr TCA Cleverton *
3	?Jan 1925 - ? 1928:	Dr HW Furnivall
4	? 1928 -?Feb 1929:	Dr JH Bowyer

(B) Brunei (1929-59)

5	Feb 1929 - May 1930:	Dr KV Veerasingham
6	May 1930 - Dec 1930:	Dr GH Swapp
7	Dec 1930 - Nov 1931:	Dr JH Winchester
8	Nov 1931 - May 1934:	Dr EW Martindell
9	May 1934 - Feb 1937:	Dr WG Evans OBE (d 1982)
10	Jan 1937 - Jun 1939:	Dr OE Fisher MB ChB DTM&H MD (b 1910)
11	Jan 1940 - Dec 1941:	Dr GM Graham
12	Aug 1945 - Nov 1946:	Major WG Toole
13	Nov 1946 - ?1948:	Dr GA Mott
14	?1948 - ?1950:	Dr LJ Clapham CBE (1912-85)
15	?1950 - Jul 1951:	Dr JP Bennett
16	Jul 1951 - Oct 1952:	Dr EC Dymond
17	Oct 1952 - Jul 1954:	Dr EH Wallace (1911-60)
18	Jul 1954 - Nov 1955:	Dr EC Vardy (1902-late 1970s)
19	Nov 1955 - May 1956:	Dr MA Rozalla (acting)
20	May 1956 - Jul 1959:	Dr MT Read MBE MC (b 1914)

Note * see CO 273/337 (20500)

Appendix 3.4 Brunei: State Finance Officer (1906-59)

1	Jan 1906 - Dec 1914:	Resident, ex-officio
2	Jan 1915 - May 1919:	EG Goldfinch
3	May 1919 - ? :	Resident, ex-officio
4	? - Dec 1941:	Liew Thian Thi
5	Jul 1946 -?Jul 1954:	Dato DH Trumble DPMB OBE PJK (b 1902)
6	?Jul 1954 - Sep 1959:	EW Cousens (b 1918)

Note For short periods in 1950 and 1952 Mr RJ Henniker-Heaton acted in the post.

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Appendix 3.5 Brunei: State Forest Officer (1933-59)

1	1933 - ?1937:	JS Smith
2	1937 - Jan 1940:	CO Flemmich
3	Jan 1940 - Jan 1941:	AJ Fyfe
4	Jan 1941 - Dec 1941: Jul 1946 - ?1948:	KH Bryant
5	?1948 - Jan 1949:	ES Erskine
6	Mar 1949 - Feb 1951:	J Grant
7	Feb 1951 - Jan 1952:	JH Nelson-Smith
8	Jan 1952 - Oct 1952:	DO Belait and LP Zehnder (Joint Acting Head)
9	Oct 1952 - Sep 1959:	BE Smythies

*

Appendix 3.6 Brunei: State Agricultural Officer (1937-59)

1	Feb 1937 - Oct 1940 :	GDP Olds
2	Oct 1940 - Dec 1941:	J Cook CBE
3	Aug 1946 - Feb 1949:	H Ritchings
4	Feb 1949 - Sep 1959:	Awang (later Dato) Hamidoon bin Awang Damit. (a)

Note: (a) Dato Hamidoon remained State Agricultural Officer as late as 1965.

From September 1951 to April 1952 he was on a course in Ceylon; and from September 1954 to August 1955 he undertook a further year's training in Devon. From September 1951 to April 1952 W Crocker was Acting State Agricultural Officer; from September to November 1954 NW Smith; and from November 1954 to August 1955 FJ Harper. Mr Harper was retained in Brunei after August 1955 as Deputy Agriculture Adviser, especially concerned with the Wet Padi Mechanical Cultivation Scheme at Mulaut.

*

Appendix 3.7 Brunei: State Education Officer (1949-59)

1 1906-1931: No appointment
2 1931-1949: Assistant Resident, ex-officio
3 1949-1954: J Pearce (1892-60)
4 1954-1959: HJ Padmore (b 1912; now deceased).

Note: From September 1956 to February 1957 PW Spicer was Acting State Education Officer. Likewise, Mr Pearce acted in the post from July 1959 until March 1960.

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Appendix 3.8 Brunei: State Wireless Engineer (later renamed Director of Telecommunications)

1 Apr 1921 - Jan 1926: PHF George
2 Jan 1926 - Jul 1926: JW Machan
3 Jul 1926 - Apr 1928: LR Watts
4 Apr 1928 - Sep 1959: Pengiran (later Pengiran Temenggong) Haji Mohamed bin Pengiran Piut (b 1906; now deceased) MBE 1953.

Note: Pengiran Mohamed remained in the post until 1967.

*

Appendix 3.9 Miscellaneous Government Officials (1906-59)

(a) Postmaster (later Superintendent of Posts and Telegraphs)

1 1908 - 1910: S Murugasu
2 c1911 - 1929: Leong Ah Ng
3 1929 - 1950: not available
4 c1950 - 1957: Kong En Choi
5 c1957 - 1959: Inche Ali Khan bin Abdul Khan

(b) State Auditor

1 c1950 - c1954: Cheong Keong Quee
2 c1954 -?Aug 1955: Hanafiah bin Abdullah
3 Aug 1955 -?Dec 1956: GET Dean
4 Dec 1956 - ?1958: M Clegg
5 ?1958 -?Sep 1959: S Cruiks

Note: After 1906 Brunei's accounts were inspected by the Auditor-General of the Straits Settlements. In 1910 that officer reported as follows (the relevance of the first paragraph becomes apparent in the second):

"14. The revenue accounts of Labuan were audited in that island in September (1910). The Treasury accounts are audited regularly as they come in, but the difficulty of communication causes great delay. Owing to the want of experience in the person of the District Officer and the stupidity of his clerk, the accounts were in a very unsatisfactory condition altogether...A change in the officer and some instructions and explanations at the time of the audit visit in September have brought about some improvement.

"15. The accounts of Brunei, which is not part of this Colony, are audited by this office. They are of small amount and cause much trouble for the same reason as the Labuan accounts".

CO 273/359 (37770) Auditor General's report, paragraphs 14-15, enclosed in Sir A Young to CO, No 478 (Straits Settlements), 16 November 1910.

*

(c) State Marine Officer

1 Dec 1951 - Apr 1957: JK Corrigan
2 Apr 1957 - Sep 1959: EH Muton

Note: In March to August 1954 BD Johnson acted in the post.

(d) Deputy Legal Adviser

1 ? 1952 - Jan 1958: DB McGilligan
2 Jan 1958 - Sep 1959: J McP Adams

Note: GVC Young acted in this post August 1955 to June 1956, September 1956 to January 1957, and August to November 1958.

(e) State Supplies Officer

1 Apr 1952 - Oct 1956: JS Montgomery
2 Oct 1956 -?Jan 1958: SJ Clark
3 ?Jan 1958 -?Sep 1959: GCG Prindable

(f) State Survey Officer (cr 1 July 1952)

1 Jul 1952 - May 1953: AO Stockings
2 May 1953 -?Jan 1955: RN Baron
3 Jan 1955 - Sep 1959: MJ Hurley

Note: From September 1957 to August 1958 R Gwilliam acted in the post.

