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The Transformation from Colonial Administration to Educational Development in the Malay Educational Service (1920-1950)

Ahmad Husni Bin Ahmad Zainal Abidin

History Section, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
*Corresponding author: ahusniz@student.usm.my and ahusniz@gmail.com

Abstract
This study examines the pivotal role of the Malay Educational Service (MES) during a crucial period when the social mobility of the Malay peasantry hinged on Malay education and access to educational opportunities. The focus is on its inception in 1919, the emergence of MES officers empowered to lead the line, and the profound impact the MES had on the development of Malay education. To achieve these aims, supporting data are extracted from colonial records, curricula, Department of Education reports, and publications, including surviving evidence from the archives of Muhammad Yusof bin Ahmad, a senior officer of the MES. For a methodology, qualitative analysis is employed to discuss neglected areas in history, fill a gap in historical knowledge, and open the way to rethinking the colonial period. The broader finding of this study is the instrumental role of MES officers who leveraged the constructive nature of British educationalists. They navigated as agents of change and catalysts to advance the cause for Malay education and beyond.

Keywords: Malay Educational Service, Malay education, MES officers, agents of change

Introduction
In 1867, the Colonial Office in London took administrative control of the Straits Settlements comprising Singapore, Penang, and Malacca and appointed a Select Committee to assess the state of local education (Wong and Gwee 1980, 11, 14).[1] In its assessment, it was found that various schools were run chiefly by the Roman Catholic clergy, who established their system, which was uncoordinated, unchecked, and without government supervision (Stevenson 1975, 12; Winstedt 1923, 4).[2] The Woolley Report was then published in 1870, followed by the appointment of A.M. Skinner as Inspector of Schools (IOS) (1872-1879), aiming to reorganize the whole education system in the Colony. In doing so, he took a 'gradualist approach'. He employed the services of a Superintendent of Education in Penang and a sub-inspector in Malacca to help him establish Malay vernacular schools that would provide free elementary instructions to all school-age children in their mother tongue and secular education in *Jawi*. Lamentably, this step coincided with the British forward movement in the Malay States, where British Residents did not pay much attention to policy guidance from the colony and rarely sought it (Stevenson 1975, 12). The uneven progress made throughout the remainder of the 19th century, as such, was marked by numerous challenges and complexities. It was not until schoolmasters were appointed as Inspector of Schools (IOS) in Perak (1890), Selangor (1890), Negeri Sembilan (1896), and Pahang (1913) that there was an improvement,

as before this, cadets of the civil service had carried out work. They were not officers of the Education Department and were frequently transferred (Winstedt 1923, 4).[3] With a permanent expert inspectorate in place, uniformity in the administration and educational aims of the Education Department was gradually secured (Winstedt 1923, 4).

Meanwhile, the formation of Federated Malay States (FMS) in 1896 resulted in the creation of a Federal IOS post in 1897, a post filled by J.M. Driver (1898-1903), who was required to interfere as little as possible with State Education Departments. His title was then changed to Director of Public Instructions in 1901, and under his assistant, R.J. Wilkinson, Malay education began to gain traction in the villages until J.B. Elcum (1903-1906) took charge and reverted to the staid conditions of the past. So, in 1906, the Federal Inspectorship was abolished, and control of education in the Colony and FMS was vested in the Director of Education (DOE) before R.O. Winstedt was appointed Assistant Director of Education (ADOE) in 1916. In his new post, he recommended that the government augment the Malay vernacular education system along industrial lines and provide a sound primary education system for pupils who typically spend their lives in the country districts (Straits Settlements Legislative Council Paper No. 22 1917). Malay schools would then be the conduit for elementary instructions, emphasizing handwork and gardening, physical training, and general games that would breed a vigorous and self-respecting agricultural peasantry to form the nation's backbone (Federal Legislative Council 1920, B65).

Henceforth, a qualitative analysis is used for this study as a methodology to meet the objectives: (1) To examine the pivotal role of the Malay Educational Service (MES). To discuss the emergence of a group of MES officers empowered to lead and act as a catalyst for change. (3) To delve further into the profound impact of the MES in the development of Malay education.

The Inception

For the “new learning” to take place in the Malay States, Sir Arthur H. Young, British High Commissioner, had received approval from London for study trips to Indonesia and the Philippines as “certain specified terms” and conditions for the appointment of R.O. Winstedt (HCO 207/1916).[4] Given the latter’s knowledge of the Malay language and the Malay mind, his promotion to the post of ADOE was contingent upon studying the vernacular and technical education systems of these two countries (HCO 207/1916).[5] Following his return, recommendations were made to ensure greater focus was given to handicrafts and horticulture, to equip Malays for *Kampong* life, and to make peasantry education the core of educating the majority of Malays.

The Government’s decision to proceed, notwithstanding, Winstedt’s ideas for reform had originated from the day he first set foot in Singapore to his experiences in Perak and Negeri Sembilan (Winstedt 1969, 49).[6] A brilliant man, he had an absorbing hobby of studying the Malay language and customs. He mixed almost entirely with Malays for three weeks each month, which helped him to know more about them (Winstedt 1969, 101).[7] In 1904, he was made Assistant District Officer (ADO) in a series of Perak Towns where he caught malaria and asthma and nearly died of acute septicemia in Batu Gajah (Winstedt 1969, 3).[8] The fourteen-month recovery period was a difficult phase in his life. However, urged by R.J. Wilkinson, he began his work on *Malay Grammar,* which contributed significantly to the development of the Malay language (Winstedt 1913, 5). He also wrote a book on *Colloquial Malay: A Grammar with Conversations* and put together *An English-Malay Dictionary* (Winstedt 1969, x). His frequent attendance at weddings and rural ceremonies and visits to the outlying villages on foot also allowed him to make friends with minor chiefs and the local community, where he saw the natural talents and skills of Malay craftsmen that he wanted to

nurture (FMS Negeri Sembilan Administration Report 1913, 18). Thus, the promulgation of a rural-biased Malay education system was imbued over many years through a network of rural village schools. Malay education must be suited to a people whose future necessarily lies in agriculture as it will fit them for the free life of that countryside where the happiness and economic interests of the Malay race have lain for centuries (Winstedt 1923, 27). However, where Malay education could fit them for very little else in the years to come was something Winstedt did not discuss in his 1916 report, not because he had no vision of the future of the Malays, but being a proponent of incremental change, it was the gradual approach of overcoming one hurdle at a time. This was his *modus operandi* (Sel/Sec. 1908/1928).[9] Therefore, Malays must be afforded education in their mother tongue, and once there is a gradual improvement, they can go to an English school (Winstedt 1923, 28). Meanwhile, English could be taught simultaneously with Malay, a recommendation he made at the Conference of Residents in 1917 but was denied (HCO 1145/1917; CSO 441/17).[10] The coexistent learning of English in Malay schools was integral to his initial plan but kept abeyant indefinitely (HCO 1145/1917).[11] There is no surviving evidence on why this decision was taken. Perhaps, it is very likely due to the same reasons in the past not to over-educate the Malays that Winstedt, being a newly promoted Grade III MCS officer (Malaya Tribune 29 July 1916, 7),[12] was not going to argue. Yet, the recommendation for the basic Malay school course to be fixed at four years, viewed as the period for removing illiteracy, was sanctioned. Given that the Malays were not eager to send their children to school or stay longer than necessary, the five years afforded were of no value to a Malay boy returning to the *kampong* after he completed his Year IV and went on to English school (HCO 1718/1916).[13] He would have a better chance of learning most of what was taught in Standard V, especially where English was taught simultaneously with Malay. It was recognized, however, that not all Malay boys were destined to till the soil or mend their fishing nets, and therefore begged the question of a Malay boy to an IOS on what the Government would do with him next (HCO 1718/1916). For boys with the ability, diligence, and readiness of their parents, let English education be an option. Henceforth, the reduction from five to four years was instituted in the years that followed after Winstedt visited the Linggi Malay School (LMS) soon after he became ADOE (Mohamed 2011, 55). Having written on the History of Negeri Sembilan, Winstedt already knew about Linggi's commitment to strengthen and foster Islamic influence, which had existed for centuries. Established in 1870, the LMS was the first Malay school in Negeri Sembilan and a nerve center for educating its people in Malay (Jawatan Kuasa Penulisan 1975, 8).[14] But why Winstedt chose Linggi for one of his earlier visits to a Malay school is worth surmising, as he wanted to see how well Standard IV boys were doing (Mohamed 2011, 55-56). It turned out that after spending time with them, Winstedt was impressed that the questions he asked were all answered correctly.[15] Winstedt was pleased and expressed his satisfaction to the headmaster. He even wrote an encomium in the school's Visitor's Book before he left (Mohamed 2011, 55-56).[16] Not long after this eventful day, the education policy to lower school leaving age from Standard V to IV was enforced, and its curriculum expanded (FMS Conference of Residence 1917).[17] British Residents instructed District Officers to advise on steps for the acquisition or reservation of sites and the building of more schools, school gardens, and recreation grounds that were not at the side of but not too distant from public roads. Suitable quarters were provided for school teachers, and the Malay style of the house was adopted in every case (FMS Conference of Residence 1917). By this time, Winstedt's belief that Malay boys with intelligence, aptitude, and proficiency could attend English schools had been reinforced. Since bright Malay boys had already done so in the past, there was no reason to hold them back (FMS Annual Report on Education 1920, 5).[18] In time, there would be the Special Malay Class (SMC) that Dr. Victor Purcell was credited for being the originator of the scheme in Singapore (The Straits Times 2 March

1937, 16); (Loh 1975, 137),[19] but otherwise had been one of many educational methods used by Malay Assistant Inspector of Schools (MAIS) Muhammad Yusof in Kuala Lumpur (Norlaila 2008, 255).

