

## DECOLONIZATION OF BRITISH MALAYA

Timeline	Factor	Event	Impact (long/short + what effects)
Before WWII		<u>Before WWII:</u>	
		- No strong nationalist movement, British rule unchallenged due to lack of unity	
		Fact	Effect
		Malay states ruled separately (politically divided)	A little common desire to remove the British from power
		An ethnically plural population	diverse ethnic groups were also not united in their desire to be independent from the British.
1930	Formation of the MCP (suppressed by the British special branch)		
1941-1945	Japanese occupation	<div>Japanese Occupation</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Harsh rule</li><li>- Targeting the Chinese community</li></ul> <div>Malayan Nationalism</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- General desire for national unity (nationalistic aspirations)</li></ul> <div>* <b>Malayan consciousness:</b> due to socio-economic hardship during the occupation</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Collective suffering</li><li>- created a growing desire to be freed from colonial rule</li><li>- Formation of political organisations representing the major racial groups</li></ul>	

- **1952: Alliance** bringing together **UMNO and MCA and MIC**
- Long-term impact on how Malaya would be ruled

**[Malays]** Trained by Japanese as administrators => realised they could govern Malaya themselves without dependence on the British

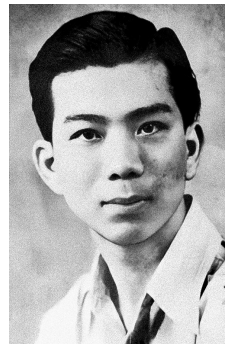
**[Chinese]** They desired a post-war order to secure their safety and economic well-being to protect Chinese interest (they were treated badly due to perceived ties to China + Japan occupied China for yrs + war atrocities)

**[Indians]** Influenced by British encouragement of anti-British sentiments, leading some Indians to join the Indian National Army to fight against British colonialism. Fostered greater unity among different ethnic groups -> growing solidarity and cooperation due to common goals

Tunku Abdul Rahman



Leader Chin Peng



#### \* Ethnic tensions

- Nature of politics and nationalist movements (allowed MCP to gain followers)
- favouring the Malays while subjecting the Chinese to harsh repression due to their perceived ties to China.
- **MPAJA (MCP)** who attacked those who collaborated with the Japanese
- Hindered political development, harder to build a unified national identity

