

## The Politics of Incorporation and the Bureaucratization of village leaders: A case-study of the Penghulu Association of Kelantan in the 1970's

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### AIM AND INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to specifically see the manner in which village leaders, the *Penghulus*,<sup>1</sup> relate themselves, through an organizational body, to the state. The *Penghulus*' relationship to the state is discussed within the broad social and political changes that had taken place in the state of Kelantan specifically in the 1970's and how these changes affected the performance of the *Penghulus*. Discussion will also be paid to government officials, such as the *Penggawas*, and their relation to the *Penghulus* which has helped to shape the latter's roles in the wider society.

Kelantan's administrative machineries had undergone some changes since Independence, and markedly so in the 1970's. Administrative changes have somewhat led to increased bureaucratization, meaning, in simple terms, that matters of administration are being increasingly dealt with through the bureaucratic channels. In addition, changes within the state's administrative machineries often mirrored or were influenced by changes in the centre (Kuala Lumpur). In this light, the roles of the *Penghulus* are being increasingly compromised and incorporated into the changing nature of the state's administrative machineries especially those having direct bearing on the roles of the *Penghulus*. The centralizing tendencies of the state's administrative machineries and the processes that are associated with it can be widely seen as the process of 'incorporation'.

The process of incorporation, facilitated by increased bureaucratization, has inevitably changed the roles of the *Penghulus*. The 'authority' of the *Penghulus* was undermined by the growth of the state's power which is intimately connected with the increased bureaucratization process. As noted by Weber,<sup>2</sup> one of the basic requirements for the emergence of the 'modern' state was the increasing domination of local functionaries (the *Penghulus* included) by the central bureaucracy. In the process of making the state 'modern' the 'autonomous' local functionaries increasingly lost their autonomy. As we shall see, the response by the *Penghulus* to the loss of this autonomy has taken the shape of tacit resistance, especially to the bureaucratic regulations imposed on them.

## THE POLITICAL SETTING

It was not until 1959 that the state of Kelantan attracted national attention. The 1959 national general election saw the rise of the PMIP in Kelantan and Trengganu, winning in both states thirteen out of the sixteen federal seats, and forty-one out of the fifty-four state assembly seats. Political scientists writing on Malaysian politics attributed the success of the PMIP to Kelantan's predominantly Malay population and its isolation from the centre of commercial and political power.<sup>5</sup> The failure of UMNO to gain support in Kelantan during the 1959 election was the failure of those who considered themselves 'modernists' to come to terms with the traditional authority, particularly the traditional village leaders, the source of much of the support of the PMIP. From this time onwards, the central authorities in Kuala Lumpur became increasingly concerned with 'winning the hearts and minds' of the Kelantanese.

In the national general election of 1964 things changed. The state of Trengganu succumbed to central influence when UMNO gained control. In Kelantan, though the PMIP was still in the limelight, its formerly monolithic control was somewhat shaken with UMNO making remarkable headway on the political scene.<sup>4</sup> It was also in the 1964 election that the central authorities renewed their incessant bid of promising to develop the state of Kelantan which was seen as trailing far behind the development race in comparison to the other states on the West Coast.

In the general election of 1969, the PMIP renewed its grip on Kelantan; and even in the state of Trengganu the PMIP made considerable gains. Despite concerted efforts by the central authorities to win over the Kelantanese voters, UMNO's position in Kelantan in the 1969 election improved only marginally. In terms of the political allegiance of the general populace there was no fundamental shift.

One result of the bloody racial riot which took place on May 13, 1969 was a move to have closer political co-operation between the UMNO and the PMIP political leaders. In Kelantan, such co-operation came into being in 1973 with the formation of the Coalition Government (*Kerajaan Campuran*) between PMIP and UMNO.

The natural outcome of the coalition scheme was the more open and vigorous intervention of the central government in the affairs of Kelantan. The central government's main aim was to 'streamline' the state's peripheral ideology to suit the national ideology. In the 1970's, the central government's main concerns were development and security. It was argued that the increased Communist activities would be very much inhibited if the general population of the country were to have a fairly equitable share in the nation's prosperity. The national dual ideology of development and security inevitably permeated through the general administrative structures from the state to the districts and



down to the village level. For example, the increased federalization of the administrative structures has led to the formation of Working Committees, one for development and one for security at the district level, chaired by the District Officers concerned. Above these two Working Committees, there is the District Action Committee. This Committee, apart from including government officials from various government departments and agencies (including the semi governmental bodies) as members, also allows for participation of politicians, especially the elected 'people's representatives' (*Wakil Rakyat*). This structural differentiation with the administration directly and/or indirectly involves the participation of local leaders, especially the *Penghulus*.

Increased bureaucratization and centralization of the state's administrative structure, two main aspects of the process of incorporation, has led to the introduction of new enactments for the purpose of disciplining the *Penghulus*. As we shall see, the responses by the *Penghulus* to the new enactments has led to changes in their relationship with the state bureaucracy. Increased centralization of the state's administrative structure has advantaged more higher-level officials in the administration than lower-level officials, such as the *Penghulus*.

The formation of the Coalition Government in 1973 has increased the central influence on the state government; and through politicization the *Penghulus* once again felt that they had an important part to play. But their rising expectation were frustrated by the fact that they were not accepted as government servants, though they had come to be seen by many villagers (and ironically, by the ruling authority too) as part and parcel of the administrative structure of the state. The rather low material benefits attached to the office of the *Penghulus* which they saw as not commensurate with the new responsibilities expected of them was interpreted by them as one of unequal exchange very much in favour of the state and central administration.

The above phenomena are some of the changes that had accompanied increased bureaucratization and federalization of the state's administrative structure. The *Penghulus* saw these change as inimical to their role and status. To the *Penghulus*, it was rather imperative to use an association as a means of articulating their interest and simultaneously to level out the weight of increased bureaucratization.

Before we discuss the way in which the *Penghulus* had tried to battle or ward-off forces of increased bureaucratization, through their association, a little digression is necessary at this stage. The brief discussion that is to follow will put in perspective the *Penghulus'* relationship to the state administration in general, the roles and responsibilities, and the material benefits attached to their office prior to the late 1960's. It was in the late 1960's that the weight of bureaucratization was first clearly felt.



## THE *PENGHULUS* AND THE STATE ADMINISTRATION

Administratively, the state of Kelantan is one of the constitutional types with the Sultan formally at the peak of the government hierarchy, but in fact acting more as a symbol for the state as a whole. The actual running of the state machinery is headed by the *Menteri Besar* (Chief Minister) who is assisted by the state Executive and Legislative Councils.

For administrative purposes the state is divided into eight districts, each headed by a District Officer. The districts are further divided into sub-districts (*daerah*) each under the jurisdiction of a *Penggawa* who is answerable to his immediate superior, the District Officer. For the purposes of land registration the *daerahs* are also divided into *mukims* which consists of one or more villages under the charge of a *Penghulu* who is subordinate to the *Penggawa*. Theoretically, there is then a smooth devolution of power from the top of the civil administrative hierarchy down to the village level. The nature of the political system as a whole can be seen as at once pyramidal (with the masses, *rakyat*, as the base) and hierarchical (with particular levels of civil administrative structures having specific roles).