As for the rest, agricultural and trade schools could be built (HCO 1718/1916).[20] For the latter, the vocational field of engineering was a subject of interest given that courses of instruction carried out successfully in Netherlands-India could be adapted in Malaya with modifications.[21] (HCO 207/1916) Indeed, the unsuccessful attempts to establish Artisan Schools in the past were no excuse not to build one in the Colony and FMS under the supervision of an Advisory Committee.[22] However, a Commission set up in 1917 containing no officers of the Education Department did not allocate a large budget for a fully equipped and strongly staffed technical school and was only able to press for a European Superintendent to oversee “elementary course in practical mathematics, mechanics and prime motors, drawing and plans, chemistry, physics, electricity, sanitation, hygiene, and surveying.” (Winstedt 1923, 18) Then, in 1918, the Commission on Technical and Industrial Education of the FMS, in which Winstedt was a member, had recommended the provision of Trade Schools with instructions in Malay, another Technical School in English, and an Agricultural School to train assistants for the Agricultural Department and estates. These schools would emphasize the necessity of improving the pay of technical posts to render them as attractive as the clerical service even though, at this stage, the public demand for technical and industrial education proper was not high (Winstedt 1923, 18). Still, technical education was again stressed in an educational conference held in 1923, but Winstedt could not press on. Despite being in a position of influence, he remained a civil servant whose advice was not always taken up by the government or, if at all accepted, not implemented expeditiously. Winstedt years later said, “I do not think future historians will connect the establishment of trade and agricultural schools with the recommendations in my report” as “it took nine years to get the trade school started and 15 years to get the agricultural school started” (Straits Budget 18 April 1935, 9).[23] Indeed, the government must answer to a setback outside the control of the Education Department.

The high quality of Malay education in a few places like Linggi aside, Winstedt found many Malay schools elsewhere were not as marked and realized the crux of the problem lies in the inadequate training given to too few teachers (Roff 1965, 213). Central to his plan, therefore, was a newly enlarged central teachers’ training college, with more specialized staff to include a Filipino for instruction in basketry and a lengthened course of three years (Roff 1965, 206). This was the Sultan Idris Training College (SITC), named in honor of the late Sultan Idris of Perak, which opened in 1922 at Tanjong Malim, a small town just north of the Selangor-Perak state boundary. The college was to be a residential school based broadly on the English public school in its organization and esprit de corps (Roff 1965, 215). Headed by its Principal, O.T. Dussek (1922-1931), the aim was to train teachers for the FMS and Colony vernacular schools and could accommodate students from the Unfederated Malay States (UMS) as well. At the college, secondary-level education would be afforded to students drawn by competitive examinations, and once accepted, they would be educated on how to teach other would-be teachers. The emphasis was on a Malay boy obtaining a good education in the vernacular and a thorough grasp of the elements of education in his language. Without that grasp, a student would be seriously handicapped upon attending an English school (Malay Tribune 4 December 1922, 2).[24] This was a view endorsed by the Government and took precedence over Winstedt’s idea of introducing English simultaneously with Malay. Thus, the question of turning Malays into bilinguals was asked many times. As for the salary of Malay teachers, this must be revised, regardless, so they would be more diligent with their work. As it stood before 1916, salaries were very low. Trained teachers in the Colony began at $12 per month and in the FMS at $15 (HCO C.S.1718/1916).[25] When H.W. Firmstone,

DOE (1915-1920) remarked that "even a Tamil road coolie earned about as much," the Chief Secretary berated him for adopting this line of argument and that the Education Department should in the future refrain from making comparisons between vocations (HCO C.S.1718/1916). It was clear that teachers' salaries were due for revision. However, the High Commissioner, Sir A. H. Young, felt the remark by Firmstone was absurd and made by an officer in a responsible post who had failed to grasp the principle of supply and demand. Nevertheless, the proposed revision was approved, but Firmstone may have struck a chord that was not music to the ears. Like Wilkinson before him, Firmstone would be promoted to a higher post, which had little to do with Malay education (FMS Annual Report on Education 1920, 7).[26] If this was not enough of an issue, Winstedt's recommendation to remove religious education from the curriculum save only to pay bills incurred on this account had startled the Malays. However, as startling as they have been, the recommendation was not insidious given that matters on religion and Malay customs had long been under the direct responsibility of Malay rulers which the Conference of Residence of 1917 was unanimous in its favor of State Committees taking responsibility for the regulation of religious education (HCO 1145/1917).[27] As far as the Government's dissent to send Malays to Muhammadan Colleges in Egypt, it was to focus on English and Malay education rather than on matters unrelated to it.

Finally, the supervision of schools in the FMS rested in the capable hands of the IOS, whose function had changed due to the rapid growth in the number and efficiency of English schools. There were changes as well in the Malay schools' curriculum, publication of textbooks, and the growing attention towards Malay girls' schools that pressed for the hiring of a Lady Supervisor as a way to overcome Malay prejudices towards girls' education (HCO 1718/1916).[28] Admittedly, the IOS was overloaded with administrative duties and supervision of English schools, let alone Malay, which had become more specialized, leaving them less time for inspection (Sel/Sec. 1554/1918).[29] The public, too, had become more interested in the aims of the Education Department. At the same time, Malay Rulers turned to education so their subjects could hold their own against the educated Indian and the vigorous intellect and energy of the Chinese (Malaya Tribune 26 March 1925, 5). Therefore, the IOS must be relieved, which could be achieved by having a Malay Schools Inspectorate (Malaya Tribune 26 March 1925, 5). Thus, the MES was sanctioned by the Conference of Residents in 1918. The MES Scheme was to take effect on 1 January 1919 and operational in 1920 (HCO 1629/1918)[30] consisting of MAIS made of good character, medically fit, and qualified for promotion to the highest class at MCKK or passed the VII Standard in any English school in the FMS or the Colony. Before his confirmation, he would have undergone an MAIS Probationer course of tuition that did not exceed two years under the direction of the ADOE at the latter's office. Or, if possible, at the Government Training College for Malay Teachers. The course will include Translation from Malay to English, Translation from English to Malay, The Malay Language, History and Geography of Malaya, and Drawing. During the course, the Probationer will receive an allowance of $240 per annum, payable monthly, with free lodging at a Malay hostel or, in lieu thereof, a further allowance at the rate of $120 per annum. An examination in the subjects prescribed above will be held annually. On passing that examination, a Probationer will be appointed to Grade III on the non-pensionable establishment and will receive a salary at the rate of $600 per annum, rising by an annual increment of $60 to $720 per annum, and will be employed for a period which will in no case be less than two years as a student-teacher at the Government Training College for Malay Teachers. He is expected to pass examinations in drawing, teaching, school methods and organization, drill and physical exercises, elementary agriculture, and Malay within three years from his appointment to Grade III. Failure to pass this test may entail his removal from the educational service. After two years in Grade III, provided the examination has been

passed, he will be promoted to Grade II, the posts being on a pensionable establishment. On his appointment to Grade II, an officer will receive a salary at the rate of $840 per annum, rising by annual increments of $60 to $1,200 per annum, and may be called upon to perform the duties of such appointment as Malay Teacher at the Government Training College for Malay Teachers, assistant Teacher at Kuala Kangsar College or at any Government English School for which in the opinion of the DOE he is suited, or as a MAIS. Ordinarily, an officer will be appointed to a post in the state in which he is native, though he will not be allowed to claim this privilege as a right. An officer who has served three years in Grade II may, if specially recommended, be promoted by the Chief Secretary to Grade 1 on a salary of $1,440, rising to $2,400 by annual increments of $120 (HCO 1101/1918). As for an Officer with exceptional ability, he may be selected for promotion to a Special Class, comprising such appointments as First Assistant Master and any other such appointments as from time to time may be created.

MES Officers, Roles, and Responsibilities

Notwithstanding the effective date for the MES Scheme to commence on 1 January 1919, the British Resident of Perak had moved quickly in 1917 to initiate the process of hiring the first MAIS for the state of Perak (HCO 1145/1917).[31] The DOE H.W. Firmstone cited the lack of Europeans to provide relief as the main reason, and it was, in his opinion, desirable to tap another source of supply to help overcome the difficulty (Sel/Sec. 1554/1918). In this instance, the veracity of hiring an MAIS was imperative, and Abdul Majid was available by sheer coincidence (Roff 1978, 129. 137).[32] The consent of Tengku Mahkota, Selangor, a member of the MCKK Board, was sought, and Abdul Majid was confirmed as MAIS Perak on 23 April 1918 (Sel/Sec. 1554/1918).[33]

