

3. The Role of Consulates

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The Role of the Consulates

In the prewar era there were four Chinese consulates in Malaya. In 1877 Hu Xuan Ze (also known as Hoo Ah Kay [Hu Ya Ji]), an overseas Chinese, was appointed consul in Singapore. Four years later (in 1881) a permanent consulate was established in Singapore and upgraded to consulate general status in 1891.¹ Other Chinese consulates were opened in Penang in 1893,² in Api in 1913, and in Kuala Lumpur in 1933.³ The consulate in Api was relocated to Sandakan in 1933. In the postwar era, China reopened its consulate general and other consulates early in 1946, though the consulate in Sandakan was again relocated to Api (present-day Kota Kinabalu). In 1948 new consulates were opened in Kuching (in Sarawak), Ipoh, and Malacca. In February 1948, the Federation of Malaya was created, but Singapore did not join and remained as a British Crown Colony. In the circumstances the Kuala Lumpur consulate was upgraded to consulate general status to head the Chinese diplomatic organizations in the new federation (see Appendix 1). As a result, China had two consulates general and five consulates in the Malayan region from August 1948 onwards. This situation continued until January 1950 when all of the consulates were closed after the United Kingdom recognized the new government of mainland China (the People's Republic). In contrast with today's situation where China's only representation in Malaysia is its embassy in the capital, China's consuls were able to undertake a wide range of activities in those days.

After taking office as consul general in Singapore in February 1946, Dr.

Wu Paak Shing (Wu Bo Sheng) undertook fact-finding visits to various parts of Malaya. During these visits, he was enthusiastically welcomed by local Chinese associations. When the consul general arrived in Kuala Lumpur on May 4, a local newspaper, the *Min Sheng Pao* (the de facto organ of the Malayan Communist Party [MCP]), carried an editorial welcoming him as “the representative of our homeland.” It urged the consul general to find solutions for the problems facing all the overseas Chinese irrespective of their political belief and called for solidarity in the Chinese community. Apparently even the MCP looked upon China as the homeland in this period, and the Chinese consul, even though he represented the Kuomintang government, was seen as a vital source of aid and protection in times of difficulty.

The principal postwar activities of the consulate general and consulates in Malaya were as outlined below.

I. Recording Human and Material Losses during the Japanese Occupation

As soon as they were reopened after the war, the consulate general in Singapore and the consulate in Kuala Lumpur initiated an audit of damage and losses suffered during the Japanese occupation. This process continued until August 1947. The report sent to the Chinese Foreign Ministry recorded 4,522 cases of injury and death and property losses totaling U.S.\$29,002,861.55 just in the area covered by the consulate general (Singapore, Johor, Malacca, Terengganu, Kelantan, Sarawak).⁴ In the period to the end of September 1947, the consulate general also surveyed the circumstances of the families of Chinese killed during the occupation. This survey was also the subject of a report to the Chinese Foreign Ministry.⁵ However, China’s Kuomintang government ultimately waived any claim for reparations from Japan, with the result that this record of losses and damages was never used. Nor are there any reports that the consulate general or consulates provided any financial assistance to victims on the basis of this record and survey. (The demands of victims for financial relief is discussed in endnote 44 of Chapter 1.)

II. Demand for War-Crimes Tribunals over the Murdering of Overseas Chinese by the Japanese Military

War criminals were put on trial between 1946 and 1948. It was the overseas Chinese themselves who exerted the strongest pressure on the Allied Forces to punish those responsible for massacres of overseas Chinese. The families of victims formed organizations in areas where massacres had occurred to

track down those responsible and provide mutual assistance. These included the Joint Appeal Committee (Mingyuan Weiyuanhui) and the Mutual Aid Association of the Bereaved Families (Yizu Huzhuhui).

In Kuala Lumpur, the Joint Appeal Preparation Committee was established on July 3, 1946 to demand trials for those responsible for the big roundup incident of March 6, 1942 in which 1,000 Chinese were put to death there. Groups represented at the inaugural meeting included the Chinese Chamber of Commerce (Zhonghua Zongshanghui), the MPAJA (Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army) Ex-Service Comrades Association (Renmin Kangrijun Tuiwu Tongzhi Hui), the China Democratic League (CDL) (Zhongguo Minzhu Tongmeng) (its representative was Kon Voon Sem [Guan Wen Sen]), the Kuomintang's Selangor branch, and the Pan-Malayan General Labour Union (PMGLU). Also among those present was the Chinese consul in Kuala Lumpur, Hsu Meng Hsiung (Xu Meng Xiong),⁶ who made a speech.

In Singapore, the Japanese army officers who were primarily responsible for the general roundup were sentenced on April 2, 1947 at the tribunal held there. However, the sentences were far more lenient than expected by the bereaved families. The editorial in the April 3 edition of the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* expressed the strong dissatisfaction felt by the bereaved families in the following terms.

We should work through the Joint Appeal Committee to seek a re-trial. If that is not possible, we should ask the Chinese government to use diplomatic means to bring about a new trial. The victims were overseas Chinese, and the Chinese government surely cannot allow the wrongs suffered by them to go unpunished.

The Singapore Women Mutual Aid Association of Victims' Families (Xingzhou Beijianzhe Jiashu Funu Huzhuhui) held a rally on April 6 and resolved to ask the Chinese Foreign Ministry to negotiate with the Japanese government regarding the payment of compensation to victims. They also called on the Chinese Foreign Ministry to open negotiations with the British government regarding a new trial for those responsible for the massacre. A letter requesting the fulfillment of their demands was handed to Consul General Wu Paak Shing.⁷ In the same month, Consul General Wu responded to the wishes of the bereaved families by sending a letter to the governor of Singapore, Franklin Gimson, demanding the death penalty for those responsible.⁸ However, no new trial was ever held.

In May 1947, the consul general, with the support of many Chinese, asked the British colonial government to seek the return of compulsory "donations" amounting to 50 million Straits dollars that the Japanese military had levied from overseas Chinese.⁹ This request was also rejected by the British authori-

ties. These facts are reflections of China's situation at this time and its limited influence in international affairs. The consulates thus lacked the power to protect the rights of overseas Chinese in these areas.

In March 1948, the United Kingdom and China agreed to work toward returning to their original owners of assets seized by Japan in British territories (*Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, March 29, 1948). Unfortunately, this agreement had little effect and was simply filed away.

III. Relief for Suffering Overseas Chinese

The political and economic upheavals that affected postwar Malaya were reflected in frequent labor disputes, especially at rubber plantations and tin mines. There was also increasing political conflict driven by pressure for democratization and self-rule. After the Malayan Communist Party initiated its armed struggle in 1948, most of the Chinese living in outlying areas were forcibly relocated by the British authorities. They were suspected of supplying food and new recruits to the guerrillas and providing support, including bases and refuges, to the MCP. Most of the Chinese in outlying areas were people who had fled inland to escape the calamities of the Japanese occupation. In the early 1950s, this forced relocation program moved into high gear, and ultimately between 500,000 and 600,000 people were shifted.

In addition to oppression by the British authorities as a result of frequent disputes, conflicts, and confrontations, the overseas Chinese were also deprived of their economic base, including jobs and housing, due to a campaign by Malays, the majority ethnic group, to drive them out. They were called the *nanqiao*, or "suffering overseas Chinese."

