"From one point of view, the successful government of our Chinese population is of more moment than any other consideration in the administration of the Federated Malay States."¹

This remark of Swettenham, the Resident-General, made early in 1896, was generally indicative of the growing concern shown by British officials for the Chinese community near the turn of the 19th century. Under the Residential System in the 1870's, the British government interfered little with the Chinese in Selangor. They were governed largely by their Capitan China, who as the administrative, economic and judicial head, tended to impose and "imperium in imperio" in the mining settlements of Kuala Lumpur. The extension of the Resident's executive and administrative powers after the centre of British government had been shifted from Klang to Kuala Lumpur in 1880, gradually reduced the control of the Capitan China who became more and more a public figure with little effective authority. Simultaneously, the manifestation of certain social shortcomings amongst the Chinese such as the growth of dangerous secret societies and the prevalence of abuses in the system of labour recruitment, urged the British to adopt more positive measures in governing the Chinese.

In 1890 a Chinese Protectorate, modelled after the one which had been set up in Singapore since 1877, was established in Kuala Lumpur to deal specifically with Chinese problems. It was manned principally by Chinese-speaking European officers under the control of a Protector, whose duties included the suppression of secret societies, the control of Chinese immigrants and associated problems such as 'crimping' and 'absconding', the supervision of brothels and the settlement of petty disputes among the Chinese.

The Protectorate was to assume additional responsibilities and greater significance after the federation of the four states of Selangor, Perak, Negri Sembilan and Pahang in 1896. In accordance with the Federal Government's objective of creating chief executive officers in all the major departments of the central bureaucracy in Kuala Lumpur, a Federal Commissioner, entitled the Secretary for Chinese Affairs,² was appointed to the Protectorate on

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¹ F. Swettenham in *Annual Report on the Federated Malay States by the Resident General*, 1897, p. 5.
² For the remainder of this essay, the Secretary will be the abbreviated term for the Secretary for Chinese Affairs.
1 January 1897. His role was a crucial one, since he had to administer to the needs of the Chinese who constituted the largest racial group in Selangor and provided the bulk of the labour force in the tin-mines of the Federated States.

G.T. Hare, who was appointed Secretary, also assumed the role of Protector in Selangor. At federal level, his powers were more supervisory in nature. For instance, he was expected to supervise the work of the Protectorate in Perak and establish similar departments in Negri Sembilan and Pahang in order to ensure that the government of the Chinese population in these states would not be very different from that of Selangor. In other words, Hare as Secretary, had to strive for administrative uniformity. In matters affecting the Chinese and the British government, he would act as intermediary between the two parties. He was also authorised to act as advisor to the state and federal governments in all matters concerning the Chinese including their customs and religion.

Despite these administrative changes in the Protectorate, the position of Capitan China was still a highly revered and influential one among the Chinese. In June 1897 a group of leading Chinese citizens of Kuala Lumpur despatched a petition to the Resident General requesting that Yap Kwan Seng, the Capitan China, be commended by the British government for the meritorious services he had rendered the state namely,

"he has accommodated and still continues to assist a great number of Chinese inhabitants and others in this state by advancing them largely with money and goods to open business themselves here and in so doing, he hereby promotes the advancement of the state itself, and runs the risk of being the loser at the end .... The assistance he has rendered to the Judicial branch of this state reflects great credit to him. Many hundreds of civil and other cases wherein complicated accounts were involved, have, on being referred to him, been settled with comparative ease and without any further complaint." 5

Swettenham and Rodger, the Resident of Selangor, did not support the petition stating that Yap Kwan Seng's work had not been so "conspicuously successful" as to warrant commendation by the Crown. Other reasons can perhaps be attributed to the lack of support by these British officials. At a time when the Federal Government was keen on introducing direct British rule over the Chinese population as manifested in the creation of the office of Secretary for Chinese Affairs, it was obviously imprudent to bestow any honour on the Capitan China. Such an action could result in submerging the significance of the Secretary's role and enhancing the influence of the Capitan China in Chinese eyes.