With the MES Scheme made effective on 1 January 1919, so was the appointment of Muhammad Zin bin Ayob as MAIS Selangor (Sel/Sec. 128/1919).[34] As a byproduct of Malay and English education, he came highly recommended by Winstedt, who was sure the gentleman from Taiping, Perak, could be appointed at once without further training and would prove to be a valuable officer (Sel/Sec. 128/1919).[35] The ADOE also recommended a salary of $960 annually and a war allowance of $244 or $1,104 annually. In addition, there was the provision of $360 per annum for motor-cycle allowance and $400 per annum for transportation (Sel/Sec. 128/1919). Muhamad Zin will be a State Officer on a six-month probation, and his confirmation was subject to passing a medical examination. As for his accommodation, nothing was mentioned since this matter would be dealt with by D.A. Bishop, the IOS Selangor, and Muhammad Zin’s reporting officer (Sel/Sec. 4314/1912).[36] With administrative formalities put to bed, matters on his appointment were without a glitch, but after nine months on the job, the issue of his accommodation remained unresolved (Sel/Sec. 4436/1919).[37] Although in charge of Malay teachers in Selangor, he was residing in an inadequate private house that he shared with Muhammad Yusof, a MAIS Probationer at the time, and Ibrahim bin Dato’ Muda Muhammad Peral, who was assisting Winstedt with the compilation of the latter’s Malay Dictionary. In contrast, teachers were given free government quarters of far better class. Yet the MAIS was intended to rank in stature and emoluments with the scheme for Malay Cadets, Malay Police Probationers, and other schemes that necessitated competition with ordinary clerks. Bishop, too, was not pleased and reacted quickly with a letter dispatched to the British Resident, Selangor. No further action was taken, but Muhammad Zin continued receiving strong support from the Education Department. A government loan of $400 for the purchase of a motorcycle was recommended, and the approval of allowance for its upkeep was granted since he was expected to visit schools throughout the State (Sel/Sec. 1489/1919).[38] The loan repayment will be in monthly

installments of $20 per General Orders. However, discrimination lingered outside the department until he was transferred to Penang in 1920. His salary was again raised in his new post as the first MAIS in Penang. This time, it was $1,020 per annum, and his transfer was declared pensionable (Sel/Sec. 0948/1920).[39] As for Bishop, he had been at odds with British Administrators on several occasions. One was on Muhammad Zin's accommodation, and another was a policy issue to deny Malays in Selangor the opportunity to receive English education in Malay schools. Ironically, Bishop's efforts to innovate may have gone too far (Loh 1975, 53-54).[40] C.G. Coleman, who replaced him in 1920, faced similar challenges regarding accommodation for Muhammad Yusof as MAIS Selangor. Indeed, it reverberates how valid R.J. Wilkinson's words once were with his concerns over the unfair treatment of Malays (Sel/Sec. 5464/1920).[41] Nevertheless, the forward steps taken by the Education Department were constructive and apparent to a reflecting mind that this was a benevolent colonial regime but flawed.

There was no doubting, however, of Winstedt's single-minded pursuits, his efforts to deliver results, and his hopes for the future that if the appointment of MAIS is a success, Visiting Teachers will be replaced as vacancies by Group Teachers, i.e., by Teachers appointed to take charge of large central schools and to supervise groups of small schools in their neighborhood (Sel/Sec. 128/1919).[42] To this end, Muhammad Zin's case serves to underscore the importance of the MES Scheme for the advancement of Malay education, establish precedence for future recruitment of MAIS, and pave the way for the appointment of Ab. Jalil bin Osman as the first MAIS in Melaka (1919) (Yusuf 1977, 24), Muhammad Yusof bin Ahmad for Selangor (1920) (Sel/Sec. 0156/1920),[43] Baba bin Jaudin in Negeri Sembilan (1920) (Yusuf 1978, 22), Ahmad bin Hj. Abdul Rahman, Melaka (1923) (The Straits Times 28 February 1937, 18), Raja Mohd Nordin bin Raja Deli, Melaka (1927), and Mohamad Ali bin Mohamad for Pahang (1928) (Ramlah 2019, 113-115), to complete the initial intake of MAIS.[44] For the UMS, Kedah had Syeikh Muhammad Hasan as Superintendent of Malay Schools (Noor 1983, 71). In Johor, under the new education policy of 1928, the MAIS post was filled by Syed Esa bin Alwee (Batu Pahat), Shukor bin Ismail (Muar), and Doon bin Mohd Taib (Johor Bahru) (Jabatan Penulisan 1975, 159). In Terengganu, the state had its first IOS named Engku Abu Bakar bin Long (1920) (Jabatan Penulisan 1975, 243), while the first MAIS in Kelantan was Abdul Hadi bin Hj. Hassan (1929), a history teacher at SITC, seconded to help reorganize the state of Malay education (Muhammad 1976, 34). As for Lady Supervisors, there was Zainun binti Suleiman in Johor (1928)[a]; Kontik Kamariah binti Ahmad, Selangor (1932)[b]; Lily binti Abdul Majeed, Selangor (1948)[c]; Tom binti Abdul Razak, Kedah (1948)[d]; and Hendon binti Hj Din, Negeri Sembilan (1949)[e] (Pertiwi 2004, [a]564-567, [b]224-227, [c]247-249, [d]512-515, [e]168-171).

With effect from 1 April 1924, the MES scheme saw its first revision concerning salaries due mainly to the rising cost of living after WW1. Given that the FMS Civil Service List of 1919 was considered out of date and given the change in circumstances consequent upon the opening of SITC in 1922, the revision was recommended by R.O. Winstedt, who in 1924 had been promoted to the post of DOE. In his letter, he had brought to the attention of the Under Secretary, FMS on the need to amend the list owing to (a) the introduction of the revised salary rates for the officers of that service and (b) the introduction of an improved three years' curriculum at SITC (Sel/Sec. 2634/1924).[45] Therefore, upon passing second and third-year college examinations, the Probationer will be appointed to Grade III on a pensionable establishment and receive a salary of $1,080 per annum, rising by an annual increment of $120 to $1,320 per annum. He will be employed for two years as a Student Teacher at SITC. On his appointment to Grade II, an officer will receive a salary of $1,440 annually, rising by annual increments of $120 to $2,160 annually. After that, only officers of Grade II specially recommended by the DOE will be eligible for promotion to Grade I, which

carries a salary of $2,400, rising to $3,600 by annual increments of $120. This proposal was agreed to by the Resident, Selangor, based on a Malay boy who has passed the Junior Cambridge Examination and, having done so, was afforded three openings (Sel/Sec. 2634/1924).[46] He may become (a) Malay Officer, Administrative Branch commonly called MAS. He continues to attend an English school and, at the end of two years (or possibly one year), passes the Senior Cambridge Examination (Roff 1978, 46).[47] He then becomes a Probationer at $90 p.m. and, subject to passing the efficiency bars, may continue to draw increments up to $300 p.m. He may further secure promotion to Special Class or the MCS. (b) Malay Officer, MES. Upon passing the College Examination at SITC in two years, he will be placed in Grade III at $90 p.m. After a further two years at the College (during which time he receives a pay increment), provided he passes an examination of considerable scope (drawing, teaching, school method and organization, drill, physical exercise, elementary agriculture, Malay, and typewriting), he is placed in Grade II at $120 p.m. This corresponds to the salary after the first efficiency bar in (a) above. He may be promoted, if specially recommended by the DOE, to Grade I, the maximum salary of which is $300 p.m. There is no further promotion possible. (c) English School Teacher. He continues to attend an English School and, at the end of two years (or possibly one year), passes the Senior Cambridge. He then becomes a Student Teacher at $50 p.m. and at the end of two years (or three years) passes the Senior Normal Examination and is graded as a Class I Teacher and draws $130, rising by annual increments of $10 p.m. (subject to passing efficiency bars) to $300 p.m. There are super-scale appointments open to him at $400 p.m. On comparing the three schemes, there is little difference to be seen. During their sixth year (after passing the Junior Cambridge), the Malay Officer (MAS) and the Malay Officer (MES) will be drawing $120 p.m. while the English School Teacher will be receiving $130 p.m. Still, the latter has been drawing $50 p.m. for three years, while the former drew $90, $100, and $110 p.m. during that period. However, the MES Officer has no opening beyond $300 p.m. In contrast, the MAS Officer may be promoted to the MCS, and the Malay who becomes an English School Teacher may hope for a super scale appointment at $400 p.m. Thus, a disadvantage for the MES officer is that even though the MAIS is drawn from the MES, the Education Department desires to attract just as good a type of Malay as the Government wishes to attract to appoint a MAS Officer. However, the Resident considered the present MES scheme adequate and had no suggestions for improvement (Roff 1978, 46). On the other hand, the Chief Secretary of the FMS did not see how the MES has compared favorably with the scheme for ordinary English School Teachers and asked the DOE whether the MES was inferior to the career of an English schoolmaster (Sel/Sec. 2634/1924).[48] Winstedt responded that the matter had already been approved by the Chief Secretary in 1923, a decision reached by comparing the salaries between the three branches (Sel/Sec. 2634/1924).[49] While Winstedt viewed the scheme for the ordinary English teacher as generous, he did not question previous decisions by his superiors. However, he did not regard the MES scheme as permanent. He expressed an opinion that although it was satisfactory and met the criteria for uniformity, he would be prompted to make the necessary recommendations should there be a type of Malay officer deserving of a higher rate (Sel/Sec. 2634/1924).[50] As for his discretion in recommending the promotion of MES Officers to Grade I, he agreed to use every endeavor to select MES entry candidates who passed the Senior Cambridge Examination (Sel/Sec. 2634/1924).[51] Therefore, it is an improvement from the policy sanctioned in 1919, where the requisite was Standard VII. In doing so, Winstedt not only avoided making the mistake of overstepping his boundaries and offending his superiors but tread cautiously to advance the cause of the MES.

In 1928, the MES Scheme was again revised, and this time, it was for the promotion of Malay school teachers who were not at Tanjong Malim but worthy of appointments above

special classes for Malay vernacular school teachers. It was recognized that any brilliant teacher of a class not lower than IIA, despite his lack of a Cambridge School Certificate, may be specially recommended by the IOS for an appointment at the rate next above his salary as a Malay teacher. MAIS, on the other hand, would be eligible for further promotion subject to his satisfactory service since there was no one grade in the present wording of the Scheme and promotion to Grade II may mean a jump from $70 p.m. to $130 p.m. plus $40 allowance (Sel/Sec. 1405/1928).[52] Thus, the salary rates of MAIS stated in the FMS Year Book 1927 were deleted since salaries would now be dealt with under the MES Scheme (Sel/Sec. 1405/1928).[53] Another amendment was also made during the year to include Malay officers of the Malay Translation Bureau at SITC (Awang 1979, 100-101).[54] They consisted of Za'ba, its Chief Translator, and Yazid bin Ahmad, who was recruited as a translator in 1926 (Awang 1979, 101).[55] Then, in 1929, Abdul Kuddus bin Muhammad was brought in when the bureau's program was expanded to produce *The Malay Home Series,* a translation of simple stories to meet the needs of Malay adults(Awang 1979, 102-103).[56] By 1930, Ahmad Murad bin Nasruddin became another bureau member (Awang 1979, 101).[57] As for the Malay Assistant Principal (MAP), this newly created MES post was approved by H.R. Cheeseman, DOE (1940-1941 and 1946-1947) in 1940 (Sel/Sec. 337/1940) (SS. & FMS Precis of 1940 Report on Education, 1941: 2) (*Cenderamata*, May 1941, 3). Muhammad Yusof's initial designation after his promotion to the post was Senior Head Teacher before it was changed to MAP in 1941 (SITC 112/1941).[58] Cheeseman also approved his Super Scale Division I promotion, which was extended only to deserving government officers.[59] Others promoted along with Muhammad Yusof were Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad, Zainal Abidin bin Sutan Maidin, Syed Esa bin Alwee, and Shukor bin Ismail.[60] From 1941 to 1945, when the world was at war, thousands in Malaya were displaced due to exile with deportation and mandatory evacuation orders. Muhammad Yusof himself was deployed to Tenri, Japan, by the Japanese regime in 1942, but he miraculously survived to resume his work as MAP in 1946. He was succeeded in 1950 by Zainal Abidin bin Ali, who was previously MAIS Pahang and Melaka (Morais 1965, 463).