(g) State Information Officer (cr 1953)

1 1953: Assistant Resident, Brunei Town (ex-officio)
2 1954: Inche Suhami Haji Amin (recruited from Malaya)
3 1957-61: Pengiran Muhammad Yusuf bin Pengiran Haji Abdul (b 1923) now Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Setia Negara Yusuf DK SPMB POAS PHBS PJK Hon DL (Vancouver).

(h) Controller of Customs and Excise (cr 1955)

1 Jul 1955 - Sep 1959: RE Chater MBE (b 1911)

(i) Commissioner of Development (cr 1954)

1 Oct 1954 - Oct 1958: ER Bevington CMG CEng (b 1914)
2 Mar 1957 - Nov 1957: Capt RH Morris OBE (b 1915) - acting

(j) Controller of Civil Aviation

1 Oct 1954 - Oct 1958: ER Bevington
2 ?Oct 1958 - Sep 1959: Dato WI Glass (b 1926)

(k) Director of Broadcasting

1 Mar 1957 - Jan 1960: J Duclos (b 1916)

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APPENDIX FOUR: LISTS OF SENIOR MALAYS (1906-59)

Appendix 4.1 Sultans of Brunei (1906-59)

Transferred to page 125, footnote 58 (above).

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Appendix 4.2 Wazirs (1906-59)

(a) Pengiran Bendahara

1	c1883 - Jul 1917:	Pengiran Anak Besar bin Pengiran Tajudin (c1829-1917)
2	Feb 1918 - Sep 1943:	Pengiran Anak Abdul Rahman ibni Pengiran Muda Omar Ali Saifuddin (d 1943)
3	Jul 1947 - Jun 1950:	Pengiran Muda (later Sultan Sir) Omar Ali Saifuddin GCVO 1972 KCMG 1953 (b 1914)
4	Jul 1950 - Nov 1951:	Pengiran Anak Muhammad Yassin bin Pengiran Omar Ali OBE 1950 (1878-1951)
5	Aug 1952 - :	Pengiran Muda Hashim ibni Pengiran Anak Abdul Rahman

Note: This post was vacant between September 1943 and July 1947.

(b) Pengiran Pemancha

1	c1898 - Dec 1912:	Pengiran Muhammad Salleh (d 1912)
2	Jul 1913 - Jul 1950:	Pengiran Anak Muhammad Yassin (later Pengiran Bendahara - see above, No 4).
3	Jul 1950 - Nov 1982:	Pengiran Anak Muhammad ibni Pengiran Anak Abdul Rahman DK DPMB POAS OBE (1918-82)

Note: Professor Brown comments: "Pengiran muda is the title used for sons of the Sultan and Pengiran Bendahara (first vizier) and for the eldest son of the Pengiran Di-Gadong (second vizier) if their mothers are noble (i.e. if the sons are gahara). Pengiran anak is the title of non-gahara sons of Sultans, of Sultans' daughters, of all children of the Pengiran Di-Gadong other than his eldest gahara son, and at least of all remaining gahara children of viziers...". Source: DE Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate - Brunei 1970 - p 24.

Appendix 4.3 Pengiran Shahbandar (1906-1959)

1 1906 - 1912: Pengiran Sahibul bin Ismail (d 1912)
2 1918 - 1949: Pengiran Anak Hashim bin Pengiran Shahbandar
3 1958 - : Hon Pengiran Haji Muhammad Salleh bin Pengiran Haji Muhammad DPMB POAS

Note: Standing subject to correction, no appointment appears to have been made to this office in 1912-18 and 1949-58.

*

Appendix 4.4 Secretary to Resident (or 1935).

1 1935 - 1941: Inche (later Pehin Dato) Ibrahim bin Muhammad Jahfar DK DPMB POAS CBE (1902-71)
2 1946 - 1959: Inche (later Dato Haji) Muhammad Taib bin Awang Besar DSLJ MBE (c1910-74)

*

Appendix 4.5 District Officer, Brunei and Muara

1 1906 - 1921: not available
2 ?1921 - 1932: Pengiran Anak Hashim bin Pengiran Shahbandar (c1864-1949). See Appendix 4.3 (No 2)
3 1932 - 1935: Inche (later Pehin Dato) Ibrahim bin Muhammad Jahfar (see Appendix 4.4, No 1)
4 1935 - 1946: not available
5 1946 - 1956: Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Omar Ali MBE 1952 (b 1906).
6 1956 - 1960: Pehin Orang Kaya Shahbandar Haji Ahmad bin Daud MBE 1954 (b 1907; now deceased)

Note: In 1954 and 1958 Inche Ajmain bin Abdul Razak temporarily filled the post. Similar duty was performed by Pengiran Ahmad bin Pengiran Bendahara Haji Muhammad Yassin in 1955 and by Mr P McAfee (1923-73) in 1957.

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Appendix 4.6 District Officer, Belait (1907-1959)

1	Jan 1906 - Sep 1907:	no appointment
2	Sep 1907 - ?1921:	Pengiran Anak Hashim (see Appendix 4.5 No 2)
3	?1921 - May 1924:	Pengiran Anak Haji Muhammad (d 1926)
4	May 1924 - ?1938:	Abang Seruji, Pehin Dato Shahbandar (d 1947)
5	?1939 -?Sep 1941:	Inche Muhammad Edin
6	Sep 1941 - ? 1946:	Inche Muhammad Taib (see Appendix 4.4 No 2)
7	1946 - 1947:	not available
8	?1947 - Jun 1956:	Pehin Orang Kaya Shahbandar Ahmad (see Appendix 4.5, No 6)
9	Jun 1956 - Aug 1958:	Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Omar (see Appendices 2.5 No 30 and 4.5 No 6)
10	Aug 1958 - Sep 1959:	Pengiran Momin bin Pengiran Haji Ismail

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Appendix 4.7 District Officer, Tutong (1906-59)

1	Jan 1906 - Sep 1908:	not available
2	Sep 1908 - Aug 1911:	Inche Mohidin (d 1911)
3	Aug 1911 - ?1918:	Haji Muhammad (or Dato Patinggi, d 1930)
4	by 1918 - May 1924:	Abang Seruji (or Pehin Dato Shahbandar 1920: see Appendix 4.6, No 4)
5	May 1924 - Apr 1926:	Pengiran Anak Haji Muhammad (see Appendix 4.6, No 3)
6	Apr 1926 - 1942:	not available
7	? 1942 - Jul 1957:	Pengiran Ahmad bin Pengiran Anak Luba (b 1899)
8	?Jul 1957 - Nov 1961:	Dato Setia Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Pemancha Haji Muhammad Salleh

Note: Inche Awang bin Haji Hanafi may have been DO Tutong 1926-35.