In the pre-British era, the *Penghulus* (then known as *Tok Nebengs*) were selected and appointed directly by the Sultan. They were usually chosen on the basis of their physical might - and hence naturally commanded respect from their fellow villagers - with the purpose of keeping order in the *mukims*. They were also appointed for the purpose of collecting taxes for the ruling family or the state. During the British Administration of Kelantan the role of appointing the *Penghulus* was delegated to the respective District Officers. Since Independence (1957), a special committee from the state Public Service Commission has been introduced for the purpose of appointing the *Penghulus*, and their certificates of appointment are signed by the *Menteri Besar*.

Traditionally, the office of the *Penghulu* was hereditary. During the 1970s, however, this was no longer so. As set out by the '*Skim Perkhidmatan Penghulu-Penghulu Kampong Kelantan 1968*' (The Service Scheme for the Village Heads of Kelantan 1968),<sup>5</sup> those who are between 25 to 45 years of age, possess some Islamic religious knowledge, are able to read and write the National Language, and are renowned for good conduct can apply for the position of *Penghulu*. Preferably the applicants should come from the local community (*anak tempatan*) or those living within the *mukims* where the position of *Penghulu* is vacant.

What usually happens is that the vacancies for the position are advertised at the land offices of the districts concerned. Such advertisements are also posted at the *Penggawas*' offices and sometimes the *Penggawas* themselves make the announcement at congregations, usually after the Friday Prayers. The applicants for the post should write their application letters personally to their respective District Officers. The District Officers will then forward the applications to the *Jawatankuasa Penasihat Penghulu-Penghulu Kampong* (Consultative Committee for the Village Heads)<sup>6</sup> which will then interview and select the applicants



and finally submit the successful applications to the *Menteri Besar*. The *Penghulus* often mistakenly believe that the *Menteri Besar* has the final say in the selection of *Penghulus* but, in actual fact, it is the Consultative Committee which has the real power.

The formation of the Consultative Committee was accompanied by the formation of the *Jawatankuasa Tindakan Disiplin* (Disciplinary Action Committee) to supervise the functioning of the *Penghulus*. The above two committees were created one month after the introduction of the '1968 Scheme'.

The Consultative Committee with its broad supervisory functions consists of six members; four members from the State Assembly, the District Officer concerned, and a Secretary provided and appointed by the State Public Service Commission (*Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Negeri*). This means that District Officers are not permanent members of the Consultative Committee. It is only when the *Penghulus* under their jurisdictions are subjected to the Consultative Committee's 'supervision' that they are brought into the Consultative Committee for the purpose of supplying the Consultative Committee with information regarding the *Penghulus* under consideration.<sup>7</sup>

As regards their roles the *Penghulus* are generally seen, particularly by the state administration, as the 'leaders' within their own mukims, principally playing mediating roles between the villagers and the Government. Their roles can be as specific as those concerning livestock and as general as looking after the general welfare of the village. In the 1970s, increased Communist activities were the Government's main security concern and *Penghulus* were frequently in the look-out for 'subversive elements'. They are, in other words, the Government's 'eyes and ears' (*mata dan telinga kerajaan*).

Being seen by the administrators of the state as an important element in the overall Government machinery while at the same time not *formally* recognised as such is perhaps one of the basic dilemmas facing the *Penghulus* in Kelantan, especially in the 1970's. This has something to do with the *habuan* (commission) that they received. The increased bureaucratization of the role of the *Penghulus* as a direct result of the Government's dual objectives - rural development and security - motivated the *Penghulus* in general to aspire to be identified as Government servants and to desire a regular monthly salary. Failing this, they wanted the Government at least to increase their annual bonus (*hadiah tahunan*).<sup>8</sup>

The introduction of more stringent rules regarding the position of *Penghulus* has a direct relationship with the *Penghulus*' participation in politics. The *Penghulus*, like other Government servants, were strongly warned not to meddle in the politics of the day. They were asked 'to refrain' (*menahankan diri*) from involvement in politics. They could, like any other citizens, however, vote for any political party of their liking.<sup>9</sup> Those who failed 'to refrain' were theoretically obliged to resign their position.



From the outset, it can be argued that the passage of a more stringent scheme such as the '1968 scheme', was essentially with the view of curbing the '*Penghulus*' political participation. To a certain degree, it can be said that increased bureaucratization has facilitated the formulation of the said service scheme for the *Penghulus*. Although the *Penghulus* are not government servants, most of the regulations imposed on them by the Administration are as strict, if not more, as those rules and regulations imposed on full-fledged government servants. Almost half of the clauses contained in the '1968 Scheme' concern discipline. The creation of the *Jawatankuasa Penasihat Penghulu-Penghulu Kampong* was in fact a step to 'streamline' the administration of the *Penghulus*. The Consultative Committee can independently dismiss a *Penghulu* without prior consultation with the State Executive Council. Four of the six members of the Consultative Committee were members of the State Legislative Assembly made up of various People's Representatives (*Wakil Rakyat*). However, the ultimate power capable of dismissing *Penghulus* lies with the State Executive Council, the members of which might well be members of the Consultative Committee.

The *Penghulus* in general were rather unhappy with the increased disciplinary measures binding their roles. They were naturally taken aback by such a move since formerly such disciplinary measures were usually imposed on government servants. Perhaps, it is because of their relatively informal position within the general administrative structure that the Administration found it necessary to impose more stringent disciplinary measures.

Our discussion thus far has stressed on the brief socio-political change that had taken place in the state of Kelantan, remarkably so in the 1970's. We also observed that the change was concomitant with increased bureaucratization and centralization of the state's administrative structure, the two phenomena which helped to shape the process of incorporation. Within the broad incorporation process, we briefly located how the process (through increased bureaucratization) had affected the position of the *Penghulus* vis-a-vis the state's administration. The rest of the essay will devote to discussions of the *Penghulus*' association and how the *Penghulus*, through their association, had tried to manoeuvre and level-out some of the forces (in the form of rules and regulations) emanating from increased bureaucratization process which they saw as inimical to their general interest.

#### THE ACTIVITIES AND TRENDS OF THE PENGHULU ASSOCIATION OF KELANTAN (PPKK) FOR THE YEAR 1953 TO 1962

The foundations of the PPKK were laid by the 'men of the apparatus' rather than by the *Penghulus* themselves. It was formed on the initiative of a District Officer, a *Penggawa* and a *Penggawa's* clerk. It was early in 1953 that the then District Officer of Bachok, Haji Nik Abdullah bin Nik Hussain suggested the idea. The



idea was readily supported by the *Penggawa* of Gunung Timor, Wan Abdullah bin Wan Su and his clerk, Encik Mohammad bin Salleh.

The idea came to fruition early in 1954 but it was not until February 4th, 1955 that the association was formally registered with the Registrar of Societies under the Societies (Registration) Rules of 1953, subject to the Societies Ordinance 1949. Their first address for correspondence given was as Teratak Pulai, Gunung Timor, Bachok, Kelantan.

In the early years of its existence most of the members were from Bachok with Teratak Pulai as its headquarters. This can be clearly seen from the composition of the Executive Committee and the other Committee Members of the PPKK for the period of 1953-1954, the first year of its existence.