As a general rule, an MAIS was an assistant to the IOS, and he was responsible for providing administrative oversight, supervision, and inspection of Malay schools. In practical terms, his duties were similar to those of the IOS, where he was entrusted with responsibility and influence to help improve instructions at the level of individual pupil-teacher contacts (Sergit 1978, 1). His supervisory and administrative duties must minimally focus on determining a significant degree of the educational effectiveness of the schools he inspected. Being a bi-lingual in Malay and English, the MAIS was expected to provide intellectual leadership by example and precept, inspire growth, and institute change. Each school depended on the quality of teaching and the availability of equipment to ensure that standards of educational output did not falter. If they falter, the MAIS must take corrective action through inspection and reporting (Sergit 1978, 1).[61] Therefore, two years of probationer training was vital to make MAIS aware that the Education Department would administer education in the SS and FMS. The DOE was the Head of the Education Department, while the Assistant Director of Malay Vernacular Education would advise on matters concerning Malay education (Bretherton 1931, 2). Each settlement and state has its education unit, with the IOS designated as the lead officer answerable to the Resident. From 1919 onwards, MAIS was employed, and in some states, notably in the UMS, where there were none, the appointment of European Assistant Inspector was made effective (Bretherton 1931, 2). This education unit was further divided into districts, with a Malay Visiting Teacher in charge of each district. Schools for each district were divided into groups, with a Group Teacher in charge of each group, the latter spending time teaching and assisting inexperienced teachers in the schools in his group. The administrative hierarchy for the MES is as follows:

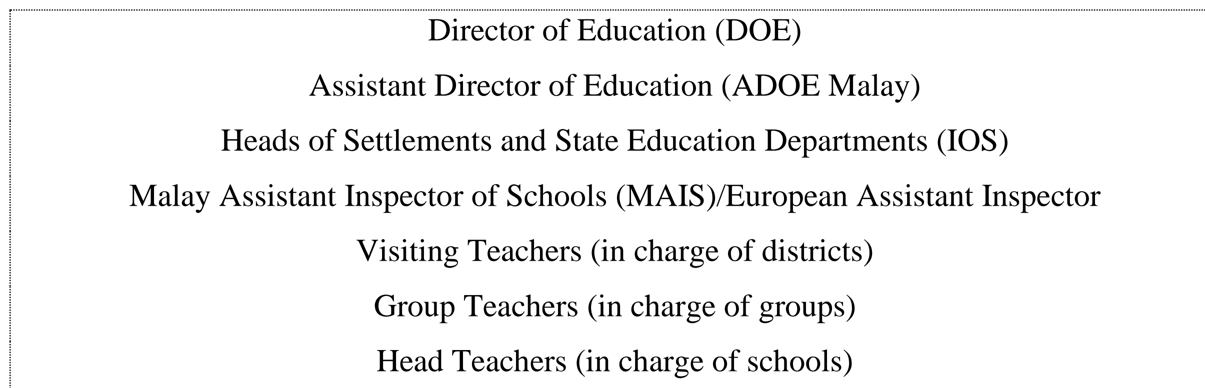

Figure 1: The Administrative Hierarchy for Malay Education, 1920-1950. Source: Department of Education, Straits Settlements, and the Federated Malay States; Memorandum on the Sultan Idris Training College and Malay Vernacular Education 1931, 3.

Once the MAIS was equipped with knowledge of hierarchy, he would be made to understand that the Visiting and Group Teacher System was instituted owing partly to the initial lack of trained teachers and partly because many village schools scattered over large areas were inaccessible (Bretherton 1931, 3). In the State of Perak, for example, the village school in Belum on the Siamese border was the most distant school and a fortnight's journey from the administrative center. Many schools were located on riverbanks, which were inaccessible by railway or car. In Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, and Pahang, schools were scattered as well and only accessible sometimes by a car and at other times on a motorcycle, a bicycle, or on foot. A MAIS may have to row a *Perahu* (small flat-bottomed wooden boat) that kampong folks use for transportation in remote villages and coastal areas. Along small rivers and waterways, he would use a *Sampan* (smaller boat) that could carry one to two persons at best and, usually, accompanied by a Visiting Teacher for all his visits. Thus, with briefings and tutorials, the MAIS Probationers could see the importance of an unabridged familiarity with the locations of schools and village surroundings (Sel/Sec. 5870/1926).[62] The MAIS would soon be brought to speed since the Malay population was agricultural and the expected literacy attainment was low, "the curriculum of the vernacular schools did not, therefore, aim high, and had a definite agricultural bias." (Department of Education 1931, 4). The three most important subjects taught up to Standard IV were the 3Rs, all taught in Malay, a language people in far distant lands have seen the need to learn. Not only were the British and Dutch keen, but the Americans led by Professor L.O. Frederick Roehrig at Cornell University in New York regarded Malay as the easiest, the most easily pronounced, the most well-sounding of Oriental tongues, and one of the most widespread and practically useful languages in the world (Trubner 1886, 70).[63] Although his studies at Cornell were short-lived after he left the university, studying the Malay language remained bright when British administrators, scholars, and orientalists took the language to another level (Arberry 1943, 39-42). Thus, the role of British enablers in fostering the language could not be ignored despite their romanticism to preserve the Malay ways of life. Much of their work was piecemeal, but when IOS, mostly educationists, were appointed to bridge the literacy gap in the new era, the direction of Malay education began to move away from the old order. Therefore, the MAIS as protagonists must ensure boys and girls in the *kampong* are grounded with knowledge of their language, history, and geography of the Malay Peninsula in particular and of Asia in general. Learning during each period in class was of ¾ hour duration, and these subjects were taught from 8.30 to 10.45 with a break between 11.00 and 12.00. As for the subject of writing, both the Malay-Arabic and Romanized scripts were

taught, and the class work was carried out on a blackboard. Reading was devoted to the Malay language, literature, and History of Malaya. For Arithmetic, a weak subject, a series of textbooks have been compiled to make it as practical as possible. The hygiene course was also taught while school gardening and physical training were important.

After rigorous training, the MAIS were well-equipped to undertake their multifaceted roles. These included administrative oversight and direct engagement with educational stakeholders, ensuring more Malays sent their children to schools since many, even as late as 1930, were still questioning the values of Malay education (Cenderamata April 1930, 70). They were oblivious that schooling also embedded the desire for continuous learning, so they did not end up as a "*katak dibawah tempurung*" (Hose 1934, 83).[64] However, as rudimentary as Malay education was, it depended mainly on the ability and energy of Malay teachers, the availability of new textbooks, and the conviction of Malay parents to send their children to schools (Majallah Guru May 1931, 168-169). Therefore, Malay education was treated by the Education Department as a work in progress, and Malay teachers were expected to play a vital part in its advancement and in converting a doubter into a believer in Malay education. He must not only be well trained in the methods of teaching to help improve children under his care but also adopt the right attitude, discipline, and a sense of purpose. The future of Malay children depended on what was taught in the classroom and the molding of their character and behavior in their early life. As such, the time spent by teachers in school teaching alone was insufficient. They must do more as a schoolmaster's work, Winstedt emphasized, does not end in the classroom. Manifold activities make up the life of a school, and these can be kept vigorous only if each staff member is ready to devote much of his spare time to the boys in his care. (FMS Annual Report on Education 1920, 4). Therefore, the impetus on the MAIS to innovate, lead, guide, and unite them towards a common goal through teachers' associations as a reforming movement to help reignite the cause of teaching, improve relations between teachers, encourage the productive exchange of ideas, upscale the quality of teachers, help develop integrity, and earn respect for the teaching profession (Muhammad 1951, 2). Much could also be achieved by merging MAIS-led teachers' associations, as was found in the merger of associations in Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, and Melaka to publish the magazine *Majallah Guru* (1924). Even the teachers' magazine *Panduan Guru* (1922), launched earlier by Muhammad Zin bin Ayob in Penang, saw the benefits of joining the merger in 1925. Other publications, such as Cenderamata (1925) and Lembaran Guru (1926), had many of the same writers in MG who could synergize, while Bulan Melayu (1930) in Johor led by Zainun Suleiman, once a prolific writer of MG, was to advance the cause of Malay education for girls. Indeed, teachers' magazines were a platform to express their views and support improvements, an important medium to effect change.