1. Relief Measures for People Forcibly Relocated during the Japanese Occupation

The consuls began to provide assistance to the *nanqiao* in 1947. The *Min Sheng Pao* reported the following case. The Japanese military had forced about one hundred households consisting of over two thousand people to settle in Badong New Village in Kuala Selangor (Selangor State). In February 1947 these people were again forcibly relocated, this time by the British authorities. The reasons are not clear, but it appears that Malays had sought the return of the land, which was originally a Malay reservation. The Chinese inhabitants asked the Chinese consul in Kuala Lumpur, Hsu Meng Hsiung, to approach the British authorities in order to seek the cancellation of the evacuation order.¹⁰ On May 22 he met with the Sultan and asked his help in having the order rescinded. The consul also worked to restore relations between lo-

cal Malays and the Chinese residents, and on May 27 the communities held a friendship meeting.¹¹ However, it is not known if the evacuation order was ever rescinded, since there are no records.

According to the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, a community of just over five hundred Chinese residents in New South Sea Village (Xin Nanyang Cun) on the outskirts of Sungai Way (Selangor) sought the assistance of the consul general in Singapore, Wu Paak Shing, in October 1947. The population of the village (all Chinese) were originally residents of the Ampang 6 and 7 sections on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. They were relocated by the Japanese military in March 1943 on the grounds that they had links with anti-Japanese guerrillas. Unable to establish an adequate agricultural base, the people were living under considerable hardship.¹²

In late June 1947, the Chinese consul in Penang, Li Neng Geng, promised Chinese farmers in Penang and Province Wellesley, who had been resettled on barren land after repeated forced relocations, that the Chinese government's Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission would provide financial aid totaling U.S.\$60,000. However, the money failed to materialize, and in late July, the Province Wellesley Farmers' Union, an MCP-affiliated organization consisting of 5,274 people in 979 households, sent a letter to the consulate seeking immediate payment. The aid was never sent.¹³

In June 1948, Chinese farmers who had been resettled at Kulim in Kedah State during the Japanese occupation were ordered to leave the area by the British colonial authorities. According to a media report, they asked the acting consul to intercede on their behalf.¹⁴

The Chinese government's aid programs for overseas Chinese were not limited to farmers. On May 7, 1946, for example, Consul General Wu Paak Shing was quoted in the *Straits Times* as saying that the Chinese government would provide aid totaling 30 million Straits dollars for the restoration of overseas Chinese industries in Malaya. However, this was not forthcoming.

2. Relief Efforts Following Clashes with the Malay Population

On March 6, 1946 a clash between Malays and the Chinese at the village of Bekor in Perak State left fifty-six Malays dead. Eighteen Chinese were charged with responsibility for the incident. In June 1947, nine of these people were found not guilty and released, but the other nine were sentenced to death. Many Chinese associations expressed outrage that the British authorities had chosen to put the entire blame for the incident on the Chinese community, and the Chinese consuls in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, and Penang were asked to assist the defendants. On July 23, 1947 the three consuls met in Kuala Lumpur to consider their response. They then issued a call for reconciliation

between the Malay and Chinese communities. The consul general in Singapore, Wu Paak Shing, met with the governor of the Malayan Union, Edward Gent, and asked for clemency. Kuang Da, who had succeeded Hsu Meng Hsiung as consul in Kuala Lumpur that May, had observed the trial and also met with the governor. As a result of this campaign, the death sentences imposed on the nine defendants were commuted on August 13 and replaced with jail terms of between five and fifteen years.¹⁵

The consulates were keen on monitoring the legal actions, not only the imposition of death sentences but also the overall pattern of arrests, imposed on the Chinese. The Anglo-Chinese Treaty of January 11, 1943 required the British authorities to notify a Chinese consulate immediately in the event that any overseas Chinese was arrested, detained, or deported, but it seems this requirement had been left unattended. According to newspaper reports, the Chinese consul in Penang, Li Neng Geng, demanded notification in March and May of 1947.¹⁶ The British authorities accepted the consul's demands and began to provide notification from November 17, 1947.¹⁷

Yet this was not merely a matter of the Chinese government exercising sovereignty over overseas Chinese. Complex domestic political issues in China were also involved. For overseas Chinese affiliated to the Chinese Communist Party, which opposed the Kuomintang government in power, notification was something to be avoided, since it could result in their being handed over to the Kuomintang regime with the prospect of extremely harsh treatment.

In its editorial of November 29, 1947, the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, which was sympathetic to the Chinese Communist Party, was critical of this situation, saying that in a sovereign state, crimes by foreign residents should be subject to trial by the authorities of that nation. It condemned the notification requirement as mechanism used by the Kuomintang to threaten overseas Chinese. (Yet this position is self-contradictory because those who were affiliated to the Chinese Communist Party had firmly held that the British authorities should not restrict the political activities of overseas Chinese unless they became involved in local politics.) The *Min Sheng Pao* (the organ of the Malayan Communist Party) also criticized the notification system in its editorial of November 24, describing it as a pretext for driving out the Chinese. Lee Kong Chian (Li Guang Qian), chairman of the Associated Malayan Chinese Chambers of Commerce (formed in February 1947 through the merger of all Chinese Chambers of Commerce in Malaya), stated that while such an arrangement might be acceptable in a country with few overseas Chinese, it was unacceptable in a country with a large Chinese community, such as Malaya. He said the consulates should first of all consult with the overseas Chinese community. This view was echoed by Secretary-General Eu Chooi Yip (Yu

Zhu Ye) of the Malayan Democratic Union (MDU), a moderate left-wing political party that was part of a united front with the Malayan Communist Party. In addition to his concern about the risk that Chinese would be excluded from Malaya, Eu also stated that the Kuomintang government in Nanjing did not know the circumstances of overseas Chinese in Malaya.¹⁸

The above criticisms reflected on the one hand the views of people sympathetic to the Chinese Communist Party and on the other the thinking of people whose lives were beginning to be rooted in Malaya. Analyzing more specifically some of the factors that characterized the Chinese community in this period, the overseas Chinese community was divided into supporters of the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party and was thus unable to take united action to protect Chinese rights. As a result, it lacked the influence to force the British authorities to accept Chinese demands. In addition, anti-Kuomintang groups were not united in support for the Chinese Communist Party or democratization in China. In fact, there were already people whose first aim was to secure rights in Malaya.

Apart from China's lack of influence in the international community, the limited effectiveness of the consulates in protecting the overseas Chinese was also due to internal conflicts within the Chinese community itself. The pro-communist faction opposed any involvement of (the Kuomintang government's) consulates in political activities by overseas Chinese but wanted the consulates to protect the overseas Chinese from oppressive policies imposed by the colonial authorities in Malaya. The consulates were probably confused somewhat by their dual stances.

The determination of the Chinese government to prevent clashes between Malays and overseas Chinese was apparent from the type of person it chose to head the new consulate that it established in Ipoh in August 1948. The new consul, Haji Ibrahim T. Y. Ma (Ma Tian Ying), was a Muslim and had been director of the China Muslim Goodwill Mission to Southeast Asia. After taking office, Ma undertook frequent trips to mediate clashes between the Malays and Chinese and called for the restoration of good relations between the two communities. When his consulate was closed after Britain severed relations with the Kuomintang government in January 1950, Ma resigned from the government service and remained in Malaya to pursue a career in commerce. He continued to call for unity between the Malays and Chinese.