The interest shown in its formation by the combination of a District Officer down to the *Penggawa* and his clerk is an indication of their need to identify with the *Penghulus*. In its early years, it seemed that the *Penggawa*, particularly Wan Abdullah bin Wan Su (who was then the PPKK's adviser) had tended to indentify too heavily with the interest of the *Penghulus* so much so that the state government found it necessary to transfer him to a more distant place, Ulu Jeram, Ulu Kelantan and to appoint a second adviser.<sup>10</sup> It is also important to note that in societies where leadership and organization are lacking, the role of the adviser as the sole formulator of the Association, as in the case of the PPKK, is the duplication of the adviser's character. In sum, the adviser is the 'leader' and the members are the 'followers'.

After its shaky start in 1953, the PPKK showed promise when in May, 1954, a Second Annual General Meeting was held at Sekolah Kebangsaan Pak Badol, Gunung Barat, Bachok and the attendance at this meeting was rather encouraging. At this stage two new factors were added to the Association: a new adviser was assigned and the post of Deputy-President was created. There were also changes in the number of committee members, an increase from the original seven to fifteen. However, in terms of its geographic spread, nothing changed in the sense that all the Executive and ordinary committee members were from the District of Bachok.

The Association, although at this stage (1954) not yet formally registered, sent three committee-members to attend a Convention held by the Association of Village Heads of Malaya (*Gabungan Ketua-Ketua Kampong Sa Malaya*) on 28th August, 1954 in Kuala Lumpur. The PPKK was represented by the President, the Secretary, and Penghulu Ismail Ahmad from Pasir Puteh.

By the time it was accepted as an association by the Registrar of Societies (4th February 1955), the PPKK had a membership of 200. It also for the first time included members from outside Bachok on the Executive.

On the 1st April, 1955, another Annual General Meeting was held at the building of the *Majlis Ugama Islam*, Kota Bharu. The meeting was attended by



responsible for playing the role of a 'pressure group' by putting demands to the State Government, including the need to increase the *Penghulu's* annual bonus, which at this time stood at RM10. Concessions like clothing and fire-arms were also demanded. A delegation of four was later sent to meet the State Secretary regarding the above demands.

On 19th October, 1956, the Third Annual General Meeting was held at Sekolah Kebangsaan Ketereh, Kota Bharu, which was attended by 193 members. Among the resolutions adopted at this meeting were: first, the renewal of their demands to the State Government; second, a plan to visit different parts of Kelantan and the holding of talks in order to explain to the people the Association's functions and activities; and third to urge the State Government to form an Investigation Committee to formulate a special scheme for the *Penghulus*. The Association held six committee meetings for that year and efforts were concentrated on attracting more members so as to buttress its financial status. These efforts were, however, poorly rewarded.

Again, on 10th March, 1957, the PPKK sent two representatives to Kuala Lumpur to attend the *Gabungan Ketua-Ketua Kampong Sa Malaya* Annual General Meeting. The Association was represented by the President Ismail Awang and Encik Noh bin Mamat, the *Penghulu* of Buluh Poh, Kadak, Kota Bharu. The expenses for the expedition were borne by the committee-members. That year also saw for the first time that the PPKK was represented by members outside Bachok. The most noticeable personality represented in the PPKK at this time was the Deputy President, *Penghulu* Ismail Ahmad from Pasir Puteh. Similarly, the position of the Treasurer was filled by an 'outsider', *Penghulu* Yusuff Haji Othman from Kemuning, Machang. Although Bachok still contributed three quarters of the PPKK's Executive and ordinary committee members, it was no longer totally dominant. There were two representatives from Kota Bharu, two from Tanah Merah, one from Pasir Mas, and three from Pasir Puteh. What was clear at this stage was that Pasir Puteh played a significant role within the PPKK, being second in importance.

By the Fourth Annual General Meeting which took place at *Maahad Muhammadi*, Kota Bharu, on 27th July, 1957, it was clear that the PPKK's financial burden was overwhelming. Financial problems notwithstanding, the PPKK managed to finance a *pencak silat* show<sup>11</sup> as a contribution to the celebrations of the nation's Independence on the 31st August, 1957.

The year 1958 was an important and decisive year for the PPKK. It was in that year the Association received its new Adviser, Nik Hussein Fathi, the *Penggawa* of Gunung Timor who replaced *Penggawa* Wan Abdullah. Nik Hussein Fathi can be considered as the single most important figure within the PPKK. During his tenure, he revitalised the financially - burdened association which was in danger of dissolution. The membership of the PPKK at this time



stood at 208. The PPKK was further given a confidential assurance by the Member of Parliament of Pasir Mas, Encik Yaakob bin Awang who affirmed that the State Government was prepared to look into the possibility of introducing a new Special Scheme for the *Penghulus*. A number of delegations were then sent to meet the State Secretary, the State Executive Working Committee and other officers. As a result, on 28th August, 1958, the much-awaited New Scheme for the *Penghulus* was passed by the State Government. Though given increased responsibilities, the Association accepted the New Scheme which entitled members to a RM240 annual bonus. The passing of the New Scheme, however indirectly, had to do with the coming National General Election which was due to take place in July, 1959.<sup>12</sup> The New Scheme was again reviewed in 1960 and by this time, the PPKK was financially quite stable and thanks to its new energetic adviser, the Association was making its name known throughout the state.

On 5th April, 1961, a representative of the PPKK was sent to Kuala Lumpur to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Association of the Village Headman of Malaya. By 1962, it was clear that the Association was making progress and making its presence felt in society in general, and to the state government in particular. Though not all its demands were met, (for example, authorization for the possession of fire-arms) members seemed to be duly satisfied with what they had achieved. In short, under the guidance of the new adviser, the Association's performances were rather orderly and very much 'streamlined'.

#### THE PPKK, THE PPKN AND THE WAKIL RAKYAT

On the surface, the discussion of the roles of the *Penggawas* within the scheme of our analysis seems to be out of place since our major concern is the *Penghulus*. Nevertheless, the inclusion of the *Penggawas* in the framework of our discussion is intended to make intelligible the fact that the *Penggawas* were once great supporters of the Penghulu Association. PPKK was formed on the initiative of *Penggawa* Wan Abdullah Wan Su and later, in its depressed period, was steered clear of the rocks by *Penggawa* Nik Hussein Fathi. This illustrates the point that the *Penggawas* were concerned about the welfare of the *Penghulu*, and considered *Penghulus* as part of the family. But this was the past. What about the present?

At the present, and as early as 1970, indications are that the once intimate relationship between the *Penggawas* and the *Penghulus* had been clearly severed. Even the clerks of the *Penggawas* had to form their own society known as '*Persatuan Kerani-Kerani Penggawa Kelantan*' (The *Penggawas*' Clerks Association of Kelantan).