Other reforming movements, too, were instrumental. For example, scouting for boys was introduced in Malay schools in 1929 to help MAIS and teachers build the character of Malay boys and instill manners in them. In this regard, Lord Baden Powell, the founder of the World Scouting movement, believed that Scouting was about encouraging young people's physical, mental, social, and spiritual development so they could contribute to society and become responsible citizens (Sinclair 2009: 9). He believed Scouting was about education in high ideals, in self-reliance, in sense of duty, in fortitude, in self-respect, and regard for others – in one word, in those attributes that go to make up Character (Reynolds 1947: 13). Meanwhile, movements, such as the Malay Volunteer Infantry, Cadet Corps, St. Johns Ambulance, and the Red Cross Society, played an essential role in grooming the Malay society. For girls, it was the Girls' Guide and Brownies, to name but a few. Other platforms, including the Government Servants Thrift and Loan Society, were incorporated to serve the interest of Malay teachers and their welfare. Its executive and advisory committee even had a

teacher as a representative to deal with the application of loans under the supervision of an IOS and MAIS (FMS Annual Report 1932, 36). Therefore, the traits of versatility, adaptability, and dependability were expected of each MAIS. This extended to upgrading schools which, for the existing ones, have been in poor physical condition for many years. In time, new schools will be constructed on pillars like the traditional Malay houses with roofing thatch made of leaves of the *"Nipah or Rembia"* palm that was cost-effective and optimally low in maintenance (Majallah Guru September 1930, 168-169).[65] Commonly found in many states, these schools were not divided into five classes that correspond to the original five Standards I to V but arranged unsystematically under one roof according to the impromptu wishes of the head teacher. Standard I and II boys were not provided with desks and chairs and had to sit on the floor. Only after they had reached Standard III, IV, and V were provided with long benches to sit on and long desks where they could write comfortably. Thus, the role of MAIS is to recommend the construction, enlargement, and upgrading of school buildings, hostels, alterations or additions to the staff, and the provision of additional school materials or equipment. He was the chief link between the Education Department and schools and an officer who could help shape the dynamics in the children's early life and when they became adults since not all have the natural bent for languages to go further. Therefore, technical education requires good English knowledge, available through evening classes (Majallah Guru 1930, 150-152).[66]

MAIS were former students of teachers training college. At MCM, for instance, three objectives of good behavior, good health, and learning were emphasized in that order (Khoo and Ramlah 1977, 44). In like manner, these objectives have been adopted in schools, but in time, the importance of learning has been given more attention. Thus, the supervision by MAIS demands continuous interaction between him and the teaching staff to improve the student's propensity to learn. One example is moving away from rote learning to activity methods that require expert knowledge in teaching methods over the whole range of school subjects (Sergit 1978, 118-119). Another would be the inculcation of good behavior inside and outside the classrooms. Formal Malay words were used in daily conversations to replace bazaar Malay words used in the *kampong*. Also, between students, informal words such as *aku* (I) and *engkau* (you) will no longer be used in everyday conversations, and this was the way they were encouraged to follow even after they left school. For writing, locally made slates and slate pencils were provided in Standard I to III, and exercise books and pencils for Standard IV and V (Mohamed 2011, 57).[67] As far as the general administration of Malay schools went, the responsibility of MAIS would be to work with the head teachers on the admission of pupils, promotion, leaving and dismissal of pupils, school fees, attendance, school terms, and holidays. Other Important tasks involved curriculum, syllabus, timetable, examinations, staffing, teachers' training, school activities, school accounts, stocks, and even scholars' season train tickets (Cenderamata November 1924, 106-108). These tasks also apply to girls' schools, working in tandem with Lady Supervisors. Indeed, the task of providing proper education was now in the hands of the government, which was doing its best to elevate the Malays (Zainal May and June 1923, 90).[68]

Figure 2: Malay School children at the Setapak Malay School in the early 1900s. Source: Moore 2013, 148.

When Muhammad Yusof became MAIS Selangor in 1920, almost all male teachers in Selangor wore *sarong* to work. Not many wore shoes and were considered strange if they did. They instead used clogs or were barefooted. He would be frowned upon if a teacher wore a tie in Western attire, as did the late Ismail bin Ishak (Bukit Raja) and Baba bin Kulup (Semenyih) (Muhammad 1951, 1).[69] However, in time, MAIS would set a trend when they came on a motorcycle wearing a shirt, tie, pants, and shoes. Soon, Group Teachers followed suit, and school teachers adopted the new dress code. The boys also wore colorful clothes and three to four-inch high songkok or brimless Malay caps of black velvet (Mohamed 2011, 57). Like their teachers, the children were almost all in their sarongs and without shoes. It was a matter of time before school uniforms were introduced, and they came in conditions without enlarged stomachs, looking pale and listless due to an infestation of soil-transmitted intestinal worms. Many children have also been stricken with mouth ulcers and runny noses that refuse to dry up (Muhammad 1951, 1). Henceforth, another role for an MAIS to coordinate medical and sanitary inspections during which children are examined for malaria, enlarged spleen, anaemia, vaccination marks, eye disease, signs of tuberculosis, enlarged glands, and general cleanliness. For Selangor, inspections were carried out in Kuala Lumpur, which was very similar to a routine medical inspection of schoolchildren in England, with particular attention given to conditions expected in the tropics (FMS Selangor Administration Report 1928, 4). In coastal villages such as Ulu-Selangor and remote villages like Ulu-Langat, traveling dispensaries were sent out once a month, and children were treated for minor illnesses. In the past, schools were used to distribute Quinine for the treatment of Malaria and as a way to encourage children to come to schools. This has been a mainstay for years. Other than this, the Malays had proved to be intensely sports-loving. They responded well with energy and enthusiasm to sporting events and physical drills (The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser 15 August 1924, 12). Inter-Malay school sports and games competitions soon became essential to school life. A MAIS would ensure keener and better sports competitions through improved facilities and prowess in sporting events. More so with the urgency to

develop a new breed of teachers to help organize school sports and games, run scout troops and school funds, arrange school shows and parent's day, and even run school libraries. To this end, the MAIS operating in concert with Headmasters would cultivate a strong union and 'esprit the corps' not only amongst teachers but with *kampong* folks before they could enlist the continuous support and cooperation of the latter.

Last but not least is the role of the MAIS in deputizing. It began with Abdul Majid bin Zainuddin in 1917 before the MES Scheme was sanctioned, and then became the Acting Principal of Matang Teachers Training College, the first Malay to hold a senior post. As for other MAIS, their working relationship with the IOS has solidified over the years to the extent that the MAIS seamlessly manages work in Malay schools. Indeed, a remarkable phenomenon requiring little IOS supervision led H.R. Cheeseman to state, "The Malay school system was in time directed almost entirely by a Malay inspecting and administrative staff." (Cheeseman 1970, 129). Even British Resident Selangor T.S. Adams had considered Muhammad Yusof for IOS in 1933. Incidentally, C.G. Sollis, the IOS Selangor, was on extended leave due to illness. Muhammad Yusof was considered to fill in until another IOS named L.D. Whitfield arrived (Sel/Sec. S. 93/1933).[70] Another case in point refers to the time when H.R. Cheeseman was asked to send the best Malay inspecting officer for a tour of two to three years in Brunei. The Governor General was pressing for someone with energy, drive, and experience, and in response to the request, Cheeseman had Muhammad Yusof in mind as the most qualified candidate.[71] At this time, Muhammad Yusof was the Head of the Malay Section in Kuala Lumpur, leading the line to facilitate, catalyze, and motivate those who served the MES. His scope of work then had extended to provide advice to MAIS in other states and direction on educational standards and uniformity. Other examples include the appointment of Zainal Abidin bin Ali as Acting Superintendent of Education in Brunei for one year in 1939 and Zainal Abidin bin Sutan Maidin as IOS Penang in 1946. As for Za'ba, his transfer from MCKK to the Translation Unit of the Education Department in Kuala Lumpur was brief as he was, not long after, appointed by Winstedt to a senior post at the Translation Bureau of SITC and as a Malay/English Teacher in 1924 (Adnan 2007, 17-18).[72] At SITC and reporting to O.T Dussek, Za'ba was given the latitude to excel and improve the standards of Malay education until 1939. Besides his work, he even found time to collaborate with Winstedt for the latter's book on the *History of Malay Literature* in 1940, wherein he had written a chapter on *Modern Developments* (Winstedt 1940, 142-162). Then, in 1947, Za'ba was sent to London by H.R. Cheeseman, where he was made Lecturer of Malay Language at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, and conducted research into old Malay manuscripts and archaeological exhibits in the British Museum (The Straits Times 25 September 1947, 7). Za'ba was at the SOAS until 1950.

Successes, Failures, Criticism, and Setbacks

From 1920 to 1940, the development of Malay education was eminently suited to the people of rural Malaya, whose future lay in peasant agriculture. Bearing this in mind, eligible Malay students, after completing their elementary education, would be brought in and trained as supervising teachers at SITC along the lines of the Jean Training School (Mayhew 1938, 120-130). The idea, which was not new in the three African countries of Kenya, Nyasaland, and Rhodesia administered under British rule, was to help develop community work in a group of schools where they were placed. The three-year course included house planning and building, the management of simple dispensaries, the growing of sample crops, the theory and practice of hygienic sanitation, and the principles of cooperative work. It essentially involved adapting village schools to the social and economic needs of the community. Similarly, in the Philippines, the same concept that originated in America was implemented and subsequently