#### \* Revival of the MCP

- Japanese resistance group, led by the leaders of the **MCP**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standing was improved (esp w the chinese) through its leadership of the MPAJA which conducted guerrilla warfare against the Japanese</li> <li>- After the war, British recognised it as a legal party and halted its suppression of communistic activities, giving an opportunity to assert itself as a political player in post-war Malaya</li> <li>- Limited as failure to garner widespread support among the Malays due to radical agenda + violent tactics due to guerrilla warfare and assassinations</li> <li>- Impacts were <u>limited</u>: counterinsurgency strategies, such as the <b>Briggs plan</b>, cut off <b>MCP's</b> rural support by relocating villagers into New villagers =&gt; made party politically weak at the end of the emergency but was constrained due to inability to gain mass support</li> </ul> <p><b>Loss of British Prestige</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shattered the myth of colonial superiority</li> <li>- Undermined confidence in British rule</li> <li>- Exposed to anti-Western propaganda -&gt; more critical of British colonial rule (greater east asia co-prosperity sphere)</li> </ul> <p><b>[IMPACT]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attempt to meet the growing nationalistic demands of the local population</li> <li>- Aimed to prevent resistance and appease</li> </ul>
1946	<p><b>Malayan Union Scheme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Formation of UMNO</li> <li>→ Formation of AMCJA + MIC</li> </ul> <p>Citizenship for all → Malay nationalism</p> <p>All except Singapore brought under a central government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plan to unite the Malay states + sg to centralize power to British but was heavily opposed</li> </ul>	<p><b>Malays</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concerned about their political and economic future in Malaya</li> <li>- Did not understand the perspectives and concerns of other ethnic groups</li> <li>- Formed <b>UMNO</b> (United Malays National Organization) to pressure the British</li> <li>- Wanted the a pro-Malay scheme instead</li> <li>- United political front that opposed the British</li> </ul> <p>Non-Malays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rise of malayan nationalism</li> </ul>
1948	<b>Federation of Malaya</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some Malay radicals rejected this as they</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Malay Union but <u>pro-malay</u> as all races opposed but the Malays wanted pro-malay and british conceded as they wanted power over the majority</li> <li>- Addressed the main concerns</li> </ul>	<p>wanted immediate independence, formed <u>PUTERA</u> and joined forces with <u>AMCJA</u> to oppose the federation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- United 140,000 workers to organise a hartal to oppose the federation but the british didn't budge</li> </ul>
1948 July	<p><b><u>** Start of Malayan Emergency</u></b></p> <p>British and Malayan partners fought a prolonged conflict with the <b><u>Malayan Communist Party</u></b> over the future of Malaya</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Began when MCP attacked and killed 3 European plantation managers in Sungai Siput, sparking an <u>insurgency</u></li> <li>- British gov suspended citizen rights, imposed curfews, and arrested suspects w/o proof</li> </ul> <p><b><u>1950: Briggs plan</u></b></p> <p>Starve out the communists by cutting off their food and medicine supply from chinese squatters</p> <p><b><u>1951: Assassination of British High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undermined British authority</li> </ul> <p>Malayan leaders began to gain experience in administering the country, where 6 officials of the legislative council were appointed to head departments in the federal government.</p> <p><b><u>1952: UMNO and MCA began a policy of cooperation</u></b></p> <p>1953: Introduction of white and black areas White: free of communism, black: had communism</p>	<p><b><u>[Catalyst]</u></b> sped up Malaya's decolonisation process through political developments/reforms (British r more scared of communism than a free colony)</p> <p>Prompted the British to relinquish power and grant the people of Malaya independence</p> <p><b><u>Increased british military presence and control over malaya</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- British gained authority to move large numbers of people in Malaya to newly formed settlements without their consent 'strengthened its claim of being a nationalist group (wanted to be free from colonizers)</li> <li>- Allowed government to better monitor the movement of people and look for wanted members of the MCP</li> <li>- Improved security at tin mines, plantation estates, and vulnerable areas</li> <li>- Started engaging in <b><u>psychological warfare</u></b> to win the hearts and minds of the people</li> <li>- <b><u>MCP lost support due to psychological warfare</u></b></li> <li>- Nurture a locally anti-communist leaders who were credible</li> <li>- <b><u>Gradual devolution of power</u></b> to locally elected government</li> <li>- Introduction of greater political freedoms, rights and powers in malaya</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Formation of the alliance</b></p>	<p>1955: <u>UMNO, MCA and MIA</u> joined forces to form the alliance and contest the federal election, winning 51/52 of the seats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The alliances formed the federal government of Malaya under chief minister Tunku Abdul Rahman</li> <li>- Seeing the alliance's victory, the British was willing to grant independence to Malaya (1957)</li> <li>- Received preferential quotas for employment in the civil services for scholarships and bursaries, meant to advance their economic interests and lift low-income groups out of poverty.</li> </ul> <p>1960: official depleted of power, MCP failed to win over the Malays and other ethnic groups</p>	<p>=&gt; directly led to the British willing to grant the Malays independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it demonstrated the <b>political cooperation among the ethnic groups in Malaya</b>.</li> <li>- This unity <b>aligned with the British expectations of a stable, self-governing Malaya</b>. The Alliance's electoral victory in 1955 general elections, which saw locally elected leaders gain control of the federal government, led to the successful independence talks in London as it was the <b>final breakthrough that convinced the British that Malaya was ready for self rule</b>.</li> </ul>
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<p><u>1948-1960:</u> <b>Malayan Emergency:</b> British and Malayan partners fought a prolonged conflict with the <i>Malayan Communist Party</i> over the future of Malaya</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Began when MCP attacked and killed 3 European plantation managers in Sungai Siput, sparking an <u>insurgency</u></li> <li>- British gov suspended citizen rights, imposed curfews, and arrested suspects w/o proof</li> <li>- <b>Increased British military presence and control over Malaya</b></li> </ul>