One of the most pressing

3. Table to compare the number of Chinese with the other races in Selangor in 1891 and 1901:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>%age Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>50,844</td>
<td>109,598</td>
<td>115.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malays</td>
<td>26,578</td>
<td>40,640</td>
<td>52.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>3,592</td>
<td>16,847</td>
<td>369.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasians</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>247.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europeans</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>168.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>177.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Resident General to the High Commissioner, 25 November 1896; Selangor Secretariat files (herein abbreviated as SSF), 1608/96.


issues which faced the Secretary as Protector in Selangor soon after he commenced work, related to the protection of women and girls. An ill-balanced sex ratio wherein males greatly outnumbered females, caused partly by the preference of Chinese men to keep their women in China, and partly by the financial inability of mining coolies to maintain their wives in the Malay States, resulted in rampant prostitution. As long as prostitutes ploiled their trade on their own accord, the Selangor government did not impose repressive measures to curb the existence of brothels. However, when unscrupulous brothel-keepers or their agents attempted to exploit the situation by trafficking in women, it became the concern of the Protector to rescue the unfortunate victims from the clutches of the exploiters.

In 1895 the "Women and Girls Protection Ordinance" had been passed by the Selangor government making it compulsory for immigrant females to be registered at the Protectorate on their arrival in the state. The Protector ceased to exercise any control which he had previously held over brothel-keepers since the ordinance abolished the registration and inspection of brothels by the Protectorate. Prostitutes, if ill-treated, could only seek protection from their brothel-keepers and not from the Protector. Instead of being a more progressive act than the previous enactment of 1893 which allowed the Protectorate to supervise brothels, the Protection Ordinance of 1895 tended to weaken the Protector's authority. It also left prostitutes at the mercy of their employers for the latter were usually the people against whom these women wanted protection.

On the recommendation of Hare, the Protection Ordinance of 1895 was amended two years later whereby the Protector was vested with wider powers to enable him to deal with the problem of prostitution more effectively. Under the new ordinance of 1897, a prostitute could appeal directly to the Protector for assistance as long as she possessed a protection ticket issued by the Protectorate. It was the responsibility of the brothel-keepers to see that these protection tickets were kept safely as they could be fined or imprisoned if these tickets were damaged or lost unless these were replaced within a specified time. The method of providing protection tickets was designed to give the Protector stricter control over brothel-keepers. It was also meant to encourage prostitutes, to apply for assistance from the Protector at any time without the restrictions that had been included in the Protection Ordinance of 1895.

Another significant section of the amended Enactment of 1897 was aimed at the forced or indefinite detention of prostitutes in brothels. In Selangor it was a common practice among brothel-keepers to see that these protection tickets were kept safely as they could be fined or imprisoned if these tickets were damaged or lost unless these were replaced within a specified time. The method of providing protection tickets was designed to give the Protector stricter control over brothel-keepers. It was also meant to encourage prostitutes, to apply for assistance from the Protector at any time without the restrictions that had been included in the Protection Ordinance of 1895.

7. It was estimated that there were 810 males to 190 females in every 1000 persons of Chinese nationality. Census Report for Selangor, 1901; SSF 4908/01.
9. Letter from Secretary for Chinese Affairs to Resident General, 10 July 1897; SSF 1026/97.
10. An Enactment to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the protection of Women and Girls and for the suppression of brothels, 1897; SSF 1020/97.
keepers to detain employees who had fulfilled their contracts in order to compel them to serve a second term or to sell them to a new agent. Very often, prostitutes were transferred from one district to another to prevent them leaving the profession. Although the forced detention of women was an offence under the Protection Ordinance of 1895, this regulation was largely ineffective since the Ordinance prohibited prostitutes from lodging complaints to the Protector. Under the amended Enactment of 1897 however, the Protector was empowered to instruct a brothel agent to produce a particular prostitute before the Protector within a period of two weeks "if the Protector has reason to suspect that any woman or girl in a brothel has by violence, fraud, misrepresentation or any other deceitful means, been taken against her will from such brothel and removed to some other place, either within or without the state, with the intent that such woman or girl shall be detained there against her will to be employed or used for the purpose of prostitution, or with the knowledge that such woman or girl is likely to be so employed or used ...."