replicated in Malaya, where teachers would go to the *kampong* to communicate methods of life under the supervision of a Malay school inspectorate. However, unlike in Indonesia, where Dutch education officers carried out inspections, the appointment of MAIS in Malaya was made to ensure boys went to schools and, once they entered, stayed the course to complete their primary education. Progress was slow initially, as Malays did not welcome secular education and actively opposed it for their girls (Report of the Committee on Malay Education 1951, 2). By 1935, there were only 82 girls' schools in the FMS with 227 teachers and 5,082 pupils, against 465 boys' schools with 1,324 teachers and 38,000 pupils (Report of the Committee on Malay Education 1951, 2). The literacy attainment rate for boys was 80%, while the girls only managed to secure a rate of 20% (Scott 1937, 431).[73] Discernibly, MAIS was making progress but still had difficulties in ensuring growth and fostering the best knowledge, skill, and character the Malays have in them to attain despite Malay education made free and as rudimentary as it should be for a society whose exposure had been restricted to religious education for centuries. More so, where education was thought of as an undertaking that must be forced onto them by way of compulsory attendance and not as a form of self-activity, they could benefit immediately other than to one day become a teacher, policeman, or a soldier if they did not end up as a farmer or fisherman. Undoubtedly, a mindset began at home with parents having no interest in education for their children per se and no reverence for secular education (Barnes Report 1951, 14). For them, the time spent in school was wasted when a boy or girl could work in the *sawah* instead (Cenderamata April 1930, 70). Clearly, the traditional value systems and cultural influences at home dictated actions inconsistent with educationists' intentions. Therefore, the absence of harmonious connections found between the two sets of influences has led to a divergence between the home and school, not helped by a confused child whose plight had emanated from the lack of reinforcement, mistrust between parents and teachers, and the tendency for educational efforts of both to cancel out (Barnes Report 1951, 15). In general, there was a lack of active interest in children's education or parental awareness of the home as the source of their education. So was the 'residual incapacity' arising from defects of nutrition, hygiene, and character training during infancy. Not to overlook the child's inability to endure the high 'tolerance of frustration' that has been the Western man's primary source of achievement as an explorer, inventor, and reformer (Barnes Report 1951, 18). Therefore, the strength of women in reconstituted homes must go hand in hand with educational reforms in Malay schools where a paucity of accommodation, furniture, and equipment exist; consequently, made worse by an unconducive environment where almost all Malay schools were in one-roomed buildings and housed in temporary sheds that have existed for 30 years (Barnes Report 1951, 12, 19). Children, especially in Standard I, sat on the floor when they first learned to read and write, and where half a dozen more classes were crowded together in a setup disruptive to teaching. Some villages were without schools, and where schools existed, progress had been slow since boys were required to cram with handwork and girls with housecraft. Education for Malay girls, too, has been neglected partly owing to the dearth of accommodation and the need for coeducation where a separate school for older girls could have otherwise enhanced their pursuit of further education. The shortage of textbooks needs to be resolved as well, especially from Standard III upwards (Barnes Report 1951, 12). Not having the right supplied textbooks was usually not the issue as these were being addressed at SITC, but its availability in large numbers was. Furthermore, the shortage of general reading materials and facilities for borrowing books in libraries were inexpedient.

With all the restraining factors in evidence, education obtained to the highest standards was insufficient for Malays to secure a job other than to remain in the village. Those who passed the Standard IV examinations and were still under 11 years of age could not enroll in English schools for various reasons (Barnes Report 1951, 11). One was owing to

the distance and transportation difficulties as almost all English schools were located in towns. Urban Malays who qualified for admission have been debarred due to the lack of accommodation. Most remain in Standards V or VI since they cannot afford to pay fees charged by private or continuation schools or because boarding facilities are inadequate. Although the decision to teach English in Malay schools had received acclamation from the Malays, especially after the war, this could not be implemented due to the shortage of English teachers who were not readily forthcoming. Only a fraction of Malay pupils go to the School Certificate stage. Other causes include the low economic standing of most parents and the attractive jobs for those who passed Standards VI, VII, and VIII (Barnes Report 1951, 11). Henceforth, the limiting factors on the readiness of parents to leave their children at school are available accommodation and staffing.

To address educational issues in the new era, a conference was held in Singapore back in 1923 to review the progress made hitherto (Malaya Tribune 25 October 1923, 2). Several pertinent issues regarding the English education of Malays were discussed. It was found in Anderson School, Ipoh, that Malay boys in Standard I from the Malay vernacular schools, if given six months of special training and another six months of work, could be promoted to Standard II, as opposed to a Malay boy who ordinarily took two years to reach that level without special training. Another similar success was found at Penang Free School, where most Malay boys, after receiving special training, had reached Standard V at the end of two years. In Johor, parents had objected to their children traveling any distance from their *Kampong*, and it was proposed by J.V. Thompson, an education officer in Johor's Department of Education, that universal education in English be provided for all schools with over 100 Malay boys. This proposal came with the view that it would not interfere with the agricultural and industrial life of the Malays. As it was then, only 3,000 Malays were attending English schools against some 22,500 other races throughout Malaya. He pointed out that a universal English education could overcome this disparity. It was suggested that Malay and English commence concertedly from the beginning of a child's school life. The proposal was seconded by Rev. V. Clough of St. Andrews School, Singapore, but Winstedt considered Johor as not having the same problems as in the SS and FMS, given that the mix of many races in the southern state was not as high. Winstedt felt that diversity in other states was a difficulty that the Education Department had to contend with. He also considered Thompson's view on universal English education, which would not interfere with the agricultural and industrial pursuits as the mainstay of Malay life, an over-sanguine view. Thus, Winstedt seconded the proposal by H.R. Cheeseman, where the most satisfactory system was still in vogue and where Malay boys should proceed to Malay vernacular schools at the age of six. After passing Standard IV in their 10th year, they will be allowed to attend an English school to receive intensive training in that language. This proposal was duly accepted and passed.

There was little doubt that the bulk of the inhabitants must turn to agriculture and other industries, said Winstedt, and that the Education Department will have to equip them for those paths of life as "any ideal of education, not adjusted to local wants, must lead to economic dislocation and social unrest." (Winstedt 1923, 15). Based on this statement alone, the education policy for the Malays was not, for the time being, going to change, and Malay education had to "still be carried to a suitable point before it could have an important effect on the position of the Malays in the clerical services and commerce." Meanwhile, the SMC was to continue regardless of any shortcomings. Therefore, it was not surprising to find the policy for Malay education under intense criticism by 1928. No less was it on the provision of English education where Malay boys were rushed through intensive training in the SMC and were required to cram to pass Standard V within three years. If they were de-energized, burned out, and had lost interest in their studies, it was not due to the alleged laziness of the

Malays or that they were inferior in intellect but were, in the first place, not on equal footing with others who go up standard by standard, acquiring knowledge and intelligence as they developed gradually. Had Malay boys been given equal opportunities, free from obstacles or other hindrances, they would have been more than capable of learning and studying English as diligently and intelligently as other boys, thus passing the required examination standard without being overaged and lagging. Therefore, it was not about the ability and motivation of the Malays but the educational structure that offered secondary education only in urban English schools, a constraint where geographic barriers kept most Malay students from higher educational achievement (Hirschman 1972, 500). This is why there were few Malay students at the Medical College in Singapore, few Malay teachers in English schools, and very few Malay Queen's scholars. It was also found in an Education Conference held in 1928 that Malay boys had little difficulty doing the work of Standard IV in the two-year SMC right up to Standard V, and they could do well to stay ahead in arithmetic, history, and geography. However, after passing Standard V, the Malay boy would wane and lag behind the Chinese and Indians. How so, when he first came to an English school, he had a broad knowledge of arithmetic? The question led educationist J. Bain, Acting IOS Selangor, and Muhammad Yusof's reporting officer at the time, to give his inputs and argue that the underlying principles of subjects afforded to the boy in a Malay school had not been explained as thoroughly as it had been to the boys in an English school. Either this or a combination of the influence at home, the lack of parental restraint, or their lack of ambition. For an answer to the first issue, educators felt that it was due to the lower quality and efficiency levels of teachers in Malay schools that O.T. Dussek, as Principal of SITC, would disagree because the view that the problem lay at home where there was no one to coach the Malay boy and help him with his homework, could not be dismissed. This is why he ended up as second best (Mohamed 2011, 47).[74] The second was a social problem not directly related to education. Again, Malay poverty proved to be a significant drawback and, ultimately, the embryonic stage for a deep-seated resentment of British rule to see them languish in poverty.

Despite the unceasing criticisms in the press, MAIS found the SMC to be the only solution available. Therefore, Malay boys must take advantage of the opportunity. Even if the poverty levels of the Malays are a significant obstacle, they must rise to the challenge and expect conditions for free English education to remain constant, as this is how the education standards are kept high (Malaya Tribune 8 November 1929, 2).[75] Indeed, the clamoring for a universal education system had not waned and was again discussed in the 1928 conference, which led participants to contemplate allowing pupils to be taught in English during weekdays and continuing with Malay in the afternoon, on Saturdays and Sundays until pupils passed Standard V. The effect of these proposed changes, it was argued, will be saved two years in the SMC, the Malay boy's vernacular will not be neglected, and he will have an opportunity for early English education. Thus, this prevented him from being superannuated early in English schools (The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser 13 August 1929, 7). However, a layman who clamored for English education could only express vague dissatisfaction but usually could not answer his questions as education was nothing if not technical. Consideration must also be given to how the changes could best be made. Certainly, MAIS would be interested in knowing how the proposed changes could be managed effectively, as it meant having qualified European and local English teachers deployed in every vernacular school. This issue begs the question of their availability. A separate training institute to produce English teachers could be a solution to train Malayan teachers. There were also additional facilities such as school libraries and government quarters, a change of curriculum, new processes, and workflows while considering the need for more school inspectors and support staff, all of which could hypothetically be accommodated at an enormous cost. Given that the government's record in funding

undertakings on Malay education has not been encouraging, it would be futile to expect high expenditures. Malaya was undoubtedly a country where substantial knowledge of two languages was desirable, but never in its history has the Education Department obtained the funds it sought for education. (Central Advisory Committee May 1950, B248). As such, school subjects in the mother tongue must be taught first, followed by tuition in the second language, not beginning until the age of about ten years. Accordingly, education officials still believed that a thorough grounding in Malay was essential and adequate for those who remained in the village. Only selected boys should be passed on to English schools. Moreover, the small number of Malay boys and girls in English schools could not be ignored and did not, therefore, offer sufficient justifications for a drastic change in education policy.