## 1942 British Defeat

- British prestige and influence was damaged in the eyes of the Malaysians as Malaysians saw British taken as POWs and doing hard labour
- Shattered myth of colonial superiority

## 1841-1945 Japanese Occupation (underlying as it provided the necessary conditions)

Critical of the British	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Malaysians exposed to anti-Western propaganda in schools and media</li><li>- Even though people did not believe, it made them more critical of British colonial rule</li></ul>
Increased tension in ethnic relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Differing experiences of the Japanese occupation among ethnic groups</li><li>- Malaysian People's anti Japanese army/MCP who attacked those who were allegedly collaborators with the Japanese (Malays) as they were mostly policeman who tracked down MPAJA insurgents</li><li>- favorable to the Malays and sent for training in administration</li><li>- Punished Chinese for supporting war in China and resisting the invasion</li><li>- Indians were punished for loyalty to the British</li></ul>
Malay administrative training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- made Malays more confident about governing a country</li></ul>
Revival of the MCP as a political force (underlying) -> (root)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- provided opportunity for the revival of the MCP as a political force in resisting -Japanese occupation</li></ul> <p><b>MPAJA</b> was trained by British but led by members of MCP</p>
Rise of Malaysian national consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- socio-economic hardships during occupation created a national consciousness</li><li>- made Malays have a growing desire to be freed from colonial rule</li><li>- nationalism was a means to unite the people and develop the economy and raise the standard of living among the poor, but the Malays were concerned about the economic position of the Malays</li></ul>

## 1946 Malaysian Union (1945, Jap surrender)

- Implement political reforms to restore order and control
- planned to gradually transfer power to Malaya, Sultans were to become advisors to the Governor

Malays angry

1. Direct rule
2. Extension of citizenship rights to nonmalays
3. Threatened sultans to agreeing (we gon expose ur collaboration w the japanese) but didn't realize they had to give up power

Malayan responses

Malays	Chinese	Indians
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- concerned for their political and economic future in Malaya</li> <li>- non-malays benefitted from colonial economy as Malays were doing traditional agriculture</li> <li>-first to protest</li> <li>- Caused the British to collaborate with many Malay leaders to form an organisation (UMNO) to adopt a non-cooperation to pressure the British to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- generally supported</li> <li>- formed AMCJA pushed for equal citizenship rights but did not have the support of former British officials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supported AMCJA</li> <li>Had some reservations about citizenship by MUS =&gt; little value as it was not citizenship for an independent nation but for a British colonial territory</li> </ul>
<p>1946 - Chief minister of Johor (dato onn bin jaafar) started the peninsula Malay movement where him and other malay chiefs formed UNMO to adopt a policy of non-cooperation to pressure the BRitish to replace MU with a pro-malay scheme</p>		

British decided to act on Malay demands to maintain a degree of influence and control over Malaya

**1948** The Federation of Malaya

- strong collaboration between the British and the Malays to restore the governing powers of the sultans
- Cold war resulted in communist insurgency
- British gained authority to suppress the insurgency
  - To defeat the communists, the British set up checkpoints at entrances to villages.

- Tried to starve out communists **Briggs plan** tried to starve out communists by cutting off their food and medicine supply lines from Chinese squatters living at the edge of the jungle.

Non-malays opposed and joined PUTERA and joined forces with AMCJA to oppose the federation

- British tried to win the hearts and minds of the people
- Used psychological warfare against the communists
- Gradual devolution of power to a locally elected government (as long as not communist)
- MCP lost much lost support etc

Catalyst - malay union as various ethnic groups in Malaya became actively involved in the politics of the country, UMNO which represented family interests, succeeded in getting the British to replace the Malaya Union with the Federation, caused Chinese to establish MCA and indians to establish MIC

1949: each ethnic group was represented by a major political party

Defeat the communist insurgency the BRitish decided to quicken the decolonisation process by implementing more reforms

1951: 6 officials were appointed to head departments in the federal government

- Ensure malay's political and economic interests and an acceptable citizenship for the nonmalays