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Appendix 4.8 District Officer, Temburong (1906-1959)

1	Jan 1906 - mid 1907:	first holder dismissed for malpractices
2	mid 1907 - 1908:	no appointment
3	?1908 - ? 1912:	Abang Arip
4	1912 - ?1918:	Abang Seruji (see Appendix 4.7, No 3)
5	1918 - 1924:	not available
6	in 1924 - ?1935:	Inche Abdul Rahim bin Andor
7	?1935 - ? 1946:	Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Omar (see Appendix 4.6, No 9)
8	? 1946 - ?1947:	POK Shahbandar Ahmad (see Appendix 4.6, No 8)
9	?1947 - Jun 1957:	Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Pemancha (see Appendix 4.7, No 8)
10	Jun 1957 - Sep 1960:	Pengiran Ahmad bin Pengiran Bendahara Muhammad Yassin

Note: From February to August 1955 Inche Ajmain bin Abdul Razak acted in the post.

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Appendix 4.9 District Officer, Seria (1954-9)

1	Mar 1954 - Feb 1955: Jul 1955 - Apr 1956:	Inche Sunny bin Ahmat BAS
2	Feb 1955 - Jul 1955:	Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Pemancha (see Appendix 4.8, No 9)
3	?Apr 1956 -?Dec 1957:	Inche Abdul Ghani
4	Dec 1957 - Mar 1958:	PG McAfee (1923-73)
5	Mar 1958 - Sep 1959:	Inche Ghani bin Hassan.

*

Appendix 4.10 Chief Kathi

From 1906 to 1913 the imam was Haji Mohidin (dismissed 1913). The first Kathi, appointed in 1913, was Khatib Abdul Rajak, who may have remained in office until 1940. A change of kathis certainly took place in 1940.

Perhaps from 1940, certainly from 1947, until the end of the Residential Era the incumbent was Pengiran Haji Muhammad Salleh SMB. Acting Chief Kathi in 1954 was POK Shahbandar Ahmad (see Appendix 4.8, No 8).

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Appendix 4.11 State Custom, Religion and Welfare Officer (or 1954)

1 1954-1972: Pengiran Pemancha (see Appendix 4.2b, No 3)

Note: In 1958 Inche (later Dato) Marsal bin Maun temporarily filled this post.

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APPENDIX FIVE: MISCELLANEOUS PERSONAGES

Appendix 5.1 General Manager, BMPC/BSPC

Mr HL Fountain, one of the drillers present when oil was first struck at Seria in 1929, writes (letter to the author, 16 September 1983) as follows:

"The management of Sarawak Oilfields Limited (SOL) consisted of (1) the General Manager and (2) the Assistant General Manager (AGM).

The General Manager of SOL, based in Miri (Sarawak) was responsible for all Shell's operations in Sarawak and Brunei but he generally delegated the administration of the outposts to his AGM. Hence SOL's AGM was virtually the Manager of the BMPC, although he always resided in Miri".

Year	General Manager SOL	AGM
1929	Hon TG Cochrane	FF Marriott
1932	AH Noble	FF Marriott
c1935	FF Marriott	LA Toone

The latter were still in office in March 1939, when Mr Fountain left Brunei. By 1941 a Mr Parry was Manager of the BMPC; he became one of the victims of the massacre perpetrated by the Japanese at Long Nawang (see above, p 319).

After the Second World War the General Manager of the BMPC (as follows) resided in Brunei itself rather than in Sarawak:

1945–51	GO Higgins
1951–59	Dato RE Hales CBE (b 1904)
1959–63	Dato PM Linton (b 1910)
1963–	G Williams (b 1918)

(In 1957, of course, the BMPC was renamed BSPC).

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Appendix 5.2 Editor, "Borneo Bulletin" (first published on 7 November 1953)

1	Nov 1953 - Apr 1958:	WF Runagall
2	Apr 1958 - Feb 1963:	R Shaw
3	Feb 1961 - Oct 1961:	C Bryce (acting)
4	Feb 1963 - ? 1964:	L Carroll
5	? 1964 - Oct 1975:	JR Carver
6	Oct 1975 - Apr 1979:	H Mabbutt
7	Apr 1979 - :	L Brindson

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Appendix 5.3 Resident, Limbang (Sarawak)

1	1890 - 1909:	OF Ricketts (c1856-c1943)
2	1909 - 1911:	K Ivone-Chaldicott
3	1911 - 1914:	DA Owen (1880-1952)
4	1914 - 1920:	HSB Johnson (d 1941)
5	1920 - 1927:	FF Boult (1879-1952)
6	1928 - 1933:	F Kortright
7	1933 - 1934:	EO Bruce
8	1934 :	A Macpherson
9	1934 - 1935:	JR Combe
	1935 - 1936:	EO Bruce
10	1936 - 1938:	RL Daubeny

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APPENDIX SIX: STATISTICS

Appendix 6.1 Brunei: Official Estimates of Population Year By Year

1906-10	not available
1911*	21,718
1912-20	not available
1921*	25,454
1922-6	not available
1927	37,878
1928	35,000
1929	29,000
1930	31,170
1931*	30,135
1932	30,590
1933	32,900
1934	33,971
1935	33,732
1936	34,016
1937	35,963
1938	37,868
1939	not available
1940	o40,000
1941-5	not available (enemy occupation)
1946	48,034
1947*	40,670
1948	42,537
1949	45,000 - 50,000
1950	not available
1951	45,000
1952	49,624
1953	54,109
1954	60,330
1955	65,342
1956	71,401
1957	74,646
1958	80,277
1959	85,227
1960*	83,877

Notes: * census figures.

It will be noted that there was a tendency rather to over-estimate the number of inhabitants: compare the census years with the year immediately preceding. The accuracy of these figures is important because it affects other data, such as birth rates, death rates, infant mortality rate, school enrolment rates and so on.

Sources: Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports (except 1940: see p 533, above).

Appendix 6.2 Brunei: Finance 1907-41 (in Straits' dollars)

Year	Income	Expenditure	Repayment of National Debt	National Debt (total at year's end)
1907	51,777	93,334	-	200,000
1908	43,539	75,738	-	220,000
1909	54,562	76,948	-	300,000
1910	77,051	73,513	-	300,000
1911	109,430	79,318	-	400,000
1912	140,847	122,762	-	400,000
1913	165,082	138,665	-	433,000
1914	126,972	163,352	-	439,750(a)
1915	129,529	114,518	-	439,750
1916	133,223	113,317	-	439,750
1917	134,321	106,011	-	439,750
1918	136,160	122,958	-	439,750
1919	170,155	138,844	-	439,750
1920	206,253	223,690	9,750	430,000
1921	165,890	197,469	2,683	427,317
1922	209,702	188,250	? 2,817	444,500(b)
1923	228,272	189,208	4,500	440,000
1924	268,024	247,614	4,500	435,500
1925	345,573	245,286	5,500	430,000
1926	396,834	303,394	5,500	424,500
1927	440,870	426,981	5,500	419,000
1928	393,875	350,005	6,000	413,000
1929	345,290	344,092	6,000	407,000
1930	333,069	373,604	6,000	401,000
1931	342,011	322,791	6,000	395,000
1932	362,403	334,328	6,000	389,000
1933	580,750	514,812	6,000	383,000
1934	645,021	545,021	4,800	378,200
1935	813,532	786,201	245,200	133,000
1936	928,689	779,521	133,000	nil
1937	1,049,293	653,149	-	-
1938	1,179,979	1,476,725	-	-
1939	1,274,644	1,181,325	-	-
1940	1,556,354	1,462,174	-	-
1941	1,325,912	1,137,219	-	-

Notes: (a) Loans totalling $500,000 were negotiated from the FMS during the years 1906-11, but $60,250 of the final instalment was not drawn.

