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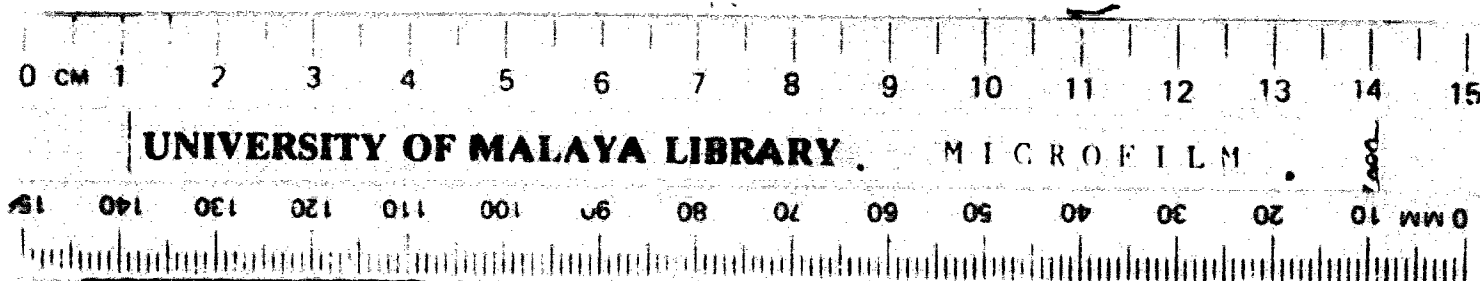


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**PATTERNS AND TRENDS  
IN THE BREAK-UP OF RUBBER ESTATES  
IN  
THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA**



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## S U M M A R Y

The object of this study is to examine trends and patterns in the break-up of rubber estates in the Federation of Malaya between January 1956 and May 1959, that is, the pre- and post-Merdeka period.

In Chapter I, two forms of break-up are distinguished; one is where a planting company sells off part of its total holding and thus breaks-up on the total. The other is where a registered owner subdivides his holding into a number of small holdings.

Chapter II is devoted to a statistical analysis of the sizes of the rubber estates being subdivided and the sizes of the subdivided pieces. Two broad patterns are distinguishable. The average sizes of the estates subdivided in the north (especially Penang) comes to about 2,400 acres while the average for the south is about 200 acres. Similarly, while the sizes of the subdivided pieces average 20 to 30 acres in the north, those in the south came to 5 to 10 acres.

A statistical analysis of the break-up of rubber estates is given in Chapter III. The sizes involved vary considerably, in contrast to those affected in subdivision. A peak in such sales occurred in 1956 and 1957.

Factors influencing the abovementioned sizes are discussed in Chapter IV. It would appear that the relative uniformity of the sizes and shapes of estates and pieces involved in the south is mainly due to the similarity of purpose in subdivision, namely, to replant with the aid of the Rubber Industry (Replanting) Board's "Fund B" for Small-holders. In the north, however, the main factors making for the wide

disparity in the sizes and shapes of the estate and pieces involved, are population pressure, the increase in the number of small investors and the subsequent land hunger (for landownership is a sign of social prestige).

In Chapter V, trends in the process of break-up and subdivision are discussed. In 1956 and 1957, a peak occurred in land transactions as a result of political reasons, such as, the looming cost of rehabilitation, after the Japanese Occupation and the Emergency Situation, and the uncertainty of Malaya's political future (with approaching Merdeka). The economic aspects of the aging Malayan rubber trees, the falling price of rubber, the tax "burden" on Malayan rubber, and the improving opportunities of investment overseas, all made for a series of disinvestment in rubber estates in Malaya. Such a tendency has decreased since mid-1958. Subdivision, for replanting purposes, is however, fast increasing, especially in the south. Backlogs in the process are caused by the existing system of land administration.

My conclusion (Chapter VI) is that the break-up of rubber estates which leads to disinvestment in Malaya is favourably giving way to a trend of amalgamation. Subdivision for replanting purposes is also generally advantageous to the economy; but, when estates are subdivided into smallholdings the cessation in the provision of estate amenities leads to extremely poor conditions of upkeep of the land and to a deterioration in the standard of living of the former estate workers.