Malayan Economic Policy and Socio-Political Development 1948-1963: Domestic and Global Factors

Abstract

This paper discusses the Malayan economic development (and its policy) and the socio-political development in the late 1940s until 1963. The situation in Malaya was not stable during that period. Two groups were emerged in Malaya, first pro-British and the second group was pro-communist. The emergency period that was declared by the British in June 1948 because of the unstable situation in Malaya (the conflict between the communist group and British Malayan government/Alliance Government after 1957). The British with cooperation by the Malayan people was successful in managing the conflict. Economic development and socio-political policies were used as strategies in defeating the communist movement in Malaya. The findings in this paper are; the domestic situation in Malaya during the period 1948-1963 was not free from the global political development (i.e, the Cold War that emerged in Europe in late 1940s between the United States and the Soviet Union; the strategy and policies taken by the British/independence pro-British government in Malaya applied and considering the bipolarity struggle (Cold War between Communist and the West) and; Malayan pro-West and anti-communist foreign policy under Tunku Abdul Rahman (first prime minister of Malaya) contributed to the positive development of independence Malaya. Without strong support from the British and Western powers and right foreign policy decision by Tunku Abdul Rahman, it was impossible to achieve a positive level of development and political stability during the period of 1948-1963 (Malaya might be controlled by the communist group and became a communist state like North Vietnam in 1954).