

"THE POSITION OF THE YANG DI PERTUAN AGONG UNDER
THE CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY"

- Analysis based on the Royal Assent
and The Proclamation of Emergency -

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A project paper submitted to the
School of Administration and Law
by Partial Fulfilment of the
requirements for the Diploma in Law

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

After the Second World War many new nations in Asia and Africa found it expedient to blow hot air and play up their newly won independence, sometimes to the discomfort and sorrow of their well-wishers. But then the Alliance took over the government of Malaysia then emerged with Singapore and Borneo as new members of the family-stable and progressive. And if Malaysia is to continue to enjoy the fruits of independence it is imperative that its people must continue to learn the lessons of history. So it can be a building force in welding the people together. We must often referred to what happened in the past, in the belief that the future will portend happiness for our people.¹

Malaysia today comprises of thirteen states federated through her history in a gradual process of federation from the initial formation of the straits Settlements in 1826, the Federated Malay States in 1896, the Malayan Union in 1946 which subsequently became the Federation of Malaya in 1948. It was only on independence in 1957 that the newly democratic State was able to play a positive role in

¹ Contemporary Issues in Malaysian Politics:
Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al Haj

its own political ideals which later managed to gain independence in 1963 as part of the Federation of Malaysia for the other neighbouring states of Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak. Unfortunately for political reasons Singapore had to leave the Federation on 9th August, 1965.

The treaty of Pangkor 1874² is generally regarded as turning point in Malayan history; it initiated British intervention on the grand scale and was the model for subsequent treaties concluded with the Rulers of most other Peninsular Malay States. At the same time, according to the Pangkor Treaties the power of the Sultan was being restricted. The British did not conquer the Malay States by force, but they conquer through intervention.

These can be seen through the treaties that had been made between the British and the Malay Rulers. They needed the power to rule the States. But, they realised the usefulness of the Rulers and the sensitivity of the subjects regarding the position of their Rulers and the loyalty of the subjects to them. Subsequently, the establishment of the residential system, the first Resident in Perak, J.W.W Birch, was murdered in 1876, due to his impatience and in attempting to enforce a new system of government towards the local Malays, where they not used to. So, the British made use of

² See Appendix - Pangkor Treaty 1874