The consulates worked to prevent Malay-Chinese conflicts and protect the Chinese on a number of occasions. On April 21, 1947 a clash between the two communities at Jugra in Selangor left one Chinese dead, one wounded, and one missing. Consul Hsu Meng Hsiung took steps to protect the Chinese com-

munity while appealing for calm on both sides.¹⁹

On April 28, 1947 a police squad opened fire on Chinese workers at the Dublin Estate, an American-owned rubber plantation in the Kulim District of Kedah. One person was killed and five wounded. After inspecting the scene on May 4, the consul in Penang, Li Neng Gong, demanded that the British authorities should punish those responsible and pay compensation. In mid-May, three thousand rubber plantation workers went on strike against what they saw as British oppression. The British authorities put the police officers involved in the incident on trial. However, despite calls from Chinese groups in various places and Consul Li for severe penalties to be imposed, the sentences were light.²⁰

At the end of December 1948, the disappearance of two Malays at Beruas in Dindings District of Perak sparked a clash that left five Chinese dead and nine missing. As a result of this incident, a thousand Chinese residents fled the area. Representatives of these people sought assistance from Haji Ibrahim T. Y. Ma, the Chinese consul in Ipoh. In mid-January 1949, Ma visited the scene of the clash to investigate the circumstances of the incident and tried to calm the tension. The Sultan of Perak also became involved in mediation efforts, and by the end of January 1949 the situation had been resolved.²¹

According to a report in July 1949, a Chinese village on the outskirts of Kampar in Perak was attacked by the Sakais, a native ethnic group, causing forty-eight people to flee the area. Consul Ma was again asked to help.²²

3. Protecting the Rights of Petty Traders and Hawkers

Another focus of the consulates' efforts to help economically underprivileged people was the protection of the rights of petty traders and hawkers. Many overseas Chinese worked as hawkers, an occupation that was seen as the starting point for a career in commerce. Some became traders after traveling to Malaya from China and working on rubber plantations or in other occupations, while others took to trading immediately after their arrival in Malaya. Petty trading yielded a small and very uncertain income, and it was difficult to secure licenses and business areas. Hawkers faced severe restriction by local governments and were frequently driven out of areas. For this reason, hawkers often asked the consulates to approach local governments on their behalf over such matters as the extension of trading licenses. This type of problem occurred in Seremban in 1946, in Singapore and Kuala Pilah (Negeri Sembilan) in 1947, and again in Singapore in 1948. In August 1947 the Chinese consul in Kuala Lumpur, Kuang Da, attended the first anniversary meeting of the Kuala Lumpur Hawkers' Association and made a speech.²³ However, the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* (August 5, 1947) was critical of Kuang's

activities in Kuala Pilah, expressing disappointment at his ineffectiveness in negotiations with the authorities. Although the consuls were a focus of hope for the petty traders and hawkers, it seems that they were often unable to fulfill those expectations.

4. Aiding Chinese Farmers during the Emergency

After the Malayan Communist Party launched its armed struggle in June 1948, the British authorities mobilized troops and police in an effort to eliminate communist supporters. The State of Emergency was declared nationwide on June 18. Rural Chinese communities were seen as a support base for the Malayan Communist Party, so Chinese villages were burned and their residents forcibly relocated. This forced resettlement program began in earnest with the adoption of the Briggs Plan in 1950, but the prototype of the scheme was already being implemented as early as the closing months of 1948. In October and November of that year, the entire village of Kachau in Selangor, which had several hundred residents in over seventy households, was burned.²⁴ The villages of Jalong and Lintang on the outskirts of Sungai Siput in Perak, which had a total of five hundred households, were also burned, and approximately two to three thousand people, including children, were forcibly relocated.²⁵ The Chinese residents of Shanding Village (Malay name unknown) in Muar District of Johor State were forcibly resettled under a clearance program.²⁶

In December 1948 twenty-four Chinese workers were shot dead on a British-owned rubber plantation in the village of Batang Kali on the outskirts of Kuala Kubu Baru in Selangor.²⁷ In 1949 Chinese residents were forcibly relocated from a number of places, including Hylam Kang in Senai District of Johor,²⁸ Changkat Jong in Perak, and the Sungkai hunting area also in Perak.²⁹

Among the organizations that provided assistance to the Chinese victims (*nanqiao*) of this program of village-burning and forced resettlement were Chinese Chambers of Commerce (Zhonghua Zongshanghui) in various parts of Malaya, Chinese Assembly Halls (Zhonghua Dahuitang) which were overseas Chinese organizations at state level, Chinese Associations (Zhonghua Gonghui) which were overseas Chinese organizations at municipal level, and clan associations (Hui Guan) which were state-level as well as regional associations of overseas Chinese who belong to the same clan. These groups also went to the consulates with representatives of the victims in order to seek assistance from the consuls.

As early as August 3, 1948 the consulate general in Kuala Lumpur reported that it was investigating casualties and damages among Chinese under

the Emergency (*Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, August 5, 1948). In Ipoh, Consul Ma convened a rally of overseas Chinese organizations on November 17 and 22, 1948 to discuss relief measures for the thousands of Chinese refugees within his consulate's jurisdiction. Groups participating in this meeting included the General Federation of Trade Associations in Perak (Pili Hangtuan Lianhe Zonghui), the Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Perak Chinese Assembly Hall, and the Kuomintang's Malayan branch.

The Kuomintang's involvement in efforts to aid pro-communist elements may seem surprising. However, it is indicative of a number of factors, including the party's judgment that the number of pro-communist people and communist sympathizers was not large and that the party would risk alienating the masses of the Chinese in Malaya if the party ignored the sense of crisis keenly felt by Malayan Chinese in general as well as the existence of extremely strong sympathy for the sufferings of fellow Chinese.

The consulates found themselves in a delicate position. As representatives of the Chinese government, they had to strive to protect overseas Chinese, but as representatives of the Kuomintang government it was preferable for them to suppress pro-communist elements. For this reason, most of the consuls were reluctant to become involved in efforts to alleviate the sufferings of Chinese refugees.

Haji Ibrahim T. Y. Ma, the Chinese consul in Ipoh, played the most active role in relief efforts for overseas Chinese after the declaration of the Emergency. On December 3, 1948 he visited Teluk Anson (present-day Teluk Intan) in Perak to express sympathy to Chinese refugees who had fled to that town, and he appealed to them saying, "The 2.5 million Chinese throughout Malaya must unite. I urge you to participate actively in the Chinese Union (Huaqiao Lianhe) which is now being established by volunteers in Singapore and Malacca."³⁰ (The Chinese Union denotes the Malayan Chinese League [Malaiya Huaren Lianmeng] proposed by Tan Cheng Lock [Chen Zhen Lu] in November 1947.) The consul appears to have recognized that his ability to provide assistance would be limited.

The consul general in Kuala Lumpur, Li Qing, said that he would not criticize the Kachau Incident if it was carried out to root out "bandits," by which he apparently meant Malayan Communist Party guerrillas. However, he stated that more time should have been provided to enable people to prepare for resettlement. At the same time, at the request of the Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall and other groups, he sent a consul on a fact-finding visit to the area and asked the British authorities to investigate the situation and pay compensation.³¹ However, it appears that no compensation was paid.