(b) In 1922 $20,000 was borrowed from the Straits Settlements.

Sources: Brunei Annual Reports, CO 531/3 (22583) and CO 531/6 (28412)

Appendix 6.3 Brunei: Finance 1946-59 (in Malayan dollars)

Year	Income	Expenditure	Surplus
1946(a)	774,145	679,596	94,549
1947	4,389,974	1,797,597	2,592,377
1948	6,586,299	3,740,254	2,846,045
1949(b)	8,736,148	4,228,489	4,507,659
1950	17,302,869	7,112,504	10,190,365
1951(c)	69,390,905	7,488,048	61,902,857
1952	75,652,619	13,846,239	61,806,380
1953	98,976,643	22,646,697	76,329,946
1954	96,035,394	23,360,885	72,674,509
1955(d)	102,669,423	28,933,959	73,735,464
1956	118,037,004	29,657,397	88,379,607
1957	130,954,281	39,401,515	91,552,766
1958	131,273,257	34,282,740	96,990,517
1959	129,568,762	30,419,136	99,149,626

Notes: (a) Second half of 1946 only.
(b) The pound sterling was devalued in 1949.
(c) Introduction of income tax.
(d) In the Brunei Annual Report 1957 the figures for 1955 were changed to 104,104,343; 28,768,753 and 75,335,590 respectively.

Source: Compiled by the author from Brunei Annual Reports

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Appendix 6.4 Brunei: Trade 1906-41 (in $ Straits)

Year	Exports	Imports	Total Trade	Trade Balance
(a) Brunei Town only (1906-14):-				
1906	n.a.	60,878	n.a.	n.a.
1907	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1908	78,909	80,029	158,938	- 1,120
1909	237,112	70,207	307,319	+ 166,905
1910	245,639	81,985	327,624	+ 163,654
1911	n.a.	?87,074	n.a.	n.a.
1912	233,676	84,883	318,559	+ 148,793
1913	216,248	88,948	305,196	+ 127,300
1914	216,282	126,743	343,025	+ 89,539
(b) Whole State (1915-41)				
1915	543,707	234,004	777,711	+ 309,703
1916	734,254	254,756	989,010	+ 479,498
1917	952,260	189,451	1,141,711	+ 762,809
1918	1,033,734	362,853	1,396,587	+ 670,881
1919	1,134,864	614,061	1,748,925	+ 520,803
1920	1,173,252	722,678	1,895,930	+ 450,574
1921	791,028	410,854	1,201,882	+ 380,174
1922	577,305	391,627	968,932	+ 185,678
1923	900,307	470,463	1,370,770	+ 429,844
1924	867,190	803,242	1,670,432	+ 63,948
1925	1,859,736	1,013,418	2,873,154	+ 846,318
1926	1,651,048	1,434,889	3,085,937	+ 216,159
1927	1,443,703	1,359,276	2,802,979	+ 84,427
1928	1,058,071	1,385,744	2,443,815	- 327,673
1929	1,251,335	1,484,293	2,735,628	- 232,958
1930	807,449	2,536,422	3,343,871	-1,728,973
1931	501,494	2,193,511	2,695,005	-1,692,017
1932	1,505,738	2,430,247	3,935,985	- 924,509
1933	2,191,037	2,411,768	4,602,805	- 220,731
1934	3,439,501	1,751,868	5,191,369	+1,687,633
1935	3,778,655	1,994,059	5,772,714	+1,784,596
1936	4,205,270	1,869,994	6,075,264	+2,335,276
1937	5,595,240	2,516,154	8,111,394	+3,079,086
1938	6,580,482	2,821,799	9,402,281	+3,758,683
1939	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1940	9,622,973	3,787,160	13,410,133	+5,835,813
1941	6,624,835	2,725,809	9,350,644	+3,899,026

Sources: Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports.

Appendix 6.5 Brunei: Trade 1946-1959 (in Malayan dollars)

Year	Total Trade	Imports	Exports
1946(a)	4,112,408	3,217,962	894,446
1947	n.a.	16,229,715	n.a.
1948	84,460,015	35,207,305	49,252,710
1949	97,897,961	35,835,170	62,062,791
1950	265,603,555	60,265,034	205,338,521
1951	330,000,570	50,358,830	279,641,740
1952	352,353,171	76,719,967	275,633,204
1953	405,915,275	123,322,162	282,593,113
1954	373,357,401	99,880,894	273,476,507
1955	396,802,916	93,384,093	303,418,823
1956	444,375,194	114,083,317	330,291,877
1957	447,448,175	107,463,542	339,984,633
1958	415,543,815	88,665,955	326,877,860
1959	372,970,577	62,965,731	310,004,846

Note: (a) Second half only of 1946.

Sources: Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports

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Appendix 6.6 Abstract of Judicial Statistics 1906-59

Year	Number of Police	Crime Reports	Court Cases:- Criminal	Civil	Total	People imprisoned: During Year	Held at Year's End
1906	12	70b	10a	11a	21a	n.a.	6
1910	31	n.a.	50a	57a	107	n.a.	n.a.
1915	35	n.a.	104a	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	7
1920	39	195	416	445	861	165	n.a.
1925	57	265	283	532	815	65	29c
1930	63	289	255	506	761	44	15
1935	82	591	460	438	895	30	9
1938	85	539	511	273	784	18	n.a.
1947	n.a.	784	422	46	468	64	n.a.
1950	185	n.a.	692	175	867	60	n.a.
1955	224	2119d	1728	145	1873	179e	n.a.
1959	328	2211fg	1527	88	165	84h	n.a.

Notes: a: Brunei Town only
b: 1907
c: 1926
d: includes 808 traffic offences
e: 1954
f: 1958
g: includes 1,409 traffic offences
h: 1957

Sources: Compiled by author from Brunei Annual Reports

APPENDIX SEVEN: A WHO'S WHO OF PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH THE BRITISH RESIDENCY IN BRUNEI 1906-59

Appendix 7: Who's Who

1 Abang Seruji, Pehin Dato Shahbandar. District Officer in Tutong (by 1918) transferred to Belait in May 1924. Appointed Pehin Dato Shahbandar in 1920 with a seat on the State Council. Died 1947.