The *Penggawas* themselves have their own Association known as *Persatuan Penggawa-Penggawa Kelantan* (*Penggawas*' Association of Kelantan), or PPKN for short, initiated in 1953 and formally registered on 7th June, 1956.<sup>13</sup> Of late, much of the Association's activities had been directed to



It is pertinent to note here that the revitalisation of KPPMB - which ceased functioning in 1972, primarily owing to the death of the Association's President and Treasurer - has a direct link with the PPKN's dire concern with increasing the salary of its members. The salary that they get, starting at RM220 per month, is thought to be unfair considering the amount of work that they have to perform, encompassing so wide a role as to include social, economic, and also religious functions, functions which can be adequately summarised as 'administrator, judge and supervisor in his Daerah'.<sup>16</sup>

The need for the revival of the KPPMB was first pushed at its 18th Annual General Meeting on 24th of August, 1972. The man solely responsible for the revival of the KPPMB was Ismail Awang, the then Secretary of the PPKN, who at present is the Penggawa of Wakaf Bharu, Kota Bharu. Their first meeting of the various *Penghulus* (in Kelantan *Penggawas*) from the states in West Malaysia took place on 24th April, 1973 at Merdeka Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. Representatives from Selangor, Johore, Kedah, Penang, Trengganu, Kelantan and Perlis were present. At the end of the meeting they accepted the *Rang Undang-Undang* (Draft Bills) as prepared by the PPKN.

From 1972 the main preoccupation of the PPKN was with raising the salary of its members, urging the State Government and later, after the revitalization of the KPPMB, the Malaysian Government to raise the salary of *Penggawas* to the level of a Semi-Professional Group with the starting salary of RM400 per month. Apart from this, members also want to retain their monthly allowance which they are now receiving, ranging from RM75 to RM100 per month. In the 1970's, they were still vehemently fighting over the issue.<sup>17</sup> I specifically belabour this point i.e. the PPKN's main preoccupation with salary-raising is to make clear one important fact; this preoccupation is consciously and/or unconsciously responsible for the weakening of ties in its relationship with the *Penghulu* Association. It is also this preoccupation, notwithstanding the rationalisations and justifications offered,<sup>18</sup> which has necessarily beclouded some of their former preoccupations which were focussed at solving society's problems, preoccupations that can be considered as 'community-oriented' in nature.

Such 'community-oriented' undertakings were evident, for instance, in the concern expressed in 1969 for the overall performance of the Malayan Tobacco Company (MTC) regarding the buying of tobacco leaves from the growers who complained of being 'unfairly treated' by the Company. The absence of these 'community-oriented' preoccupations is the distinguishing feature of the present-day functioning of the PPKN. This radical re-orientation has indirectly affected - more so, of late - the relationship between the PPKN (*Penggawas*) and the PPKK (*Penghulus*). An illustration is in order here.

It is an open secret that in Kelantan the relationship between the *Penggawas* and the *Wakil Rakyat* (people's representatives) which includes both parliamentarian and state councillors, has never been smooth and easy. Each



claims to be the guardian of the commoners. The one - the *Penggawa* - concerned with the welfare of his *anak-daerah* and the other the *Wakil Rakyat* - eagerly wanting to identify himself with his electorate which, of course, overlaps that of the *Penggawa's daerah*. This 'coincidence of interest' sometimes proved to make interpersonal relationships precarious. Clashes of interests frequently occur over the issue of '*projek-projek kecil*' (small projects) - usually for the purpose of repairing the *Penggawa's* roads offered by the State Government through the *Wakil Rakyat*.<sup>19</sup>

In 1972, the *Penggawas* suggested that the *Penghulus* must be *elected* rather than appointed. What usually happened under the appointive system was that the *Penghulus* were the candidates of the *Wakil Rakyat*. Any candidates put forward by the *Penggawas* - who undoubtedly know the prospective *Penghulus* better - usually had only the slightest chance of appointment. The idea that a *Penghulu* must be elected was further supported by the *Penggawas* at their 1973 Annual General Meeting. The then Secretary of the PPKN wrote a letter to the State Secretary concerning the issue but received no reply. The idea did not evoke much support. In one of the committee meetings, the Secretary of the PPKN told his colleagues that the issue should be dropped since he had encountered a few *Wakil Rakyat* who were rather unenthusiastic about the idea. The *Wakil Rakyat* were of the view that it would cost a lot of money to hold an election. One might conclude that here is a case of conflict arising from the ambiguous relationship existing between the *Wakil Rakyat* and the *Penggawas* in that both propound the idea that their roles are but a reflection of the majority interest. This was sometimes manifested in the relationship between the *Penggawas* and the *Wakil Rakyat* so that it was deemed necessary for the State Government, as early as 1970, to form the *Jawatankuasa Perhubungan* (Communication Committee) or simply the JKP. It was formed with the prime objective of bridging the gap that existed between the *Penggawas* and the *Wakil Rakyat*.<sup>20</sup> The State Government particularly sees this as important, and especially in the face of the Coalition Government with its New Economic Policy, the cooperation between the two 'camps' is inevitably crucial.<sup>21</sup>

As far as the PPKN is concerned (and this was made explicit during the 1970's), there is an important variant to be noted: the new membership composition in the PPKN. As we noted before, the then Secretary of the PPKN, Ismail Awang, was instrumental in the revitalisation of the collapsing KPPMB. It should be borne in mind that Ismail Awang was a former *Ustaz*. This is a new trend within the PPKN: the need for leaders having religious background. There is then a shift from the 'community-oriented' preoccupations (of before 1970) to 'religious-oriented' preoccupations within the PPKN. This new 'streak' of consciousness was apparent when at their 1975 Annual General Meeting among the main items on the agenda three were 'religious-oriented' which were later easily approved by the meeting. The three items were: to ask the State Govern



ment to offer bonuses for Koranic teachers in the villages; to provide a free trip to Mecca for at least four *Penggawas* annually; and third, the more hotly debated issue of appointing an *Ulama* into the National Film Censorship Board.

The question of pilgrimage to Mecca provides another reminder of the convergence of interest of the two groups. As from January 1976, the State Government had already given approval to the *Penghulus* for travel assistance of RM500 each for two of them to go to Mecca every year.<sup>22</sup> In contrast, what the *Penggawas* asked was for four persons per year to go and that all the expenses should be borne by the State Government.

There is, however, one important reason why the demands made by the PPKN in the early 1970's especially that of raising members' salaries were vigorously pushed forward: it was the coming national general election of 1974. This election was very important since the outcome of the election in Kelantan would reflect the feasibility of the Coalition concept propounded by Kuala Lumpur. The committee members of the PPKN fully realised the implication of making demands after the election. It is the game of politics, they argued, whichever side wins the election, promises will remain promises (*janji tinggal janji*). Therefore it did not matter whether demands are put forward before or after elections.

In reiteration our discussion so far has been concerned primarily with the formation of the PPKK, the initiatives for which came from the *Penggawas*. The *Penggawas*, in the beginning, also provided the advisory functions for the PPKK. We have also noted that the PPKK made substantial progress under the advisership of *penggawa* Nik Hussein Fathi, the then *Penggawa* of Gunung Timor, Bachok, who held the position up until 1966. In the 1970's things took a different shape altogether. The once intimate relationship between the *Penggawas* and the *Penghulus* was no longer there. The *Penggawas'* rather awkward relationship with the *Wakil Rakyat* in which both were claiming influence with the *same* followers further eroded the *Penggawas'* patronage function. The *penggawas'* intense concern for a rise in salary is fundamentally due to the fact that the *Penggawas* felt that they would be shouldering a greater proportion of responsibilities to be introduced by Kuala Lumpur, particularly so after the formation of the Coalition Government (late 1973). Before this one knew the *Penggawa* as a person principally dealing with the registration of land or with the issuing of passes (permissions) for the slaughtering of cattle or buffaloes. It is these *anticipated* responsibilities, rather than the loss of them, that triggered both *Penggawas* and *Penghulus* to formalise their roles. The centre's (Kuala Lumpur) ideology which consistently stressed the need for a 'revolution from below' and the importance of '*kepimpinan akar umbi*' (grass-root leadership) in ensuring the success of the New Economic Policy, made them aware of the fact that they *have* the responsibilities after all!