In December 1948 Consul General Li entered into negotiations with the

British authorities over compensation and other matters pertaining to the Batang Kali Incident, and about the accidental bombing of the village of Salak South by the British air force in August 1948 which left three Chinese dead and nine wounded. Eventually compensation amounting to 4,300 Straits dollars was paid.³² In January 1949 Li made a speech in which he summed up the activities of the consulates and the consulates general since the declaration of the Malaya-wide Emergency in June 1948 and outlined their future policy. He said that it was difficult to distinguish bandits and their supporters from law-abiding citizens. He then urged Chinese farmers in Malaya to cooperate with the government (the British colonial authorities), and called upon all Chinese in Malaya to provide aid to farmers who had been resettled.³³ Li advised farmers to leave areas designated for evacuation,³⁴ and urged the British authorities to release the innocent without delay.³⁵

In February 1948 the consulate general in Kuala Lumpur issued a warning that failure to cooperate with the British military and police or report information about communist elements to the Malayan (i.e., British) authorities could result in deportation.³⁶

The consul in Malacca, Cheng Jia Hua, received an appeal for assistance following the Hylam Kang Incident. After consulting with the consul general in Singapore, Wu Paak Shing, in January 1949, he traveled to Batu Pahat in Johor and was welcomed at a reception attended by representatives of thirty-nine overseas Chinese organizations. In his speech he urged these people to cooperate in the efforts of the Malayan government (i.e., the British colonial authorities) to put down the uprising. He also urged the Chinese to move from areas affected by disturbances without delay, and to build friendly relations with the Malay people.³⁷

In February 1949 the local Chinese Association in Muar (Johor) responded to Consul Cheng's recommendations by calling a meeting for representatives of Chinese organizations. Six people were chosen to represent these groups at a convention to form the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) (Malaiya Huaren Gonghui).³⁸ Based on a concept put forward by Tan Cheng Lock, the MCA was the first ethnic Chinese party in Malaya to participate in Malayan politics. The convention was held on February 27, 1949.

As the insurgent activities of the MCP intensified, the Chinese consuls, Li Qing and Cheng Jia Hua, were forced to make their positions clear and finally demonstrated that their first priority was to oppose communism. Abandoning their avowed policy of protecting all Chinese, they not only cooperated willingly with the colonial authorities in efforts to suppress communist elements, but even urged the overseas Chinese in Malaya to cooperate in the suppression of communist activities. In the author's view, this stance may have had

the effect of causing the majority of overseas Chinese, especially those involved in farming, to shift their attitudes away from China.

The consul who showed the greatest dedication to the cause of alleviating the sufferings of overseas Chinese during this period was Consul Ma. Yet even he, like Consul Cheng, saw that the overseas Chinese would ultimately need to unite and form their own organization (i.e., political party). The consuls sought to bring about a shift in attitude among overseas Chinese, and to end their reliance on the Chinese government. In retrospect it is clear that their stance was an extremely wise one. As demonstrated by the events in Muar, their advice actually contributed indirectly to the formation and growth of the Malayan Chinese Association. At the time, however, the attitude of the consuls was seen as an indication that the Chinese government was turning its back on the many overseas Chinese and overseas Chinese organizations that had sought its protection. The disappointment felt by many overseas Chinese seems to have strengthened their identification with Malaya.

Between March 1949 and the closure of the consulates general and all of the consulates in January 1950, there were almost no articles in the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* about the efforts of the consuls and consuls general to relieve the sufferings of overseas Chinese. In fact, the main source of assistance from this period onwards was the new political party, the Malayan Chinese Association.³⁹ There can be no doubt that the activities of the MCA in this area encouraged Chinese farmers and the Chinese community as a whole to identify more closely with Malaya.

In addition to the role of the consulates, we also need to examine the relationship between China and the *nanqiao* after the establishment of the People's Republic in October 1949. This will be analyzed in more detail later. First, there is another aspect of the Emergency that should be considered.

Not all Chinese farmers saw their homes burned and were forced to leave their communities and settle in the "new villages." Tens of thousands were deported to China after being categorized as supporters of the Malayan Communist Party. Most of these people had lived for decades or generations in Malaya. Not only did they have no economic ties with China, but many did not even have relatives there. According to British reports on the 1950–51 period, despair drove some of these people to commit suicide by leaping into the sea from the vessels on which they were being deported.⁴⁰

The deportation program was suspended after the establishment of the People's Republic of China but was resumed in November 1950. It was again halted on January 25, 1951 due to China's refusal to accept any more deportees, but deportations resumed on March 20.

The Chinese government did everything possible to provide livelihoods

and work for the returnees. In November and December of 1950, returned overseas Chinese, democratic parties, and the General People's Association of Relief (Renmin Jiuji Zonghui) held rallies throughout China to protest the oppression of their "fellow Chinese" by the British authorities. On December 29 a China's foreign ministry spokesman issued a statement criticizing the oppression of "China's overseas nationals."⁴¹

In March 1951 the Chinese government established the Chinese People's Relief Committee for the Overseas Chinese Refugees of Malaya (Zhongguo Renmin Jiuji Malaiya Nan Qiao Weiyuanhui). This committee consisted of twenty-nine people, including several Malayan Chinese, such as Tan Kah Kee (Chen Jia Geng), Hu Yu Zhi, and Cheong Choo Kun (Zhang Chu Kun). It asked the British government to allow a survey team to visit Malaya in order to investigate the tragic situation of overseas Chinese there. The seventeen-member survey team included a number of overseas Chinese who had been returned to China from Malaya. Cheong Choo Kun was one of the three deputy leaders of the mission, and five of the other thirteen members were also former Malayan Chinese. These were Wu Feng, who had been a member of the education committee of the Federation of Malaya, as well as Hu Yi Sheng, Huang Lu Ping, Zhang Zhuang Fei, and Lu Xin Yuan. However, 203 Kuomintang-affiliated organizations in Singapore urged the British authorities to reject the mission, and the application was refused.⁴² The British attitude toward China at this time was manifested in the words of Henry Gurney, the High Commissioner for the Federation of Malaya: "If they feel that Chinese detainees in Malaya are not getting fair treatment they can solve the problem by opening their ports and allowing them to enter China."⁴³

Between August 1950 and mid-1951, the British authorities considered a number of options for the five thousand communist detainees and their dependents who numbered ten thousand. These included dumping the people on China's coast, resettling them on an island off Borneo's north coast (the island of Balambangan was selected after surveys), and deportation to the Solomon Islands, the Seychelles, or East Africa.