2 Pengiran Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Omar Ali (b 1906). District Officer in Temburong before the Japanese occupation. District Officer successively of Brunei-Muara and Belait (1946-58). 1958-9: Assistant Resident, Kuala Belait. Continued in the Brunei Government's service after the Residential Era, e.g. in 1974 he was appointed Speaker of the Legislative Council. MBE (1952).

3 Sir Anthony Foster Abell (b 1906) DKDP (1954) KCMG (1952). Ed. Repton and Magdalen College, Oxford. 1929-49: Colonial Service, Nigeria. 1950-9: Governor and Commander in Chief, Sarawak, and High Commissioner for Brunei. Member MCC. Retd 1959.

4 Inche Jasin Affendy (b c1923). 1956: Member Executive Committee PRB. April 1957: Secretary-General PRB. 1962: Military Commander TNKU. May 1963: captured by British troops. 1963-73: internment without trial. 1973-date: exile in Malaysia.

5 Pehin Orang Kaya Shahbandar Ahmad bin Daud (b c1907) MBE (1954). 1925: punkah-puller for Mr Pretty. 1925: Customs Department. 1928: Clerk. 1941-5: Controller of Food Rationing (along with eight others). District Officer successively in Temburong (1946-7), Belait (1948-1956), and Brunei-Muara (1956-60). 1961: Appointed First Resettlement Officer. 1965: one of the seven directors of the National Bank. Also a Privy Councillor, Legislative Councillor and a member of the Council of Ministers. Father of Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad (see below). Died: ?1970s.

6 HH Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin (1913-50) KBE (1949) CMG (1940). Son of Sultan Muhammad Jemal. Reigned 1924-50 (Regency 1924-31). First Brunei Sultan to visit the United Kingdom (1932). Married princess from Selangor (1934). Daughter, Princess Ehsan (b 10 October 1935) excluded from the succession in 1950.

7 Sir John Anderson (1858-1918) GCMG (1909) KCB (1913). 1877: MA from Aberdeen University. 1892-1904: Colonial Office. 1904-11: Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner for Brunei. 1911-16: Permanent Under-Secretary of State, CO. 1916-18: Governor, Ceylon.

8 Sheikh Ahmad Azahari (b 1928/9). RC Mission education. Sent to Java by the Japanese for training as a veterinary surgeon. Post-war: participated in Indonesian independence struggles. 1953: imprisoned in Brunei. 1956: Leader Partai Rakyat Brunei. August 1962: PRB won 90%

of the poll in District and Legislative Council elections. Dec 1962: Brunei Revolt (which appears to have occurred before Sheikh Azahari was ready). 1962-date: exile in Indonesia (Bogor).

9 Mr CA Bampfylde (1856-1918) SCS: see above, p 69 (fn 33).

10 Mr ER Bevington (b 1914) CMG (1961) CEng. Ed: Cambridge University. 1937-63 HM Overseas Service. 1937: served in Gilbert and Ellice Islands. 1942: DO, Fiji. 1945-6: Sec., Commission of Enquiry into cost of living allowances, Nigeria. 1950: Administrative Officer, Fiji. 1951: Asst. Col. Sec. (Dev't), Fiji. 1954-8: Commissioner of Development, Brunei. 1958-61: Finance Secretary, Fiji. 1962-3: Commissioner of Development, Fiji. 1964-7: Senior Project Engineer, Wright Rain Ltd. 1967-70: Appeals Inspector, Ministry of Housing and Local Government. 1970-: Senior Housing and Planning Inspector, Department of the Environment.

11 Mr JG Black (b 1896). 1920: joined MCS. 1927: Assistant Adviser, Trengganu. 1930: Resident, Labuan. 1937-40: Resident, Brunei. 1940: DO Seremban (Negri Sembilan). 1942-5: interned by the enemy in Changi gaol, Singapore. 1946-8: British Adviser, Trengganu. 1948: British Adviser, Perak. Now (1985) living in retirement in Edinburgh.

12 Mr Betram Brooke (1876-1965). Second son of Rajah Sir Charles Brooke.

13 Sir Charles Brooke (1829-1917) GCMG (1888). Rajah of Sarawak (1868-1917). Son of Rev. Charles Johnson and Emma Brooke, sister of Rajah Sir James Brooke. Ed: Crewkerne Grammar School. 1842: entered Royal Navy. 1852: entered SCS. 1852-63: Tuan Muda. 1863-8: Rajah Muda. 1868-1917: Rajah. "Although he occupied the position of untrammelled despot, his sole ambition was the well-being of his subjects. For nearly seventy years he laboured on their behalf, and the little nation thus built up stands as a remarkable monument to his memory" (Deshon).

14 Sir (Charles) Vyner Brooke (1874-1963) GCMG (1928), third Rajah of Sarawak (1917-46). Son of the second Rajah, Sir C Brooke (see No 13, above). Ed. Cambridge University.

15 Sir James Brooke (1803-68) KCB DCL, first Rajah of Sarawak (1841-68). Uncle of Sir C Brooke (No 13, above).

16 Mr Harry Brooke (1879-1926), third son of Sir C Brooke (see No 13, above).

17 Mr Frank Nestle Butterworth (1875-1952). Ed: University College, Nottingham. c1901: Joined Island Trading Syndicate in Brunei. 1905-13: Manager, cutch factory. Published The City of Many Waters and a series of novels under the pen-name, "Peter Blundell".

18 Mr Douglas Graham Campbell (1867-1918): see p 106, fn. 3 (above).

19 Major GS ("Toby") Carter DSO. New Zealander. 1934-60: SOL. 1945-6: SRD.

20 Sir Geoffrey Edmund Cator (1884-1973). 1907: Joined MCS. 1916-21: British Resident, Brunei. CMG 1936. KBE 1946. Died 21 April 1973.

21 Mr Harvey Chevallier (c1860-1923). 1890: Asst DO, Kuala Pilah (Negri Sembilan). 1896: DO Kuala Pilah. 1907: DO Dindings. 1907 (May): Acting Resident, Labuan and Brunei. 1908 (Jan): Acting Resident, Pahang. 1909-13: Acting Resident, Labuan and Brunei. 1915: retd. 1916: temporarily returned because of wartime shortage of officers. (1913: Class II of MCS scale). Originally went out to the east as a member of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company.

22 Sir Hugh Clifford (1866-1941) MCS GCMG GBE. 1883: Joined MCS. 1896-9: BR Pahang. 1900-1: Governor of North Borneo. 1901-3: BR Pahang. 1903-7: Col. Sec., Trinidad and Tobago. Governor successively of Ceylon (1907-12), Gold Coast (1912-19), Nigeria (1919-25), Ceylon (1925-7) and the Straits Settlements (1927-9). 1902: published article "A Dying Kingdom. Author of numerous books.

23 Mr AE Collins (1871-1926) CMG (1911). Ed.: City of London School and Cambridge University. 1894: Joined CO. 1898: 1st class clerk. 1907: Principal Clerk. 1907-9: Head of West Indies Department. 1909-19: Head, Eastern Department. 1920-6: Head, Far Eastern Department. Died 5 February 1926.