It is to be argued in the later part of this article that the *Penghulus* are



finding themselves in a dilemma. This is more so in their relationship with the State Bureaucracy.

The responsibilities devolved on the Penghulus are singularly bureaucratic in the sense of a linear transmission of authority from the state down to the District Officers, passing through the *Penggawas*, and finding its final destination with the *Penghulus*. However, much of the confusion experienced by the *penghulus* is with the problem of orientation. Most of the *Penghulus* were confused about the manner in which they were being appointed. They have been asking questions such as whether their appointment was made by the District Officers, the *Menteri Besar* or by the Sultan himself? Their problem is one of confusion. They are not sure of their roles and place in the society in general.

#### THE PPKK AND THE STATE ADMINISTRATION: 1959 TO 1970

Although directly under the State Administration, nevertheless the PPKK's relationship with this Administration is far from easy. In 1959, after the introduction of the New Scheme of 1958, where the *penghulus* were to receive RM240 annually, much of the dissatisfaction on the part of the PPKK was over discrepancies in the payment of the annual bonus. For example, the *Penghulus* in the District of Pasir Mas and Pasir Puteh were only paid RM200 instead of the full amount of RM240. They also urged the State Government that the bonus should be paid regularly. The salaried mentality had made its appearance here: the need to have a constant and regular income. In 1959, there were altogether 546 *Penghulus* in Kelantan, and the State Government had voiced its intention to retrench 302 of the total. With the help of the *Penggawas* who sided with the PPKK, only 66 *Penghulus* were discontinued from their services. The question of land was also raised by the PPKK. The PPKK argued for ten acres of land to be given to each *Penghulu* on his retirement. Frequent comparisons were made with the FLDA Scheme in Ayer Lanas, the first of its kind introduced in the state by the National Government. They also requested free medical treatment (Class II B) in Government Hospitals. They also realised, at this time, the need to set up a 'General Fund' for the Association.

These were some of the important demands and initiatives made by the PPKK for the year 1959. Interestingly enough, the demands made in the 1970's were, as we shall see, only an extension and modification of the demands formulated in 1959. Demands such as the need for land after retirement and the need for free medical service are still rated 'urgent' in the PPKK's agenda of the 1970's. The continued delay in meeting the demands could only mean two things; the inappropriate nature of the demands forwarded and the fact that the PPKK is seen as a weak bargaining force that can be easily dispensed with by the new ruling party, the PMIP - by this time, the *Penghulus* had been labelled



as the 'Alliance men'. Towards the end of 1959, a 'Committee to Review Agenda' was formed. The aim of the Committee was to limit the range of discussion made available to the *penghulus*. It was not clear who was behind the formation of the Committee.

At the 1959 Annual General Meeting held at Sekolah Padang Garong, Kota Bharu, it was apparent that the PPKK's relationship with the then *Menteri Besar* was at its lowest. This was demonstrated from the result of the motion to select a Patron. Two names were forwarded, Tengku Mahkota and the *Menteri Besar*. During the casting of votes, the *Menteri Besar* received only two votes.

The PPKK during 1959 and 1960 was constantly reminded by the leaders of the State that their relationship with the State was nothing more than a relationship between 'mother and children'. Ideally, theirs was to be a neutral body rather than one 'following the ideology of the left of the right',<sup>23</sup> and more appropriately, "to right the wrongs, and to purify the impure" (*menyelesaikan yang kotor dan menjernihkan yang keroh*). It is an issue whether the PPKK ought to be or must be a neutral body that induces the Association to be useless or without a role. Hence, as early as 1961, a Committee of four went to see the *Menteri Besar* insisting that he clearly define the roles of the *Penghulus*.

Not all state leaders were seen by the PPKK as being less sympathetic to their cause. This was particularly true of the then *Timbalan Menteri Besar*. Since 1961, the imprint made by the then *Timbalan Menteri Besar*, Dato' Mohammad Nasir, upon the PPKK was significant. He personally managed to establish a cordial relationship with the PPKK. He explained to the PPKK, in one of his speeches, that every man has two purposes in life. Firstly, he has rights (*hak*), for example, the right to demand things; and secondly, he has responsibilities (*kewajipan*) to be shouldered. It is the correct balance between 'hak' and 'kewajipan' that determines the integrity of a human being. His discerning and thought provoking speeches were largely responsible for the PPKK's admiration for his personality. His philosophy had a tremendous impact on the thinking of the PPKK in that by 1962, the President of the PPKK found it necessary and commendable to adopt some sort of a "gradualist" policy in the PPKK's relationship to the State Bureaucracy in the sense of "accepting some of the Government approvals of our demands, and having obtained them, we can then formulate new demands".

The PPKK sometimes refrained from making demands to the Administration and involved itself with 'community projects' instead. For example, in 1961, a note of caution reminding taxi-drivers of their reckless driving which could endanger school children was sent to the Transport Department. Also in 1964, the Association strongly supported the formation of the *Majlis Pelajar-Pelajar Melayu Kelantan* (Malay Student Council of Kelantan), aimed at promoting and improving the lot of the Malay students in the field of education. Tuan Ludin Tuan Ismail, the then Vice-President, represented the PPKK at the



Council's meeting. As we saw at the beginning of our discussion, when noting some of the PPKK's demands in the 1970's, it was apparent that the demands were lacking in gradualist (*tolak-ansur*) elements. The demands were more vocal, persistent and objective. The PPKK's willingness and courage to indirectly challenge the Administration was clearly illustrated when the PPKK held seminars and forums where individuals of distinction with the Administration were invited to 'interpret' the role of the *Penghulus*. A more radical posture was taken by the Secretary of the PPKK. During one of our interviews,<sup>24</sup> the Secretary told the author that at one stage of his career, he was summoned to the *Menteri Besar*'s Office. The *Menteri Besar* demanded from him an explanation and an apology for his protest over what was to him a misallocation of welfare services organised by the State Department of Social Welfare. He ignored the summons and stayed firm on the conviction that he was right. In the end, the *Menteri Besar* gave way. He also told the author that nearly every time the PPKK is planning its Annual General Meeting, one of the Consultative Committee members for the selection of the *Penghulus* 'reminds' other *Penghulus* not to vote for him as the incoming Secretary since he demanded 'too much' from the Government. The present PPKK's rather ambivalent relationship with the State Government can be traced to the Scheme that gave the state's officials almost unlimited freedom in exercising their control over the *Penghulus*. Perhaps the wound was too great to bear since after the Coalition, the PPKK's relationship with the State Bureaucracy was still, at best, distant.