The first option was suggested in November 1950 by Harold Briggs, who had devised the New Village scheme. However, it was abandoned in June 1951 for military reasons (the unavailability of naval vessels which were being used for other duties). There were also technical problems, since it would have been necessary to move the entire group in one operation, which meant that it would not have been possible to complete the process quickly enough to avoid detection by the Chinese authorities. From the foreign policy perspective, it was feared that the scheme would cause a worsening of relations with China and could jeopardize the safety of British nationals in China. The

second option was rejected in July 1951. Reasons included the difficulty of policing the settlement, a lack of arable land, and opposition from native chiefs and the governor of the Crown Colony of North Borneo. The British were also forced to abandon the third option due to opposition from colonial authorities in the target regions.⁴⁴

Britain had long criticized China for interference in matters pertaining to British colonial subjects. It was clearly inconsistent for the British to attempt to push the responsibility for the Malayan Emergency onto China by sending back overseas Chinese. For China, which had only just emerged from a civil war, the acceptance of tens of thousands of overseas Chinese would have been a heavy financial burden. Although the new China constantly called for protection of overseas Chinese, it had no substantial economic or social links with overseas Chinese communities, and in some ways it was as if it was being forced to strengthen a relationship that suddenly appeared from nowhere. For their part, the overseas Chinese felt that Britain was forcing them to view China as their protector.

This situation demonstrates the harsh attitude of the British colonial government toward overseas Chinese. It also illustrates the foolishness of the forced expulsion policy which served only to worsen the situation. Instead of this policy the colonial government should have taken the responsible measures to encourage overseas Chinese to identify more closely with Malaya.

IV. Resident Registration

The consulates and the consulates general also provided resident registration services for overseas Chinese and issued them with registration certificates. The *Min Sheng Pao*, the organ of the Malayan Communist Party, criticized these services which began on November 1, 1947, arguing in its November 6, 1947 issue that they represented “a new means of earning funds.” It again wrote in its November 11, 1947 issue that progressive overseas Chinese would not register because they would be able to retain their Chinese citizenship even if they did not register, and it added that (the registration is redundant because) even if they registered they would not lose their Malayan citizenship. It also emphasized that the status of overseas Chinese depended on the strength and prosperity of their motherland and their own enthusiasm for participation in Malayan politics. This criticism suggests that the leftist Chinese’s attitude toward the consulates was again inconsistent as was observed with the issue of notification when overseas Chinese were arrested. Their mixed attitude toward the consulates’ policy for strengthening protection over the Chinese in turn seems to have thwarted the efforts of the consulates.

Initially registrations at the consulates general in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur were scheduled from November 1, 1947 to October 31, 1948. However, the number of registrations during this period fell short of expectations, and the period was extended to the end of 1948 in Kuala Lumpur, and to April 30, 1949 in Singapore.

In Singapore the actual business of registration was undertaken by more than eighty overseas Chinese organizations, including the Johor State Chinese Association, the Batu Pahat Chinese Association (in Johor), and the Kuomintang-affiliated Singapore San Min Zu Yi Youth Corps.⁴⁵ Registrations were also conducted in early 1949 by the consulate in Malacca, which had been established in August 1948.⁴⁶ The final number of registrations is unavailable, but it was significant that the consulates and consulates general in those days had the role of registering the entire overseas Chinese population.

From the standpoint of the consulates, registration must have been a necessary prerequisite for the protection of overseas Chinese. On the other hand, the opposition of leftists seems to have been directed not so much at the intervention of the Chinese government in Malayan internal affairs, as at the oppression of Chinese communist elements by the Kuomintang government. The consulates' role in registration itself had long been accepted by both the British colonial government in Malaya and the entire overseas Chinese community. Therefore, it is not clear how far Chinese attitudes turned against registration at that time. What is more important in this issue is the fact that the consulates clearly played a role in registration in that period, in contrast with the situation today.

The consulates and consulates general in Malaya were viewed with high expectations by broad sectors of the overseas Chinese community which saw them as a source of protection from a war-devastated economy and the disorders of the nationwide Emergency. In many cases, however, their expectations were betrayed.

Hsu Meng Hsiung, consul in Kuala Lumpur, played the most active role in efforts to protect Chinese and was the most trusted of the postwar consuls and consuls general among the Chinese community. Consul Hsu also busied himself in rescuing many evacuated Chinese who had fled to Kelang in Selangor from the confusion caused by the rise of the independence movement and anti-Chinese sentiment in Indonesia. (Other consuls also worked to rescue Chinese refugees from Indonesia.) His activities included the demobilization, through persuasion, of members of the Kuomintang-affiliated Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Army which had engaged in continued guerrilla warfare in mountainous areas after the Japanese army surrendered and become a

serious problem for the British army.⁴⁷ He also negotiated with the British authorities to obtain business licenses for petty traders and hawkers,⁴⁸ and worked to bring about a reconciliation between the rightist and leftist elements of the Chinese community. In addition, he attended a meeting of the Selangor sub-branch of the China Democratic League, a leftist party which was sympathetic with the Chinese Communist Party, in an effort to promote unification of all overseas Chinese.

However, Consul Hsu's conciliatory stance toward leftists seems to have displeased the Kuomintang government, while his enthusiastic protection of Chinese was regarded by the British authorities as an act of arrogance and interference in internal affairs. Presumably for these reasons, the Kuomintang government suddenly decided in April 1947 to transfer Hsu to the embassy of India. When his transfer was reported, Chinese organizations in Kuala Lumpur, Seremban, and other cities cabled the Foreign Ministry in Nanjing requesting that Consul Hsu stay in his current post. When he was transferred in spite of those requests, the Chinese communities held farewell parties for him, as described in the previous chapter.

A month or so after Hsu Meng Hsiung left Malaya, the *Min Sheng Pao*, the organ of the Malayan Communist Party, ridiculed the new consul, Kuang Da, and the Kuomintang government, saying that the new consul preferred to attend only such occasions as wedding ceremonies and receptions to welcome or bid farewell to people, while praising Hsu's efforts to unify the Chinese community (July 16, 1947).

These developments concerning Consul Hsu indicate that however serious and enthusiastic he might have been in his efforts to protect overseas Chinese, his ability to respond to requests from the Chinese community was limited by the international circumstances of the time, as well as by a lack of unity and rights among the Chinese themselves. The consul's personal qualities could not offset the powerlessness of his consulate.

Lee Kong Chian, chairman of the Associated Malayan Chinese Chambers of Commerce and chairman of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce, remarked in July 1947 that the Chinese Chambers of Commerce were powerless, and that the consulate was responsible for protecting Chinese.⁴⁹ The fact was that the consulate itself was unable to provide effective protection for the overseas Chinese people. This powerlessness, which was the unavoidable result of prevailing circumstances, affected the attitudes of overseas Chinese, who became estranged from China and were thus motivated to remain and settle in Malaya.

V. The Role of the MCA

As stated earlier, the consulates' role of rescuing evacuated Chinese, which was the biggest problem facing Malayan Chinese between the late 1940s and early 1950s, was taken over by the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA). While the consulates ultimately failed to meet the expectations of many overseas Chinese and their associations, the MCA, which was established on February 27, 1949, enjoyed considerable success in its rescue operations which were financed in part with revenues from lottery sales.

The MCA's established profile today is different from the way in which it was represented in the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* and the *Min Sheng Pao*. We will comment briefly on this difference.

According to the MCA's own written history, Tan Cheng Lock announced the concept of the association's prototype, the Malayan Chinese League, in September 1948.⁵⁰ Another book on the history of the MCA, written by Heng Pek Koon, says that the organization was proposed in May 1948.⁵¹ However, the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* and the *Min Sheng Pao* both reported that Tan proposed the establishment of the Malayan Chinese League as early as November 25, 1947.⁵² At that time, Tan was opposed, together with Malay and Chinese leftists, to the plan to establish the Federation of Malaya. He was regarded as the unchallenged leader of the nationwide unified front, Putera-AMCJA. ("Putera" stands for "Pusat Tenaga Rakyat" [the Centre of People's Power], a Malay leftist group, and AMCJA for the All-Malayan Council of Joint Action, a group led by Chinese moderate leftists.) Tan won the support of the Malayan communists during this period.