24 Mr William Clarke Cowie (c1847-1910): see p 42, fn 70 (above).

25 Datuk Richard John Froude Curtis PJK (b 1897). 1920: Joined MCS. 1928-9: BR Brunei. 1929: BR Labuan. 1931: OAG's ADC. 1948: Resident Commissioner, Perlis (to c1951). 1960: Comptroller, Sultan of Selangor's Household. Member of the Order of the Crown of Selangor.

26 Mr Leslie Harold Newsom Davis (b 1909) CMG (1957). Joined MCS (1932). 1938-40: Private Secretary to Governor. 1942-5: interned Singapore. 1946-7: DO Seremban. 1948: BR Brunei. 1948-50: Assistant Adviser, Muar. 1951-2: Secretary to Member for Education, Malaya.

1952-3: Member for Industrial and Social Relations. 1953-5: Secretary for Defence and Internal Security, Singapore. 1955-7: Permanent Secretary to Ministry of Communications and Works, Singapore. 1958-63: Special Representative of RGA in Singapore.

27 Sir George Vandaleur Fiddes (1858-1936) GCMG (1917) CB (1905). Ed.: Dulwich and Brasenose, Oxford. 1881: Joined CO. 1896: 1st cls clerk. 1897-1902: Secretary successively to Lord Milner, Lord Roberts and the Transvaal Administration. 1902: returned to CO as Principal Clerk. 1907: Accounting Officer. 1909: Assistant Under-Secretary of State. 1916-18: Chairman West Indies Currency Board. 1916-21: Permanent Under Secretary of State, CO. Died 22 December 1936.

28 Dr OE Fisher (b 1910) MBChB (Leeds) 1933, DTMoH (London) 1935, MD (Leeds) 1952. 1935-47: Malayan Medical Service. Jan 1937 - June 1939: Medical Officer and Asst. Controller of Labour, Brunei. 1940-1: Medical Officer, Penang General Hospital. 1942-5: Civilian internee in Japanese-occupied Singapore. As a result of privations suffered during six months' imprisonment by the Kempeitai following the "Double Tenth" Raid on Changi in 1943-4, Dr Fisher contracted pulmonary tuberculosis and was eventually to end his Malayan career in 1947. 1949: started anew as a chest physician in the United Kingdom until retirement in 1976. (Courtesy of Dr OE Fisher, letter to the author, 8 February 1985, p 2).

29 Sir GEJ ("Edward") Gent (1895-48) KCMG (1946) OBE (1935) DSO and MC (WW I). Son of Judge. Ed.: King's School Canterbury and Trinity College, Oxford. 1914-19: Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. 1920: Asst Principal Clerk, CO. 1923: Acting Principal. 1927: Principal. 1930: Seconded temporarily to India Office. 1932: Permanent Under-Secretary for Malaya, Hong Kong and Ceylon. 1946-8: Governor of Malayan Union (later Federation). Died in air disaster, 4 July 1948.

30 Mr John Orman Gilbert (b 1907) CMG (1958). SCS 1928-58. 1940: DO. 1941-2: avoided capture by Japanese. 1942-5: served in India. 1945-6: BMA/BB. 1946-53: Resident, 4th Division (Sarawak). 1953: Coronation Medal. 1953-8: BR Brunei. 1959: retd.

31 Sir Gilbert Edmund Augustine Grindle (1869-1934) KCMG (1922) CB (1919). Scholar of Corpus Christi, Oxford. 1893: 2nd cls clerk, CO. 1898: Asst. Priv. Sec to Mr Chamberlain. 1900: 1st cls clk. 1909: Principal Clerk. 1916-25: Assistant Under-Secretary of State. 1925-31: Deputy to Permanent Under Secretary. 1931: retd. 1934: d. 6 February.

32 Sir Laurence Nunns Guillemard (1862-1951) GCMG (1927) KCB (1910). Ed.: Charterhouse and Trinity College, Cambridge. 1888-1902: Treasury. 1902-8: Deputy Chairman, Board of Inland Revenue. 1909-19: Governor, Straits Settlements. 1937: Trivial Fond Records. 1951: d 13 December.

33 Professor Major Dato Tom Harrisson (1911-76) DSO OBE DSLJ. Ed.: Harrow and Pembroke College, Cambridge. 1930s: Oxford Expeditions to Lapland and Borneo. 1936: Mass Observation. 1941-4: Radio Critic, The Observer. 1945-6: SRD. 1947-66: Curator, Sarawak Museum. 1967-76: Professor, University of Sussex.

34 Pengiran Anak Hashim (c1864-1949). Son of Pengiran Shahbandar of 'Shahbandar War' fame (1889-90). 1907-32: DO first in Belait and then in Brunei-Muara. 1918-49: Pengiran Shahbandar and State Councillor.

35 HH Sultan Hashim (b c1820/5; d 1906), son of HH Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin II (r c1824-52). Pengiran Temenggong (1855-85). Sultan (1885-1906).

36 Mr Godfrey Hewett (1859-1932). Late 1880s to late 1890s: BNBC service. 1900-4: British Consul for Borneo territories. 1904-14: consular service at Rio Grande (1904-8), Pernambuco (1908-9), Antofagusta (1909-11), Paramaribo (1911-14). Retd 1914.

37 Dr RH Hickling (b 1920) CMG (1968) QC PhD. 1950-5: Assistant Attorney General, Sarawak. 1976-date: Lecturer, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

38 Pehin Dato Ibrahim bin Muhammad Jahfar (1902-71). 1932-5: DO Brunei-Muara. 1935-41: Secretary to Resident. 1941-5: State Secretary. 1946: retd from BAS. 1950s: Secretary to Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin III. 1959-62: Mentri Besar. Later Speaker of the Legislative Council. "A faithful friend and ally" (Mr JG Black, letter to the author, 12 April 1983, paragraph 7).

39. Mr Arthur Louis Keyser (1856-1924). 1884: PS to Gov., Fiji. 1888-97: FMS service. 1898-1900: Acting Consul, Brunei. 1900-18: consular service, successively at Berbera, Qaila, Cadiz, Seville, and Quito. Retd 1920. Published People and Places (1922) and Trifles and Travels (1923). 1924: died, 7 March.

40 Inche AA Hapidz Laxamana. 1956: Treasurer PRB. (1956: member of the Steering Committee set up to secure Government Registration of the Party. "Perhaps the most dangerous (of the PRB leaders)" but now (1985) a prosperous businessman in Bandar Seri Begawan. Managing Proprietor of the Malay Trading Company, a general 'import and export' firm. Captured in December 1962 during the revolt and given "rehabilitation training" (Borneo Bulletin, 25 May 1963). Freed in late May 1963 (Borneo Bulletin, 1 June 1963).