#### THE PPKK AND THE STATE ADMINISTRATION: THE 1970's

As we briefly noted at the beginning of this essay, with the fruition of the Coalition Scheme, the *Penghulus* gained confidence since they could once again identify themselves and be identified as 'the men from the centre'. If prior to 1959 they were being identified as the 'Alliance men', they could, now identify themselves as the 'National Front men' or at least, as the 'Coalition men'. As an expression of this newly found self-confidence, they demanded that the Administration give them a detailed interpretation (*pentafsiran*) regarding their roles as printed on their *Surat Tauliah* (letter of authority). Though the responsibilities of the *Penghulus* are rather clearly stated in their *Surat Tauliah*, the above comments can only mean one thing: that there is a felt need on their part that their existence should be recognised by those in authority. It is precisely for this reason that the PPKK organised a seminar titled '*Seminar Perkhidmatan Penghulu-Penghulu Kampong*' (Seminar Regarding the Service of the Village Heads), held on 15th of April, 1974 at *Maahad Muhammadiyah*, Kota Bharu. At the Seminar, four different people from four different departments were invited to present papers explaining the functions and role



of the *Penghulus*. Those who took part in the seminar were: the then Deputy Menteri Besar, Datuk Haji Mohammad bin Nasir; Deputy *Mufti* of Kelantan, Haji Ismail Yusuff; Chief Police Officer, Kelantan, and Encik Ayub Zakaria, Director, State Social Welfare Department. Again, on the 11th of March, 1975, a forum concerning the 'Roles of Village Headmen in the Era of Science and Technology' was initiated by the PPKK and four other speakers, representing different departments, were invited to give their opinion on the subject. One of the speakers purposely invited was Encik Mustafa bin Ahmad, a former and somewhat vocal opposition member of the State Assembly. A few days after the Forum, the PPKK's Secretary found himself cornered by one of the State Executive Committee members, who also happened to be on the Selection Committee for the appointment of the *Penghulus*, demanded an explanation as to why Mustafa Ahmad was invited to the 'Forum' organised by the PPKK.

It is fruitful at this stage to see some of the main activities of the PPKK in the early 1970's.

There were altogether 13 demands (*tuntutan*) made by the PPKK for the period between 1973 and 1974. Four of the thirteen demands were only reiterations of the demands made in the 1950's and 1960's. These demands included travelling allowances, retirement bonus, free government land (preferably land in the Development Schemes), and a special bonus to the *Penghulus* who died in accidents.

Only two of the above four demands were approved by the government. The first approved was the retirement bonus. The government approved a sum of RM30 which was far from the PPKK's original target of RM50 to RM100. A special bonus of RM1500 was also given to the *Penghulu* of Kubang Sepat, Pengkalan Kubor, Tumpat who was killed by bandits.

The demand for assistance from the government to those *Penghulus* wishing to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, as we have already seen, was also approved. The government also approved that the *Penghulus* should be given a commission for earmarking livestock (*kacip telinga lembu-kerbau*). For each buffalo or cow earmarked the *penghulus* will get 50 cents 'commission', an increase of 30 cents (from the original 20 cents)<sup>25</sup> Apart from these four approved demands, the rest of the demands were either disapproved or left unanswered.

Some of the important demands made by the PPKK and disapproved by the Government or remaining unanswered were: the interpretation of the *Penghulus*' role, the *Penghulus* as temporary members within the Consultative Committee, a free medical service, the right to own fire-arms, and most importantly, the demand that the government should recognise them as government servants. As for the last demand, a special memorandum was sent to the State Secretary. There were, however, other important demands worth mentioning that were also not approved by the government. First, for those *Penghulus*



who had already served for seven or more years, they were automatically appointed as *Penggawas*. Second, their annual bonus as to be increased from the present amount that ranges between RM400 to RM500 to a new scheme which entitles them to a sum of money that should range between RM1,200 and RM2,000.

Something needs to be said regarding the *Penghulus*' demand for free government land. A special meeting was held between the PPKK's President and an administrative Officer from the State Department of Land and Mines on 27th July, 1974. The decision arrived at the meeting was that the Director of Land and Mines would consider giving land to the *Penghulus* under the following circumstances,

- i) consideration will be given to those *Penghulus* who have already served for 10 years or more, and
- ii) consideration will also be given to *Penghulus* who are over 45 years old.

However, two days after the meeting, the Association rejected the offer, based on the argument that by the time they received the land, they were too old to work on it. The government's reluctance regarding this issue can be explained from the fact that the *Penghulus* demanded too much. They demanded that each *Penghulu* should be given 18 acres of land, preferably land at the Government Land Scheme at Kemahang, Tanah Merah. At their last General Meeting, as has been mentioned above, some of the members expressed their concern over the fact that the PPKK's demand regarding land was illogical.

The PPKK was also becoming increasingly suspicious of the Consultative Committee and the *Menteri Besar*. Their misgivings about the Consultative Committee and the *Menteri Besar* were clearly expressed in their Special Executive Committee Meeting which was held on 16th April, 1975. During the meeting, the PPKK expressed its concern over one of their committee members being harassed by one of the members from the Consultative Committee. The PPKK's committee member was told and warned by the member of the Consultative Committee that some of the PPKK's demands were 'too much' (*melampau*). The member from the Consultative Committee was particularly enraged, as we saw, over the fact that the PPKK had invited a former member of the State's Opposition noted for his outspoken criticisms of some of the government's initiatives to participate in their 'Forum' held on the evening of the 11th March, 1975. Inviting this particular person, the member from the Consultative Committee further argued, was like 'letting a ferocious tiger bite



the government'. The member from the Consultative Committee also demanded an explanation as to why he was not invited to the 'Forum'.

The meeting also expressed doubts concerning the contents of the *Menteri Besar's* Special Address given to the PPKK on the morning of 11th March, 1975. The occasion was specially sponsored by the PPKK to honour the new *Menteri Besar*. During the speech, the *Menteri Besar* referred to the *Penghulus* as 'the youngest child in the family' (*anak bongsu dalam keluarga*) which indirectly implied that the *Penghulus* were 'too spoiled' (*manja*) and had always to be 'spoon-fed'.<sup>26</sup> They were against the *Menteri Besar's* idea which proposed that there should be an election for the position of the *Penghulu*. At this special meeting, they also voted to stage a public demonstration, which for some reason or other, was not carried out. Although the decision to have the public demonstration was not held, it indicated the seriousness to the PPKK the problems that arose from its relationship with the Consultative Committee and the *Menteri Besar*.

After the 'Seminar', the Secretary of the PPKK sent a letter to the State Secretary giving some of the general conclusions reached at the 'Seminar'. From the letter (dated 30th April, 1974), a number of important development were discernible regarding the attitudes of the *Penghulus* to the Administration in general. First, the *Penghulus* wanted the government to review their roles as stated in their *Surat Kuasa* and more urgently, to review the '1968 Scheme', and to recognise them as fully-fledged government servants and be known as 'Assistant *Penggawas*' rather than *Penghulus*. Second, the government should pay particular attention when recruiting *Penghulus*. It was stipulated that the *Penghulus* should be recruited from individuals with deep religious commitments. Third, the *Penghulus* in their capacity as organisers of the *gotong-royong* project (for example, repairing village roads) should be given a special bonus. They were also to be given a special bonus for delivering government directives and notices to the villagers. Fourth, the government should provide them with special training so as to equip them for local administration. And finally, the government was urged to supply each *Penghulu* with special diaries.