Until April 5, 1948 the *Min Sheng Pao*, the de facto organ of the MCP, frequently carried highly favorable reports about Tan's concept of the Chinese League. However, the newspaper suddenly reversed its position in its edition of April 11 which criticized Tan as "a mouthpiece for the benefits of the bourgeoisie." This reversal appears to have foretold a change in the MCP's policy toward its armed struggle which was openly declared in June 1948. Or it can be assumed that the MCP had already started the process of changing its policy around this period.

The established theory today is that the Malayan Chinese Association was organized entirely by rightists from the outset. The evidence put forward to support this conclusion includes the fact that Tan himself was a wealthy businessman, and the fact that the formation of the MCA was supported by the British government and the Kuomintang government. (For instance, Cheng Jia Hua, the consul in Malacca, was involved in the formation of the Muar MCA, as explained earlier, while Consul Ma in Ipoh helped to establish the

Perak State MCA.)⁵³ Also cited is the fact that MCA leaders included many Kuomintang leaders. However, it appears that this theory does not reflect the real situation of the time. The positive view of the MCA held by the Malayan Communist Party up until April 1948 must have been shared by a broad range of overseas Chinese, especially Chinese farmers, who formed the support base of the Malayan communists. Some of these people must have found the abrupt censure of Tan by the MCP unacceptable, with the result that they became estranged from the MCP and began to support Tan and the MCA. For instance, Lim Lian Geok (Lin Lian Yu), who was reinstated as chairman of the school administration committee of Confucian Secondary School in Kuala Lumpur immediately after World War II, resisted the Kuomintang government's intervention in education and often sided, as a member of the school's alumni, with Chow Yam Peng (Zhou Yang Bin), the alumni chairman and an influential member of the MCP Selangor State Committee.⁵⁴ After the MCA was formed, however, Lim became one of the leading figures of its Malacca branch.⁵⁵

Less than two weeks after the formation of the MCA in February 1949, an editorial in the *Xian Dai Ri Bao*, which was virtually an organ of the Penang sub-branch of the China Democratic League (CDL), a leftist party of mainland China that sympathized with the Chinese Communist Party, predicted that the MCA would succeed in uniting Malaya-born Chinese with other overseas Chinese. The editorial continued, "Since the member organizations of the MCA did not hold general meetings of their members to ratify their decision to join the MCA, their legitimacy is still a little doubtful, and it will be necessary to follow its future course to see whether its name will agree with its nature." The editorial concluded with a eulogy that if unity among Chinese as well as ethnic cooperation between the Chinese and Malays had been realized two years earlier, the tragedy of the Emergency would surely have been avoided. Thus it expressed generally favorable comments, though with some reservations, on the MCA and concluded that they hoped that the MCA would succeed, and that the sufferings of overseas Chinese would be eased.⁵⁶

Other evidence of the complex situation concerning the support basis of the MCA is the Selangor Chinese Women's Li Chi Association, an MCP-affiliated organization, which joined the MCA's Selangor branch.⁵⁷ This was not an exceptional case. As was mentioned before and will be discussed in detail later, many regional Chinese Associations (Zhonghua Gonghui), which would be core elements in the formation of the MCA, had been associated with the CCP and the MCP.

Some among the British authorities took the view that Tan Cheng Lock was being manipulated by Malayan communists.⁵⁸ After the MCA was orga-

nized, J. J. Paskin, Secretary of State for the Colonies, received a letter dated March 1, 1949 from Henry Gurney, the High Commissioner for the Federation of Malaya, to the effect that he welcomed the formation of the MCA as an organization that would cooperate with Britain and abide by its laws. Paskin wrote back on March 8 saying that he was a little surprised to see Tan, who had led leftist activities, being elected the MCA president.⁵⁹

In her book, Heng Pek Koon states, "The CWC [Central Working Committee] members [of the MCA] held major positions in almost every type of Chinese association."⁶⁰ She also notes that the MCA was launched with the cooperation of leaders from the most important Chinese associations in the country, and that Chinese association leaders were the founders and promoters of the MCA.⁶¹

However, this description overemphasizes the personal role played by the leaders of Chinese organizations in setting up the MCA and fails to explain properly the MCA's relationship with those organizations. Contrary to Heng's view, the author regards the role played by various Chinese organizations per se as more important, and this stance is endorsed by many press reports. For instance, the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* reported that Tan Cheng Lock and Lee Hau Sik (Li Xiao Shi) reached a final agreement on the formation of the MCA on February 1, 1949, and that they decided to request the presence of two leaders each from local Chinese organizations at the MCA Foundation Convention on February 27.⁶²

In Selangor, representatives of fifty-nine Chinese organizations met a week before the convention and selected fifty-five preparatory committee members with Lee Hau Sik appointed as chairman.⁶³ As noted earlier, the Chinese Association of Batu Pahat in Johor selected four representatives for the convention. The Kwangtung Association of Malacca also selected four representatives on February 23.⁶⁴

Incidentally, the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* noted in its report on the MCA Foundation Convention that the convention elected Tan Cheng Lock as president and decided to appoint the chairmen of the Chinese Associations of ten states as MCA vice-presidents.⁶⁵ This report is, however, erroneous. It was the chairmen of the MCA branches of ten states that became vice-presidents. Yet this report reflects the prevailing perception that the MCA was established upon the foundation of the existing Chinese organizations. Indeed, the February 28 issue of the *Sin Chew Jit Poh* reported on the first day of the convention under the headline, "Representatives of All the Malayan Chinese *Organizations* Meet in Kuala Lumpur" (*italics added*).⁶⁶

In March, the Chinese Association of Batu Pahat convened a meeting of the representatives of Chinese organizations, and decided to establish an MCA

sub-branch composed of representatives of the Chinese Association, Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and various clan associations. The Keluang Chinese Association was reported to have taken a similar step.⁶⁷

In Menglembu (Perak), nine organizations selected thirty-one sub-branch preparatory committee members,⁶⁸ while in Teluk Anson, also in Perak, a conference of Chinese organizations sponsored by the Chinese Association selected preparatory committee members.⁶⁹

The MCA's Penang branch convened the Chinese Organizations' Representatives Convention at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce on March 26, 1949. The convention was attended by representatives of ninety-one organizations, including the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Penang Chinese Town Hall (Ping Zhang Huiguan, which was renamed Huaren Dahuitang in 1974), and the Straits Chinese British Association. In a vote on whether its committee members should be selected from individuals or organizations, twenty-six persons voted for selection from individuals and fifty-eight for selection from organizations. As a result twenty-five organizations were elected as committee members.⁷⁰ In May of that year around a dozen Chinese organizations held a meeting in Tampin (Negeri Sembilan) and formed an MCA sub-branch preparatory committee.⁷¹