As for the increasing demand by Mercantile firms, youths with Junior and Senior Cambridge qualifications usually did not interest them as they preferred those who have had a course in commercial training, which was a branch outside the ordinary school curriculum. It was true that those who received training in commercial courses such as bookkeeping, machine drawing, carpentry, surveying, electricity, motor mechanics, and locomotive engineering were given higher salaries than those without such training. Thus, pupils with Junior Cambridge qualifications should attempt to improve their capabilities by attending evening classes to receive vocational training or even enroll in Trade Schools. Therefore, apart from the SMC, evening/night classes and trade/technical schools were another branch through which Malay boys could find employment after they left school to earn higher paying jobs. This also applies to pupils with Senior Cambridge qualifications if they do not have the opportunity or the means to pursue university qualifications. Employment must not be confined to clerical jobs in government but to trade and commerce. Winstedt's policy statement to this effect in 1928 was pursued vigorously by MAIS until the break of WW2. After the war, there was a yearning for change in how Malay education was afforded. While the education system in place was pragmatic, it had outlived its useful life, especially after an unprecedented increase in Malay students' enrolment in Malay and English schools. The following compilation of data serves to explain:

Table 1: Malay Schools and Student Enrolment in the Federation of Malaya, 1941, 1946-1950

No.	Description	No. of Malay Schools		Average Enrolment		Malays in English Schools	
	Year	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Girls**
1	1941	998	164	116,960	15,350	5,200	
2	1946	993	155	120,254	14,860	6,535	1,168
3	1947	1,042	164	141,983	19,296	7,839	1,770
4	1948	1,116	180	171,671	23,601	8,535	2,589
5	1949	1,210	185	199,982	25,697	9,992	3,475
6	1950	1,328	195	223,993	30,375	11,630	4,186

Source: No. 1-4: Abdul 1980, 232; No. 5-6: Annual Report on Education 1950, 29, 60, 81.

Table 1 and line item (1) above represent the number of Malay schools established by 1941 and the extent of students' enrolment in Malay and English schools. Although the numbers were not what MES officers had aimed for, "the glass was seen as half full rather than half empty." Indeed, an awareness of the benefits of secular education had been instilled, which indirectly led to a considerable increase in enrolment from 1947 onwards. The enrolment figures for Malay schools reported in 1950, as per line item (6) above, was, in fact, about double that attained in 1941 and triple for English schools, which was, in no small measure, attributed to the instrumental role played by the MES. Thus, its most significant contribution to the development of Malay education was as a facilitator and catalyst, and its officers acted as agents of change. They worked tirelessly to raise educational standards for the bulk of the Malay people, meeting the needs for administration and technical services and government positions of exceptional responsibilities.

After the MES was established at the beginning of a new era, Malaya encountered changes in 30 years compared to Europe, which took 500 years (Mayhew 1938, 3). This remarkable phenomenon was mainly due to MES officers adopting the universal principles of solidarity, the oneness of human mentality, and the common aim of human progress in an education system devised by the British to adapt to local needs and conditions. The system was fit for its purpose then and a way to avert economic dislocation and social unrest. However, this British experiment, although successful while it lasted, had outlived its useful life not long after World War 2 ended in 1945 and the successive rejection by the Malays of the Malayan Union administration the British government established in 1946. Malaya, as it were, was at a crossroads. Henceforth, there was an exigency to reformulate the education policy to afford secondary-level Malay education and meet the future needs of a polyglot population after the Federation of Malaya was formed in 1948. Indeed, the government must consider an education system that integrates a plural society, which was only achieved in English schools during the MES period, where children of all races learn together in the same classroom. The English education system was the only common factor that bound diverse groups into a more homogeneous whole (Zainal 1948, 25). While practical at the time, failing to discard a temporary solution to accommodate a plural society will have ramifications if a school system continues to run along communal lines and the seeds of separatism are allowed to grow until there is a point of no return.

Conclusion

Formal education provides training for exercising human ability directed to the best ends. It seeks to cater to various standards of intelligence, from providing the poorest equipped person with the means of becoming self-supporting to the most intelligent person with the tools necessary to serve the community or responsibly help the government. Between these two subgroups, education seeks to provide the foundation of knowledge for the beneficial, intellectual, and artistic activity that will lead to the well-being, happiness, and stability of the individual and the state. Ironically, it has taken the catastrophe of a world war and the Japanese occupation of Malaya to witness an unprecedented interest in and the desire for both Malay and English education. In 1950, the total enrolment of Malay pupils in Malay vernacular rose to 254,368 from 132,310 in 1941, while Malays in Government and Aided English Schools was 15,816 in 1950 from 5,200 in 1941. The Malays were not eager to enter English schools before the war, and the most senior MAIS had experienced difficulty filling their established SMC. Indeed, there was no pressing demand for Malay education either, and many schools were by no means full. The war, however, had resulted in a surge of critical thinking, a desire for improved conditions, better opportunities for all, and a close examination of education systems by the government. With this in mind, a universal primary education afforded in *kampongs* to produce bilinguals conversant in both Malay and English was envisioned. So, too, was the realization that highly educated and cultured people must be trained for administrative, technical, and professional purposes so that, with experience, they can serve the country with skill, impartiality, and wisdom.

However, there were pressing issues the MES must resolve. Firstly, post-war problems to rehabilitate primary schools and to provide for the admission of an increased number of pupils must be addressed. Existing schools need to be restored, and new ones need to be built, bearing in mind the need for separate classrooms divided by permanent partitions and schools surrounded by playing fields. Schools will be built to cater to the long overdue post-primary education through a medium of one common language. The upkeep and maintenance of the new and existing ones will be carried out by having the locals trained to do the job to instill pride and encourage a sense of ownership. This will help create opportunities and a working environment where synergies can be generated to help the government implement its plans. The shortage of teachers for both Malay and English must be resolved urgently, and nationwide teacher training for Malay men and women must start in every state. The over-reliance on the two residential colleges at Tanjong Malim and one for women at Malacca may have to be reviewed, given that the training of teachers would extend to Chinese and Indian vernacular schools and a permanent training scheme established in the University of Malaya. Without a doubt, education standards, including for girls, must be raised, and textbooks and reading materials be provided, not only in the supply of enough copies but also in the emphasis given to materials for spoken Malay. For those who left primary school at the age of 12 or 13, they must be kept occupied in vocational schools. Religious instructions in primary schools must also be included, and tenets taught along proper lines. Meanwhile, the efficiency of schools and training colleges should be raised in line with the improvement of the Inspectorate since the movement towards improved teaching methods will need their continuing support, which a highly qualified inspectorate could provide. Lastly, regarding community development and using the Rural and Industrial Development Authority (RIDA) as an agency for fundamental education, the growth of persons and societies is considered a single process. However, details of any proposals for improvement beyond 1950 and the expanded function of the MES to continue its efforts are

not within the scope of this study and will not, therefore, be discussed except to stress the critical role the Education Department must play in the coming years.

Biography Note

Ahmad Husni bin Ahmad Zainal Abidin is now semi-retired after working in the corporate sector for over 35 years. He published his first book in 2016 and is pursuing his doctorate at Universiti Sains Malaysia, where he is researching biography in Malayan history. E-Mail: ahusniz@student.usm.my and ahusniz@gmail.com

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Declaration of Interest

The author self-financed this study. Much of what is written has been extracted from his PhD thesis, which he pursued at Universiti Sains Malaysia. He plans to use the findings of this study for a book he intends to publish.

Endnotes

1. The Select Committee went on to publish the Woolley Report in 1870.
2. The Committee comprises Colonel R. Woolley as Chairman and unofficial members W.H. Read and W.R. Scott. The Woolley Report cited the lack of encouragement by the government and the indifference of the native races to education. (Winstedt 1923, 4)
3. Winstedt was once a Cadet Officer who was not in the Education Department when he became an Inspector of Schools (IOS).
4. A. Bonar Law to Sir A. Young, 5 January 1916. This was a Letter of Approval from Downing Street, London. R.O. Winstedt, an Officer of Class IV in the FMS Civil Service, was appointed ADOE, SS, and FMS, Class III, effective from 18 June 1916 (*Malaya Tribune* 29 July 1916, 7. "Appointments").
5. Chief Secretary, FMS to British High Commissioner Sir A.H. Young, 4 April 1916.
6. Thus, his familiarity with the state of Malay education.
7. He was taught the Malay language by Dato' Paduka Raja Hj. Arshad bin Mohd Salleh of Perak and an old friend of Hugh Clifford, the former Governor and High Commissioner of the FMS (*Straits Times*, 30 October 1952, 5. "He taught Malay to Sir Richard").
8. Septicemia is defined as the invasion and persistence of pathogenic bacteria in the bloodstream. Winstedt was infected as a result of faulty medical attention.
9. R.O. Winstedt to the Under Secretary, FMS, 23 August 1928. This was a response to the ADOE (Chinese) recommendation asking the Government to pay for higher education in the Chinese language. Winstedt rejected the idea as Chinese was not yet the language of modern science or scholarship, and therefore, grants should be given only for primary

education. Likewise, the Government had not considered endowing higher education even in Malay for the same reason.

[10] H.W. Firmstone and R.O. Winstedt were present to discuss the report before the Conference of Residents made up of Chief Secretary Sir E.L. Brockman, British Residents W.G. Maxwell (Perak), E.G. Broadrick (Selangor), A.H. lemon (Negeri Sembilan) and C.W.C. Parr (Pahang).

[11] FMS Conference of Residents, 1917: Confidential Abstract of Proceedings is referred to.

[12] Winstedt was confirmed as ADOE on 18 June 1916.

[13] H.W. Firmstone to Chief Secretary, FMS, 19 September 1916.