From the above resolutions adopted by the PPKK, two main themes could be detected and seem to be very significant. In the first place, the *Penghulus* were no longer willing to render 'free services', in the sense that their services have to have an equivalent monetary return. The most explicit example of this is the special bonus asked by the *Penghulus* over the *gotong-royong* projects. The second main theme is the need for them to be formal, by urging the government to give them special diaries.

Under the '1968 Scheme', it was possible for the Consultative Committee to invite any of the *Penghulus* to be a 'temporary member' of the Committee. During the 1970's the PPKK was very insistent on this provision. It was not until



March, 1976, that the PPKK received a reply from the Administration that at the moment there is no event or cause for the election of a *Penghulu* as a 'temporary member' of the Consultative Committee to represent the voice of the *Penghulus*. However, they would notify the *Penghulus* when such a time arrives. It is precisely the secrecy shrouding the relationship between the PPKK and the Consultative Committee that led to the PPKK's persistent demand for their roles to be defined, a need which later materialised in the form of the 'Seminar' and 'Forum' mentioned above.

### THE PPKK AND THE CHANGING ADVISER

My main aim in this section is to summarise important events experienced by the PPKK since its inception in the hope of highlighting some of the important features, showing that through the years, there have been changes of advisers within the PPKK with its own inevitable consequences.

What significantly differentiates the past from the activities of the PPKK in the 1970's the role of its adviser. We have seen earlier how the *Penggawas* were very concerned with the functioning of the PPKK. *Penggawa* Wan Abdullah bin Wan Su provided the foundation and Nik Hussein Fathi was responsible for the PPKK's healthy growth up until 1966. The guidance provided by the *penggawas* was buttressed by the fact that almost all the participating members were from the same area or district. They were all from Bachok, particularly from either Gunung Timor or Teratak Pulau.

The PPKK as a powerful bargaining force was first taken note of as early as 1954 when Dato' Haji Nik Abdullah - incidentally, he was also a founding member of the PPKK - offered himself as a Co-Adviser along with the first Adviser Wan Abdullah bin Wan Su. The activities of the PPKK for the first ten years (1953-1963) have been already briefly summarised at the beginning of this article. What is left for us to do at this stage is to look briefly at the significant changes within the membership of the PPKK and to pin-point some of the instances leading to the present ambivalent relationship between the PPKK and the State Government.

As we already noted the PPKK was established in 1953. The Chairman of the PPKK at its inception was Ismail Awang, the *Penghulu* of Bukit Chinda, Bachok. By 1954, a new Adviser, Dato Nik Abdullah was appointed. Simultaneously a new post was created, that of the Vice-President. In the 1957-1958 period, in terms of its membership composition, the PPKK underwent a somewhat substantial change. We noticed that, at this time, Bachok no longer dominated the scene. Perhaps, it was the varied representation of various districts which challenged the organizational integrity of the PPKK, which at this time was on the verge of extinction. The PPKK was literally saved with the coming of the new Adviser, Nik Hussein Fathi, the then *Penggawa* of Gunung Timor. He first



joined the PPKK in 1958. There were, at this time, three Advisers for the PPKK, namely Dato Nik Abdullah, Wan Abdullah Wan Su and Nik Hussein Fathi. It was the latter who proved to be an effective Adviser but for some obscure reasons, he had to 'resign' from the position in 1966. What was also apparent at this period was the predominance of members from the Kota Bharu Districts, including that of *Penghulu* Tuan Ludin bin Tuan Ismail from Cetek, Kota Bharu, who was later to play a very active role within the PPKK. At this stage, it was also noticeable that for the first time a *Penghulu* from Ulu Kelantan was represented. This rather late response was essentially due to the communication problem.

The year 1964 also saw the dark side of the PPKK: a clash of personalities between the President (a rather conservative man, the proto-type of a *Penghulu* during the pre-British era) from Pasir Puteh with the more urbane Vice-President from Cetek, Kota Bharu. By 1966, things had got out of hand and a sudden resignation by the efficient Adviser was a total blow to the PPKK. In 1967, the President, Ismail Ahmad from Pasir Puteh disappeared from the scene and the chairmanship was shouldered by Tuan Ludin. The situation was so bad that the 1968 Annual General Meeting was attended by only 95 members. The resignation of Tuan Ludin in 1968 is still clouded in mystery. In sum, the period from 1966 to 1969 was a chaotic period for the PPKK. This can be explained in no other way than by the disappearance of guidance provided by the *Penggawa* Nik Hussein Fathi who was their Adviser up until 1966. To be sure, the Adviser after 1966 was not a *Penggawa*. The advisory role played by Nik Hussein was enhanced by the fact that he was at that time the *Penggawa* of Gunung Timor, the birth-place of the PPKK. The Adviser that they had after 1966 was a person unaccustomed to the day-to-day running of the PPKK and more importantly lacked face-to-face intimate relationships. The PPKK viewed the present adviser not so much as a *penasihat* (adviser) but as a '*penjaga*' (guardian).

It can be argued that by the end of 1969, the PPKK was no longer under the control of the Bachok-based founding members. The PPKK in the 1970's was an organisation having rather weak and distant ties with the *Penggawas* and having members coming from different districts.

In the main, our analysis thus far has been concerned with the changing advisers within the PPKK. That the Association was solely dependent on its adviser for its smooth functioning was clearly demonstrated in 1958, when the Association was under the leadership (advisership) of Nik Hussein Fathi. He saved the Association from disintegrating. The leadership of Nik Hussein Fathi also made intelligible the fact that one tends to be more faithful to a leader who is within one's midst. It is for this very reason that Nik Hussein, himself a native of Bachok, was an excellent adviser. It was also clear that after his resignation in 1966, the PPKK faced one of its trying period with committee-members, for instance, frequently resigning positions.



## CONCLUDING REMARK

The single most important feature that has emerged from the discussion in this article is how the process of increased bureaucratization had affected the *Penghulus*' position vis-a-vis the state administration. One such effect was the *Penghulus*' unhappiness over the unwillingness on the part of the administration to regard them as 'government servants'.

The claim for such recognition was not without validity insofar as, of late, the *Penghulus* are seen by the administration as an integral part of the overall administrative structure. The *Penghulus*' bargaining position in relation to the state was further weakened by the absence of dedicated advisers in leading the PPKK when voicing their demands to the state authority. The guidance given by dedicated *penggawas* since the 1950's seems to have given way to a more centralized and bureaucratized 'patron' in the 1970's.

The *Penghulus*' changing attitudes toward the state administration in sense, were directly affected by the state's changing political allegiance. Prior 1959, when Kelantan was under the Alliance administration, the *Penghulus* were fairly well-treated. It was the Alliance Government that raised their annual bonus from the meagre sum of RM10 to RM240. From this time onwards, the *penghulus* were frequently identified as the 'Alliance men' (*orang Perikatan*). After the National General Election of 1959, the PMIP took over the control of Kelantan, and the *Penghulus*, formerly identified as the 'Alliance men' were suspiciously regarded by the new ruling party. After the formation of the Coalition Government in 1973, the *Penghulus*' hopes were raised once again since UMNO had received its recognition in the state as an equal partner within the Coalition Scheme.