The Federation of Kwangtung Associations of Malaya decided to call upon all of its members to join the MCA at its convention in March 1949.⁷² The Federation of Teochew Associations of Malaya, which was established in 1934, also urged all of its affiliated Teochew Associations to join the MCA at its eleventh convention in August 1949 at which Consul General Wu Paak Shing gave an address.⁷³

In view of the processes that led to the foundation of the MCA, Heng's statement that MCA leaders held major positions in almost every type of Chinese association is simply a reversal of cause and effect. At the initial stage at least, the Chinese organizations were the basic units of the MCA, and their leaders participated in the formation of the MCA in their capacity as representatives of their organizations. Heng's implication that only leaders participated in the MCA is not true. The MCA appears to have had a far broader membership base than the Democratic Party of Singapore, which was established in 1955 with a membership drawn entirely from the leaders of Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

The fact that a wide range of Chinese organizations took part in the MCA's formation seems to have helped the MCA immensely in its efforts to secure broad support from the Chinese people. The MCA's activities also appear to have been facilitated by the fact that hundreds of thousands of Chinese farmers, who were forced to relocate by the colonial authorities, found themselves

unable to go along with the growing radicalism of the Malayan Communist Party, which they had once supported, and thus refrained from entirely rejecting Tan Cheng Lock and the MCA under his leadership.

Immediately after its formation, the MCA began rescuing evacuated Chinese farmers and completely took over the role of the consulates. In February 1950, Tan Cheng Lock, as president of the MCA, remarked that the credit for the change in the colonial authorities' attitude toward villagers should go to the MCA. This remark was affirmatively reported by the *Xian Dai Ri Bao*, which was affiliated with the pro-CCP China Democratic League.⁷⁴ These activities, which were based in effect on approval by the British colonial authorities, were intended primarily to keep farmers away from the influence of Malayan communists and did not necessarily represent a genuine effort to rebuild the livelihoods of farmers. Nevertheless, they undeniably helped to divert the attention of Chinese farmers away from the consulates and China and toward Malaya.

Notes

- 1 Lim How Seng, "Qingzhao zhuxing lingshi yu haixia zhimindi zhengfu jiande fenjiu (1877–94)" [Frictions between the Chin dynasty's consuls in Singapore and the Straits Settlement government, 1877–94], in *Xinjiapo huazu shilunji* [Anthology of historical articles on Singaporean Chinese], ed. Kua Bak Lim and Ng Chin Keong (Singapore: Nanyang Daxue Biyesheng Xiehui, 1972), pp. 13–29.
- 2 Kuang Kuo Hsiang, ed., *Bingcheng sanji* [Historical notes on Penang] (Singapore: Shijie Shuju [World Book Co.], 1958), p. 90.
- 3 Chui Kwei Chiang, "Zhongguo zhu Xinjiapo zonglingshi Wu Bo Sheng (1946–1950)" [Wu Po-sheng: Chinese consul-general in Singapore, 1946–1950], *Nanyang xuebao* (Journal of the South Seas Society) 39, pts. 1-2 (1984), p. 13.
- 4 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, March 8 and August 21, 1947; *Min Sheng Pao*, June 27, 1946 and June 3, 1947; *Nanyang Siang Pau*, August 21, 1947; *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, August 21, 1947.
- 5 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, June 8, June 20, and September 18, 1947. Upon return from his fact-finding visits to forty places in North Borneo and Sarawak in January 1947, Consul General Wu Paak Shing reported that the bereaved families of those killed in both areas (including 3,000 revolvers against Japan in Api) were demanding that the Kuomintang government in Nanjing provide relief (*Straits Times*, January 10, 1947).
- 6 *Min Sheng Pao*, July 4, 1946.
- 7 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, April 7 and April 8, 1947.
- 8 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, April 15, 1947.

- 9 *Min Sheng Pao*, May 24, 1947.
- 10 *Min Sheng Pao*, February 1 and February 6, 1947.
- 11 *Min Sheng Pao*, May 26 and June 2, 1947.
- 12 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, October 21 and November 5, 1947.
- 13 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, July 31, 1947; *Min Sheng Pao*, June 30, July 28, and November 24, 1947. Before that, the June 7, 1947 issue of the *Straits Times* carried the comments by Consul Li Neng Geng that the Chinese government would pay 130,000 Straits dollars to 4,200 Chinese in hardship (including 3,000 Chinese on Bertam Plantation which had been created by the Japanese army through the relocating of Chinese in Penang to Province Wellesley to increase food production).
- 14 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, June 7, 1948.
- 15 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, March 8, June 27, June 30, July 22, July 24, July 25, and August 8, 1947; *Min Sheng Pao*, March 20, June 24, June 27, June 28, July 24, July 30, and August 14, 1947. According to the *Straits Times*, April 12, 1946, the scene of the atrocity was a mosque in Bikaw. See also *Straits Times*, October 24, 1946 and February 20, 1947.
- 16 *Min Sheng Pao*, March 15, 1947; *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, May 23, 1947.
- 17 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, November 19, 1947; *Min Sheng Pao*, November 20, 1947. According to the official record of the United Kingdom, “Malaya: Law and Order: Attitude of the Government of China to Deportation of Chinese” (PRO, CO 537/4240, 1948), in September 1948 the British colonial government in Singapore discontinued advance notice to the Chinese consul general regarding forced deportations (letters dated September 21, 1948 of Malcolm McDonald, Commissioner General for the United Kingdom in Southeast Asia, to the U.K. Foreign Office and to L. H. Lamb, Chargé d’Affaires, British Embassy, Nanjing).
- 18 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, November 22, 1947; *Min Sheng Pao*, November 23, 1947.
- 19 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, April 22 and April 26, 1947.
- 20 *Min Sheng Pao*, May 7, May 11, May 14, May 15, May 19, May 26, May 28, May 30, May 31, and June 22, 1947. Charles Gamba, *The Origins of Trade Unionism in Malaya* (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 1962), p. 269.
- 21 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, January 1, January 4, January 7, January 11, January 12, and January 27, 1949.
- 22 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, July 20, 1949.
- 23 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, July 22 and August 3, 1947 and March 11, 1948; *Min Sheng Pao*, June 26 and June 27, 1946 and June 21 and August 4, 1947.
- 24 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, November 5, November 6, November 8, and November 22, 1948. Francis Loh Kok Wah, *Beyond the Tin Mines: Coolies, Squatters and New Villagers in the Kinta Valley, Malaysia, c.1880–1980* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 106.
- 25 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, November 8, November 18, November 19, November 25, December 2, December 4, and December 6, 1948. Francis Loh Kok Wah, pp. 106–8. According to the British official document (PRO, CO 537/4240), F. T.

Cheng, a staff member of the Chinese Embassy in London, sent a letter of protest dated October 23, 1948 to the British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, saying that on October 16, 1948 the local authorities suddenly set fire to three hundred Chinese dwellings in Tronoh, Linlang [*sic*], and Alang [*sic*] in Perak, thus rendering homeless about a thousand “Chinese nationals.” Cheng pointed out that the Chinese consuls in Malaya had repeatedly urged the “Chinese nationals” to give their unreserved cooperation to the British authorities in their task to suppress subversive elements, and protested that the measures taken by the colonial authorities not only victimized innocent law-abiding citizens but also would inevitably affect the prestige of the Chinese government. (The letter was written in English and the term used in it was “Chinese nationals.” The author presumes that Cheng employed this English term to denote the *Zhongguo qiaomin*.)