[14] LMS owed its existence to the vision and efforts of Dato Muda Mohd Peral, the fifth Datuk Muda Linggi. Tambi bin Hitam was appointed as the first Headmaster, and initially, were 26 boys in the school.

[15] As he was about to leave, Winstedt noticed the school's attap roof had many holes and asked the boys to describe what he was looking at. One boy stood up and uttered the words berbintang-bintang (star-spangled), describing a scene resembling the sky on a starry night. Winstedt congratulated the boy for his intuitive answer.

[16] Tan Sri Dr. Mohamed Said recalled this anecdote as he was one of the Standard IV boys when Winstedt visited the LMS.

[17] This includes drawing as a compulsory subject; gardening be taught wherever feasible; basketry in the broad sense of the term, i.e., including netting, matting, fish-trap manufacturing, etc., be taught. As for girls' domestic education, sewing should be taught instead of gardening, and cooking lessons should be afforded where possible. Minutes of the FMS Conference of Residents, 1917, held in Kuala Lumpur on 10 May 1917.

[18] Muhammad Yusof to Ali Ahmad, 19 January 1972. In Negeri Sembilan, 36 boys were already holding scholarships in English schools, and the Education Department had received numerous applications for admission.

[19] This refers to special classes attached to an English school in the major urban centers, e.g., Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh (Victoria Institution and Anderson School, respectively), where transfer students from Malay primary schools were given two years of intensive English language teaching, equivalent to Standard 3 and 4, after which these students were admitted into Standard 5 of the regular English stream.

[20] H.W. Firmstone, DOE to the Under Secretary, FMS, 19 September 1916.

[21] Chief Secretary, FMS to British High Commissioner Sir A.H. Young, dated 4 January 1916. At this juncture, the idea of establishing a Farm School was not discussed.

[22] Members of the Committee are a Government Civil Engineer, a Locomotive Superintendent, an Electrical Engineer, a Telegraph Engineer, and a representative of a local engineering firm.

[23] This was Winstedt's speech before 300 teachers at a farewell gathering following his retirement.

[24] E.C.H. Wolffe did not mention the idea of teaching English in Malay schools.

[25] H.W. Firmstone to Chief Secretary, FMS, 19 September 1916.

[26] R.O. Winstedt was to fill in as Acting DOE in 1920 until E.C.H. Wolffe, a more senior officer, took over.

[27] As was found in Johor, religious education afforded outside of school hours was a norm.

[28] H.W. Firmstone to the Under Secretary, FMS, 19 September 1916.

[29] Acting British Resident Perak to Resident Selangor, 10 April 1918.

[30] Amended copies of the Civil Service List, 1918, were made to reflect the change, and the MES, under the heading "Education," was inserted in the Civil Service List by the command of the Chief Secretary on 30 October 1918.
[31] This initiation on 16 June 1917 was taken following the Conference of Residents held in 1917, of which the Chief Secretary, Sir E.L. Brockman, was present.
[32] H.L. Sumner was IOS Perak from 1914 to 1922. He was previously IOS Negeri Sembilan (1907-1913). Abdul Majid, at the time, was a teacher at MCKK.
[33] Tengku Mahkota, Selangor to the Secretary to Resident, Selangor, 26 April 1918. The Tengku Mahkota was a member of the MCKK Board of Governors at the time.
[34] Under Secretary, FMS to the Secretary to the Resident, Selangor, 18 February 1919. Muhammad Zin was made a Grade II Officer.
[35] R.O. Winstedt to the Secretary to Resident, Selangor, 3 January 1919.
[36] D.A. Bishop was Assistant IOS Perak before he was appointed IOS Selangor in 1913 (*The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser2*, 23 December 1913. "Untitled").
[37] Muhammad Zin to D.A. Bishop, 20 October 1919.
[38] D.A. Bishop to the Secretary to Resident, Selangor, 24 March 1919.
[39] H.W. Firmstone to the Colonial Secretary, Straits Settlements. The effective date of his transfer is 1 February 1920, the same date Muhammad Yusof was confirmed as MAIS Selangor to replace Muhammad Zin.
[40] This refers to a request from Malays in Klang who petitioned for an English class in a Malay school in 1916. Bishop's sympathetic response was received, but the British Resident rejected the request, and the class was forced to close down.
[41] Bishop was promoted to the post of Headmaster of Victoria Bridge School, Singapore. C.G. Coleman, who took over, was a Master at the Victoria Institution, Kuala Lumpur (Sel/Sec. 3264/1920).
[42] R.O. Winstedt to the Secretary to the Resident, Selangor, 22 January 1919. These men will be put generally in Class I so that there will be no saving on the Estimates but, it is hoped, greatly increase efficiency.
[43] Muhammad Yusof officially took over from Muhammad Zin on 1 February 1920.
[44] Little is known about the early intake of MAIS in Singapore. As for Perak, Muhammad Zin (1924-1926) filled the post.
[45] R.O. Winstedt to the Under Secretary, 10 June 1924 (FMS 514/24). By this time, Winstedt had been promoted to DOE.
[46] Secretary to Resident, Selangor to the Under Secretary, FMS, 17 July 1924. Attached to the Secretary's letter is a Memorandum by J. Bain, Acting IOS Selangor, incorporating his assessment.
[47] Cambridge University Local Examination Syndicate examinations (local only in the sense that though set in Britain – in London, not Cambridge – they sat 'locally' throughout the world) were introduced in the Straits Settlements in 1891, and in the FMS about a decade later. A year apart, the examinations were at two levels, Junior and Senior. After seven years of English education (culminating in the completion of Standard VII), pupils moved into the Cambridge Junior Class (Standard VIII) and were prepared during the year for the Cambridge Junior Certificate examination. If they obtain this certificate, they will be eligible to proceed for a year in the Senior Cambridge class (Standard IX) and attempt the Cambridge Certificate examination (Roff 1978, 46).
[48] W.G. Maxwell, Chief Secretary to Government, FMS to DOE, 8 August 1924.
[49] R.O. Winstedt, DOE to The Under Secretary to Government, FMS, 23 August 1924.
[50] Refer to minutes signed by R.O. Winstedt, 13 August 1924.

[51] S.W. Jones, Acting Under Secretary to Government, FMS to the Under Secretary, S.S., 23 August 1924.

[52] Minutes of concurrence by R.O. Winstedt, DOE, 24 August 1928.

[53] Under Secretary to S.S. to Under Secretary to Government, FMS, 8 June 1928. See also Sel/Sec. 1405/1928.

[54] The Bureau was set up in 1924, and Za'ba transferred from the Education Department in Kuala Lumpur at the request of O.T. Dussek to help revive the publication of Malay school textbooks and cater to the needs of the College's curriculum. In 1925, an Editorial Board comprised R.O. Winstedt, General Editor, O.T. Dussek, Editor, and Za'ba, Chief Translator.

[55] For the intake of Yazid Ahmad in 1926.

[56] Also, Abdul Kudus was recruited in 1929.

[57] In 1930, other bureau members recruited three probationary translators and two Malay writers.

[58] R.P.S. Walker, SITC Principal to Muhammad Yusof, 8 October 1941.

[59] Muhammad Yusof to Ali bin Ahmad, 4 October 1973; Sidek Jamil of Arkib Negara Malaysia interview with Muhammad Yusof in Linggi, 12 November 1974.

[60] Ibid.

[61] This, in principle, applies to the task of all school inspectors.

[62] Muhammad Yusof to the Secretary to the Resident, 1 December 1926. See also Muhammad Yusof to John Cardosa, 31 March 1956.

[63] See Trubner's American and Oriental Literary Record, 1874. Roehrig was a distinguished philologist and linguist who worked on ancient and modern languages at Cornell University. He was responsible for organizing a Malay class at the university in 1886.

[64] The Malay proverb: *"Like a frog beneath shell",* i.e., in a world of its own in which it is the most important figure—narrow-minded conceit.

[65] This was to enable Malay contractors and carpenters to build and maintain the schools.

[66] A MAIS-driven effort.

[67] Since the late twenties, the Department of Education has encouraged extending the Malay school course beyond four years' wherever possible.

[68] The government carried out this task through the MES.

[69] In the 1920s, a tie was called *"Tangkal Polong".*

[70] F.J. Morten to N. Coulson, The Secretary to Resident, Selangor, 17 June 1933. As it turned out, the Acting DOE F.J. Morten, having considered the matter, felt it was not necessary to appoint an officer during a period the IOS was away due to illness as the routine duties could be performed by the Chief Inspector of English Schools (Dr. J. Watson) who was willing to fill in.

[71] R.P.S. Walker to Muhammad Yusof, 17 July 1947. Muhammad Yusof was unable to accept the offer and politely declined. See Muhammad Yusof to R.P.S Walker, 19 July 1947.

[72] Za'ba was "frozen" for being critical of the poor state of Malay education, why English was given priority, and of the ruling elite for not doing enough (Adnan 2007, 5). He had written in newspapers and was marked for inciting hate and anti-British sentiments by the likes of Abdul Majid bin Zainuddin, who acted in a disingenuous plot to discredit him (Ungku 1975, 103). This plot led to an inquiry and Za'ba's removal from MCKK in 1923 (Adnan 2007, 16).

[73] The appointment of Lady Supervisors has since led to an immediate improvement.

[74] Mohamed Said expressed this view of why many Malay boys in his *kampong* could not do well.

[75] These conditions include: (1) The pupil must be 11 years of age on January 1 of the year in which he or she enters an English school; (2) the pupil, if a boy, must have passed Standard IV or V, and if a girl, Standard II or III in a Malay Vernacular school; (3) the pupil must have been born in the Colony or FMS; (4) the pupil must pass a medical examination, provided that, unless a lady medical officer can conduct the examination, it may be remitted for girls; (5) the circumstances of the parent justify the granting of a free place and (6) free education is given from year to year only and renewal of the privilege is dependent on normal progress and good conduct.

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