The 'uniqueness' of Kelantanese politics and society notwithstanding, the weight of bureaucratization has proved to have somewhat eroded the bases of authority of the local-level leaders, and in the context of the discussion the bases of authority of the *Penghulus*.

The federalization of the state's administrative structures has benefitted officials in the state administration, including the *Penggawas*. This has changed the relationship between the *Penggawas* and *Penghulus* whereby the ties that formerly bound the *Penghulus* and *Penggawas* were broken principally due to the latter's closer identification with the administration and their present intense preoccupation for raising their economic standing. The *Penggawas* themselves are full-fledged government servants. Supposedly having functions wider (if not more obscure) than ordinary government servants, they seemed to have a legitimate basis to claim for more benefits from the administration, vis-a-vis the *Penghulus*.



The *Penghulus* have to relate or contend with only one source of authority, the state. Feeling themselves more closely tied up with bureaucratic regulations or values, any rejection of such values and regulations was done in a more subtle and cautious manner as in the case of holding 'seminars' and 'forums' where selected individuals seen as important in determining the welfare of the *Penghulus* in general were invited to speak.

The nature of the *Penghulus*' position in relation to the state administration, a relationship shaped by the civil-administrative structure characterized by a linear transmission of authority, has led to the restriction of scope and movement for the *Penghulus* in contending with the bureaucratic forces that affect their life. It is the presence of these singularly bureaucratic values which help to explain the unwillingness on the part of the *Penghulus* to more or less openly confront the state administration.

<sup>1</sup>Something has to be said regarding terminology. Kelantan, the term *Penghulu* refers to the village headman, the equivalent of Ketua Kampong for the other states in West Malaysia. Similarly, the term *Penggawa* in Kelantan is equivalent to *Penghulu* in other states.

<sup>2</sup>See, Hans H. Gerth & Wright Mills (eds) *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1948, pp. 235-244.

<sup>3</sup>See R.K. Vasil, 'The 1964 General Elections in Malaya'. *International Studies*, vol. 7 (1965). Vasil in this article characterized the PMIP as an 'extreme' and 'communal' party relying heavily on 'religious appeal' (p.32); R.S. Milne, in his *Government and Politics in Malaysia*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1967, has observed that 'the driving force behind the party comes from religion' and further asserted that it 'distrusts progress, and set a low value on material prosperity', (p. 93); K.J. Ratnam, in his *Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya*, University of Malaya Press, Singapore, 1965, more pointedly attributed the PMIP's success in Kelantan to the abovesaid factors of the state's isolation and backwardness, (p.169).

<sup>4</sup>In the 1964 General Election UMNO increased its state assembly seats from two (won in the 1959 General Election) to nine and an extra federal seat (making it two) was added to the score. For further details see, R.K. Vasil, *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>The most comprehensive 'Scheme' devised thus far for the *Penghulus* in Kelantan. Henceforth the abbreviated form of '1968 Scheme', will be used. For detailed description of the '1968 Scheme', see State Secretariat Kelantan (Government of Kelantan), Kelantan, File no. K. 1252/53/Pt.IV/(18).

<sup>6</sup>This special committee was formed one month after the passing of the '1968 Scheme'. See, State Secretariat Kelantan (Government of Kelantan), K.1252/53/Pt.IV/ (19), dated 1.5.1968.

<sup>7</sup>It is provided under the '1968 Scheme' (Clause 24) that the Consultative Committee may also invite any of the *Penghulus* to be a 'temporary member' (*ahli sementara*) of the Consultative Committee. It is only in the early 1970's that this provision was consistently invoked.

<sup>8</sup>The way in which the *Penghulus*, through their Association, tried to influence



the Administration toward achieving this end will be dealt with in the latter part of the article.

<sup>9</sup>This stern reminder did not, however, prevent the *Penghulus* from being actively involved in politics.

<sup>10</sup>Interview with Nik Hussein Fathi on 10.2.76.

<sup>11</sup>*Pencak Silat* is a traditional Malay art of self-defence.

<sup>12</sup>To be sure, it was the Alliance Government who introduced the New Scheme and the *Penghulus* were very thankful for this. Since then the *Penghulus* have been seen as the strong supporters of the Alliance at the grass-roots level.

<sup>13</sup>What we have here is an interesting parallel since the PPKK and the PPKN were all formed about the same time.

<sup>14</sup>Formed primarily on the initiative of the Secretary of the Penggawa Association of Kelantan (PPKN). Presently the Association's Head Office is at Banting, Selangor.

<sup>15</sup>See, for example, *Memorandum Tuntutan Skim Gaji Penghulu/Penggawa Malaysia Barat*, which was sent to the Malaysian Government and State Government, dated 1.1.70.

<sup>16</sup>In their Memorandum for the increase of their salary presented to the State Government in 1970, it is stated that the roles/functions of a *penggawa* are about 22, ranging from a rather generalized role of being a mediator between 'the government' and 'the people' to a more specific roles such as the guardian and disseminator of the Islamic faith.

<sup>17</sup>I attended the 22nd Annual General Meeting which was held on 1.5.76 at Dewan Mami, Jalan Mahmood, Kota Bharu. The major proportion of the time, however, was spent on discussing how to increase salaries.

<sup>18</sup>On PPKN justifications, see, *Memorandum Pindaan Gaji Penggawa-Penggawa Kelantan*, submitted to the State Government, 1970, p.5. They are very insistent on the fact that theirs is a '24 hour job' as opposed to other civil servants who only work for 8 hours per day (the 'nine to five job'). More importantly, they further argued that their roles/functions are 'all-encompassing'.

<sup>19</sup>*Penggawas'* roads are usually roads leading to villages in the rural areas. The roads were built on the basis of *gotong royong* of the villages concerned supervised by respective *Penggawas*. A more aspiring and active *Penggawa* will have a longer road in his *Daerah*.

<sup>20</sup>JKP was formed on 15.4.70 at the then Menteri Besar's house (Dato Mohammad Asri) which consisted of four State Executive Council (EXCO) who were also *Wakil Rakyat* and four members of the PPKN comprising the President, the Secretary and two others. On this very day, a working paper was presented by the PPKN stressing the importance of 'working for the solution of problems between *Wakil Rakyat* and *Penggawas* in all aspects of Administration'.

<sup>21</sup>By February, 1973, the JKP under the chairmanship of the then Timbalan Menteri Besar (Deputy Chief Minister) Haji Mohammad Nasir, was somewhat attracted to the ideology of the Coalition Government. Though the JKP was primarily created for the purpose of bridging the gap existing between *Penggawas* and *Wakil Rakyat*, the PPKN saw this as the golden opportunity to make explicit the fact that their members received a salary not commensurate with their responsibilities.



<sup>22</sup>In the 1970's, it cost at least RM4,000 per person to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

<sup>23</sup>This was expressed by Dato Mohammad Asri, the then Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly during the 7th Annual General Meeting of the PPKK held in Pasir Puteh on 24.9.1960.

<sup>24</sup>The interview took place on 9.2.76.

<sup>25</sup>Ear-marking is a way of 'registering' the livestock.

<sup>26</sup>The analogy is made to refer to the position of the youngest child in a Malay family where most of the time the child's whims and fancies are catered for by the family.