Based on a report dated December 2 from the High Commissioner for the Federation of Malaya, Head of the Far Eastern Department of the British Foreign Office, P. W. Scarlett, sent a reply dated December 22, 1948 to the Chinese Ambassador in London, Cheng Tien Hsi (Zheng Tian Xi), explaining that twenty huts were burned in Tronoh on October 17 and 700 persons were moved out of their own accord and that 456 persons were moved out in Lintang and Jalong on October 20–29, adding that these were all necessary measures.

Before that, on instruction from his government, Consul General Wu Paak Shing in Singapore, who had been informed by Consul Ma in Ipoh of plans for forced relocation and hut burning, sent a letter dated October 21, 1948 to the British colonial government in Singapore, requesting that although the situation behind the measures was understandable, the plans be stopped in consideration of the residents’ right to life. The request was ignored. (Professor Yōichi Kibata of the University of Tokyo kindly provided the author with P. W. Scarlett’s correct title at that time.)

- 26 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, November 22, 1948.
- 27 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, December 21, December 22, December 23, 1948 and January 10, 1949. Francis Loh Kok Wah, p. 108.
- 28 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, January 22, 1949; *Straits Times*, January 27, 1949.
- 29 Francis Loh Kok Wah, pp. 106–8.
- 30 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, December 6, 1948.
- 31 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, November 5, November 6, November 10, and November 22, 1948.
- 32 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, December 23 and December 25, 1948 and January 10 and February 19, 1949; *Xian Dai Ri Bao*, January 21, 1949 (evening edition).
- 33 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, January 12, 1949.
- 34 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, January 22, 1949.
- 35 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, January 18, 1949.
- 36 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, February 8, 1949.
- 37 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, January 22, January 23, and January 24, 1949.
- 38 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, February 16, 1949.

- 39 For details, see Francis Loh Kok Wah, *Beyond the Tin Mines*.
 40 “Repatriation of Chinese: November 1950 to 25th August 1951,” in “Malaya: Law and Order: Repatriation of Chinese,” PRO, CO 537/7273, 1950–51.

On the other hand, the *Straits Times* reported in its May 17, 1951 issue that there were illicit passport dealer groups in China for forced deportees who wanted to return to Malaya and that ten returnees with forged passports had been arrested recently in Johor Bahru alone.

- 41 PRO, CO 537/7273; Beijing Guiguo Huaqiao Lianyihui (Returned Overseas Chinese Fraternal Association of Beijing), ed. *Kangyi Yingdi pohai Malaiya Huaqiao* [Protest against persecution of Malayan Chinese by the British imperialist] (Beijing [1951]).
 42 *Nanyang Siang Pau*, March 22 and March 28, 1951 (the author is grateful to Professor Chui Kwei Chiang for supplying the information carried in the *Nanyang Siang Pau*). PRO, CO 537/7273.
 43 Henry Gurney’s letter dated May 18, 1951 to the Secretary of State for the Colonies (PRO, CO 537/7273).
 44 PRO, CO 537/7273; “Malaya: Law and Order: Repatriation of Chinese,” PRO, CO 537/7274, 1951.

Balambangan Island drew renewed attention as a politician affiliated with the Malaysian Federal Government disclosed in May 1993 that some persons related to the ruling party in Sabah (Parti Bersatu Sabah) hired “American marines” to train private soldiers on Balambangan Island from 1986 to 1990. So far there has been no information to support this report. *Utusan Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur), May 27 and May 28, 1993; *Nanyang Siang Pau*, June 3, 1993.

- 45 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, October 28 and October 30, 1947, October 25 and October 30, 1948, and March 31, 1949.
 46 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, January 24, 1949.
 47 Chui Kwei Chiang, “Zhongguo zhu Jilongpo lingshi Xu Meng Xiong” [Hsu Meng-hsiung: Chinese consul in Kuala Lumpur, 1946–1947], *Nanyang xuebao* (Journal of the South Seas Society) 39, pts. 1–2 (June 1984), p. 10.
 48 Chiu Kwei Chiang, “Zhongguo zhu Jilongpo . . .,” p. 11.
 49 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, July 27, 1947.

Heng Pek Koon seems to be wrong when she writes that the AMCCC was formed under the chairmanship of H. S. Lee. The first chairman was Lee Kong Chian. See Heng Pek Koon, *Chinese Politics in Malaysia: A History of the Malaysian Chinese Association* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 65.

- 50 Mahua Gonghui (Malaysian Chinese Association), *Mahua gonghui ershiwu zhounian jinian tekan* [MCA 25th anniversary souvenir publication] (Kuala Lumpur, 1974), p. 17.
 51 Heng Pek Koon, p. 57.
 52 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, November 26, 1947; *Min Sheng Pao*, November 27, 1947.

Moreover, the *Min Sheng Pao* reported in its February 7, 1948 issue that Tan Cheng Lock, dissatisfied with the attitude of the Associated Malayan Chinese

Chambers of Commerce about accepting the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya, proposed again the formation of a Chinese League (Huaren Lianmeng).

In its March 22 issue, the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* reported that Tan was preparing for the formation of a Malayan Chinese League (Huaren Tongmeng).

The name of the Malayan Chinese Association (Huaren Gonghui) first appeared in the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* on January 13, 1949.

53 Heng Pek Koon, p. 88.

54 *Min Sheng Pao*, May 24 and May 28, 1946, September 26, 1947, and February 3, 1948. Pili Huaxiao Dongshihui Lianhehui (United Chinese School Committee's Association of Perak), *Lin Lian Yu* [Lim Lian Geok] (Ipoh, 1986), pp. 1–2.

55 Heng Pek Koon, p. 71. Since there is no mention in Lim Lian Geok's own memoirs, in a collection of his reviews, or in biographies that he joined the MCA, it is likely that Heng Pek Koon has mistaken Lim for Sim Mow Yee, who hailed from Malacca and was also an educational activist. Heng, however, clearly confirmed in personal discussion with the author that Lim had been actively involved in the MCA at the early stage of its establishment.

56 *Xian Dai Ri Bao*, March 11, 1949 (morning edition).

The *Xian Dai Ri Bao* had a stance that was identical to that of the Malayan communists. It was banned, together with the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, on September 21, 1950.

57 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, February 23, February 28, and March 9, 1949.

58 "Memoir of O. H. Morris," par. 68, in "Chinese Affairs and Correspondence with Mr. H.T. Pagden," PRO, CO 537/3757, 1948.

59 "Malayan Chinese Association," PRO, CO 537/4242, 1948–49.

60 Heng Pek Koon, p. 63.

61 Heng Pek Koon, p. 139.

62 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, February 4 and February 5, 1949.

63 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, February 20, 1949.

64 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, February 24, 1949.

65 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, February 28, 1949.

66 *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, February 28, 1949.

67 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, March 14 and March 21, 1949.

68 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, March 22, 1949.

69 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, March 23, 1949.

70 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, March 29, 1949; *Xian Dai Ri Bao*, February 16, 1949.

71 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, May 11, 1949.

72 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, March 28, 1949.

73 *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, August 18, 1949.

74 *Xian Dai Ri Bao*, February 4, 1950 (morning edition).