41 Mr William Hamilton Lee-Warner (b 1880) OBE (1928). Son of Sir William Lee-Warner GCSI LLD of the Indian and Home Civil Services. Ed.: Rugby and University College, Oxford. 1903: Cadet MCS. 1907: Ag. Asst. DO, Batu Gajah. 1909: May to Feb: Ag 2nd Asst to Res-Gen and PS to Res-Gen FMS. 1910 (Feb) - 1911 (Feb) and Oct 1912 to July 1914: Assistant Resident, Brunei. Feb to Oct 1912: temp 2nd cls clk, CO. 1914-22: miscellaneous posts. 1922-8: Director of Political Intelligence, Malaya. Retd in 1928.

42 Alan Lennox-Boyd, Viscount Boyd of Merton PC CH (1904-83). 1951-2: Minister of State for Colonial Affairs. 1954-9: Secretary of State for the Colonies.

43 Dato PM Linton (b 1912). General Manager BSPC 1959-63. Also served in Brunei, 1935-7.

44. Sir Charles Prestwood Lucas (1853-1931). Ed at Winchester and Balliol College, Oxford. 1877: first in the Civil Service List and was appointed to the CO, eventually becoming an Assistant Under Secretary of State in 1897. 1907: first head of the Dominions Department. KCB (1912), KCMG (1907). Called to the Bar (1885). Author of "numerous valuable books about the British Empire". Principal of the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street (1912).

45. Mr Malcolm Stewart McArthur (1872-1934). Son of a General. 1895: Cadet MCS. 1896-1922: MCS. 1896-1904: various posts in Penang, Selangor, Singapore. April to November 1904; and Oct-Dec 1905: Acting British Consul in Brunei. 1906-1908: British Resident, Labuan and Brunei. April 1908: Acting Federal Secretary, FMS. Jan 1909: Ag Sec to BR, Selangor. Oct 1909: Ag Asst Col Sec, SS. (1911: promoted to Class II, MCS). April 1915: Ag Under-Secretary, FMS. Feb 1916: Under-Secretary, FMS. Jul 1919 to Oct 1922: Ag British Adviser, Kedah. Retd in Oct 1922. Died in February 1934.

46 Mr Charles Frederick Cunningham Macaskie (1888-1969) CMG (1946). Barrister at Law; FRGS. 1910-41: BNBC Service. 1913: 1st class magistrate. 1916-19: military service (mentioned in despatches). 1930 and 1937: OAG, North Borneo. 1932-4: seconded to Sarawak. 1934-41: Chief Justice and Deputy Governor of North Borneo. 1943-5: Head of the Borneo Planning Unit. 1945-6: Chief Civil Affairs Officer, British Military Administration/British Borneo. 1947-51: Commissioner for War Damage, British Borneo. 1955-9: Judge, New Hebrides and West Pacific. 1969: died in self-imposed exile in Australia, 28 November.

47 Rt Hon M MacDonald PC OM (1901-81). Son of Mr J Ramsay MacDonald (1866-1937), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, 1924 and 1929-35. Educated at Oxford. 1929-45: Conservative Member of Parliament. 1935 and 1938-40: Secretary of State for the Colonies. 1940-1: Minister of Health. 1941-6: British High Commissioner in Canada. 1946-8: Governor-General of Malaya, Singapore and British Borneo. 1948-55: Commissioner General for the United Kingdom in South-East Asia. 1955-60: British High Commissioner in India. Governor (1963), Governor-General (1963-4) and High Commissioner (1964-5) in Kenya. 1966-7: British Special Representative in East and Central Africa.

48 General Maeda (1885-1942): see above, p 323 (fn 32).

49 HH Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin III (b 1914) GCVO (1972) KCMG (1953). Son of HH Sultan Sir Muhammad Jemalul Alam (26th Sultan, r 1906-24), brother of HH Sultan Sir Ahmad Tajuddin KBE CMG (27th Sultan, r 1924-50) and father of the current, 29th, Sultan, Sir Hassanel Bolkiah II GCMG (b 1946; r 1967-date).

1934-7: educated at Kuala Kangsar. 1937: served in the Forestry Department at Kuala Belait. September 1941: married Pengiran Anak Damit (1924-79), daughter of the then Pengiran Bendahara. Ten children. (Married, second, a sister of his first wife in 1983). During the Japanese Occupation Sir Omar Ali lived at Burong Pingai but when the Allied bombing commenced in early 1945 he moved out to Damuan. The end of Japanese rule was "like heaven on earth", he claimed (Borneo Bulletin, 29 September 1972). 1947: appointed Pengiran Bendahara. 1950: appointed Sultan (after the exclusion of the late Sultan's chosen heir, Princess Ehsan). 1962: Brunei Revolt. 1967: abdicated; appointed Seri Begawan Sultan, a post he holds to date. 1970: Brunei Town renamed "Bandar Seri Begawan" in his honour. 1984: Minister of Defence.

50 Dato Sir WJ Peel (b 1912) Kt DSLJ DSNB. Son of Sir W Peel KCMG KBE (d 1945), formerly of the MCS and a Governor of Hong Kong. 1933-51: Colonial Administrative Service. 1942-5: Prisoner of War (Singapore and Burma-Thailand railway). 1946-8: BR Brunei. 1949-51: Resident Commissioner, Gilbert and Ellice Islands. 1957-74: MP (Conservative) for Leicester SE. 1958-64: various Ministerial posts, including (1961-4) Lord Commissioner of the Treasury.

51 Dato Eric Ernest Falk Pretty (1891-1967) SPMB CMG (1951). 1914-48: MCS. 1923-8 and 1948-51: BR Brunei. 1931-7 Secretary to the High Commissioner. 1940-2: Under-Secretary to Government, FMS. 1946-8: Resident Commissioner, Johore. 1948: BA Johore. 1957-67: Agent for the Brunei Government in the United Kingdom. 1967: died, 15 July. "A competent but not outstanding civil servant" (Sheppard); "legendary" (Lady R Peel); "a real gentleman who often got into tempers" (POK Shahbandar Ahmad, cf. No 5 on p 638, quoted by the Borneo Bulletin, 22 January 1972).

52 Pehin Salleh bin Haji Masri (b 1919) DPMB SLJ PJK. Ed. at SITC. 1934: Probationary Malay Teacher. 1938-40: headmaster. 1946-7: President of Barisan Pemuda Brunei (Barip). 1954-5: Supervisor, School Feeding Scheme. 1956: Vice-President, PRB. 1958: convicted (July) of perjury and sentenced to four months' imprisonment. 1958 (Oct): resigned as Vice-President, PRB, "to safeguard the good name of the party and to prevent any linking of party activities with his own private affairs". 1961-74: Commissioner of Social Welfare. In 1979: Chief Information Officer, Brunei State Government.

53 Sir (Reginald) Edward Stubbs (1876-1947) GCMG (1928). Radley and Corpus Christi. Son of a Bishop. 1900: entered CO. 1913: Col. Sec., Ceylon. Governor successively of Hong Kong (1919-25), Jamaica (1926-32), Cyprus (1932-3) and Ceylon (1933-7). 1947: died, 7 December, of heart failure. A man with a "lack of illusions, caustic tongue and disinclination to suffer fools gladly".

54 Sir Frank Athelstane Swettenham (1850-1946) GCMG (1909) CH. 1872: Joined SS service. 1882: BR Selangor. 1884-96 (except 1888-92): BR Perak. 1896-1901: Resident-General FMS. 1901-3: Governor SS. 1904: retd. 1909: Chr., Royal Commission on Mauritius.

55 Sir Harold Augustin Tempany (1881-1955) Kt (1946), CMG (1941) CBE (1933) DSc FIC FCS. Ed.: privately and Univ. Coll., London. 1910-1929: served in Antigua, Mauritius. 1929-36: Director of Agriculture, SS and FMS. 1936: Asst. Agri. Adv. to SoS, CO. 1940-6: Agri. Adv. to SoS, CO. Author of Principles of Tropical Agriculture and numerous reports.

56 Sir Thomas Shenton Whitelegge Thomas (1879-1962) GCMG (1937) OBE (1919). 1927: Col. Sec., Gold Coast. Governor successively of Nyasaland (1929-32), Gold Coast (1932-4) and the Straits Settlements (1934-42). 1942-5: interned by enemy Japanese in Singapore. 1946: retd. 1962: died, 15 January.

57 Sir William Hood Treacher (1849-1919) KCMG (1904). 1871-81: Labuan service. 1881-7: Governor of North Borneo and, in 1884-5, simultaneously acting British Consul in Brunei. 1888-792 & 1896-1901: BR Perak. 1892-6: BR Selangor. 1901-5: Resident General FMS. 1910s: Chairman, inter alia, of Brunei Estates Limited and the British Borneo Petroleum Syndicate. 1919: died, 3 May.

58 Datuk RN Turner SPDK CMG (b 1912). Ed. Dover College and Wadham College, Oxford. 1935: Cadet, MCS. 1940-1: Assistant Resident, Brunei. 1941-5: interned by enemy Japanese in Batu Lintang. 1946-50: various posts in Malaya and Sarawak. Chief Secretary successively of Barbados (1950-6) and British North Borneo (1957-63). 1963-4: State Secretary, Sabah (Federation of Malaysia). 1964: retired.

59 General Nasataka Yamawaki: see p 324, fn 38 (above).

60 Haji Zaini bin Haji Ahmad (b 1935). Son of POK Shahbandar Ahmad (see No 5 on p 638). 1956: Founder member of the PRB. August 1956: Member of PRB's interim executive committee, responsible for Political Affairs and Organization. 1958: After an apparent disagreement with his colleagues, he left Brunei to spend two years at the London School of Economics, returning to prominence in December 1961, when he announced the formation of his own party, the Brunei United National Organization, whose aims included the liquidation of colonialism, the establishment of a truly democratic constitutional monarchy, and the eradication of poverty. By February 1962, however, he had abandoned this project, subsequently rejoining the PRB as prospective Minister of Economics in the Revolutionary Cabinet. After the failure of the 1962 uprising, Haji Zaini was imprisoned (without trial) for ten years, before escaping to Malaysia, where he has since remained. Author of Brunei Kearah Kemerdekaan 1984 (1984) - copy courtesy of Haji Zaini - and various articles.

In early February 1957 Haji Zaini was reported as saying that "feudalism and monarchism" were "out of date" and that all men were equal, to be treated alike, and given equal opportunities. (Borneo Bulletin, 2 February 1957).

SOURCES

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1.2 Imperial War Museum, Lambeth

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Sir JD Boles	"Closer Association between the British Borneo Territories", written June 1960 (Mss Pac s52).
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*

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Mrs M Daubeny — Friday 29 April 1982 (London)

Datuk RN Turner — Thursday 4 August 1983 (Oxford)

Sir J and Lady R Peel — 4 October 1983 (Leicester)

*

1.8 Correspondents

Name	Importance
Awang Eussoff Agaki	Academic.
Mr E Banks	Curator of the Sarawak Museum before the Japanese Occupation. 1949-50: State Fisheries Officer.
Mr ER Bevington CMG CEng	Brunei Commissioner of Development 1954-8.
Mr JG Black MCS	BR Brunei 1937-40; BR Labuan 1930.
Professor DE Brown	Academic.
Mrs Carrie C Brown	Academic.
Major GS Carter DSO	SOL 1934-60; SRD 1945-6.
Datuk RJF Curtis PJK	BR Brunei 1928-9.
Mrs M Daubeny	British expatriate in Limbang, 1936-8.
Mr LHN Davis CMG	BR Brunei 1948.
Dr OE Fisher	Brunei State Medical Officer 1937-9.
Mr HL Fountain	SOL 1928-37.
Mr JO Gilbert CMG	BR Brunei 1953-8.
Mrs P Gilbert POAS	British expatriate in Brunei, 1953-8.
Mr A Gilmour CMG	BR Labuan 1928-9.
Professor R Heussler	Academic (now deceased).
Tan Sri Datuk AHP Humphrey PMN CMG OBE	BR Labuan 1940-2
Mr WM Johnson	SOL 1929-33
Sir John Johnston GCMG KCVO	Head, SE Asia Department CO, 1956-7.
Dato PM Linton	SOL 1935 and 1957-63. General Manager BSPC 1959-63.

Sir JC McPetrie KCMG OBE	Senior Legal Assistant, CO (1947-).
Sir WBL Monson KCMG CB	Acting Principal, CO (1939-44).
Mr R Nicholl MA	Sarawak Service 1945-69; Honorary Curator of History, Brunei Museum (1970-date).
Dato Sir WJ Peel Kt DSLJ DSNB	BR Brunei 1946-8
Datin Lady R Peel	British expatriate in Brunei 1946-8.
17th Earl of Perth	Minister of State, CO, 1957-62.
Rev DR Rawlins	Missionary in Sarawak.
Mr AJN Richards	Sarawak Civil Service 1938-63; interned in Batu Lintang 1942-5; also an academic.
Rev Fr J Rooney MHM PhD MS MA	Roman Catholic missionary and academic.
Mr P Scanlon	Assistant Resident Brunei 1950-1.
Mr BE Smythies	State Forest Officer 1952-9 (and beyond).
Datuk RN Turner SPDK CMG	Assistant Resident Brunei 1940-1; interned in Batu Lintang 1942-5; and State Secretary North Borneo 1956-64.
Rev Fr P de Wit MHM	Roman Catholic missionary; also an internee in Batu Lintang 1942-5.

Note: In the text individual letters from the following correspondents are quoted: Mr J Cook CBE (State Agricultural Officer 1940-1); Miss Gillian Howarth (of the House of Commons Library); Dr M Leifer (academic); Professor AR Maxwell (academic); and Mr EE Pengilley ED (BR Brunei 1940-1; interned in Batu Lintang 1942-5).

One or two other correspondents prefer to remain anonymous.

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WAL Raeburn	Various papers (courtesy of Mr DA Raeburn MA).

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Note: all these items have been furnished to the present writer by their respective authors, except the last, which was received by courtesy of Major GS Carter DSO.

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Note: The last two items were translated for the author from Dutch to English by Miss Toun Aelbers.