The Protection Ordinance of 1897 could not be effectively enforced unless a Home or 'place of safety' was established for the rehabilitation of wayward women. Though the Ordinance of 1895 had made provision for such an institution to be established, no action had been taken by the Selangor government. Instead, women who needed shelter and prostitutes rescued from brothels were temporarily put up by the Convent run by the Roman Catholic Mission in Kuala Lumpur.

On assuming office as Secretary, Hare drafted a memorandum to Swettenham in February 1897 pointing out the advisability of establishing a Central Home in Kuala Lumpur by the Federal government. While the general maintenance of the institution and staff salaries should be the responsibilities of the government, miscellaneous expenditure such as daily provisions for the inmates of the Home could be partly borne by the Chinese community through periodic contributions. A committee called the Po Leung Kok composing Chinese officials, could also be formed to supervise the running of the Home. Hare believed that the Home should be administered along secular lines and not by the Catholic mission as this could raise objections from the Chinese who were essentially Buddhists or Taoists. The Federal government agreed with Hare's proposals and a site near the old race course in Kuala Lumpur was selected for the Home. When the Home was completed in December 1899, the inmates were transferred from their temporary residence in the Convent to the new institution.

The control of Chinese labour in Selangor was another problem which beset the Protectorate in Kuala Lumpur. Prior to the

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11. Ibid.
12. Acting Resident of Selangor to the Colonial Secretary, 15 May 1896; SSF 4004/96.
13. Secretary for Chinese Affairs to Resident General, 17 February 1897; SSF 263/97.
imposition of the Labour Code on 1 January 1896, the responsibility for checking abuses present in the recruitment of Chinese 'sinkheh' or 'new arrivals' in the state had been left to a Chinese committee under the direction of the Capitan China. Under the State Council regulations of 1888, a coolie or labourer could be detained in the Coolie Depot, established by the Chinese Committee at Kuala Lumpur, until such time that he had been redeemed or had his passage money paid by his prospective employer. Before a sinkheh was engaged, he had to sign a formal contract with his employer at the Depot. The sinkheh was also compelled by law to obtain a discharge ticket from his employer at the termination of his service. Unless such a ticket was produced before the Depot keeper, a labourer could not seek re-employment as a 'laukheh' or 'old coolie'.

When the Labour Code was enforced in 1896, compulsory registration at the Coolie Depot was abolished. Contracts which had been signed outside Selangor, viz. in the Straits Settlements, were declared null and void unless they were countersigned before the Protector in Kuala Lumpur within fourteen days of the arrival of the sinkheh. This regulation was generally disregarded both by employers and labourers who preferred to adhere to the system of discharge tickets despite the fact that the protective clauses contained in the discharge ticket system were no longer valid legally. Ridges, who was the Protector of Selangor until 1897, complained that only two hundred contracts were endorsed by him in 1896. Thus the labour regulation of 1896 remained practically a dead letter for the Chinese "dislike written contracts by every description and prefer to work in accordance with local mining customs, which vary from time to time, according to the exigencies of the situation." 

Sinkheh labour on the tin-mines was becoming less popular with mining employers during this period. Out of a total number of 8002 Chinese immigrants into Selangor in 1896, only 4754 were sinkheh. Apparently, miners preferred to recruit laukheh on piece-rate to work as karang-strippers or tribute-workers. Under the tribute system which was commonly adopted by mine owners late in the 1890's, the employer would advance a small sum of money to coolies to work on the mines. These coolies did not receive any wages but were given the right to keep all the tin they had mined subject only to the payment of a fixed percentage of the total value of tin mined to the mine-owner. They could also take food and clothing from the mine owner in advance using tin-ore as security.

15. Regulation VI of 1895 - A regulation to amend and consolidate the law relating to labour in the State of Selangor; SSF 6297/96.
19. Ibid.
20. Karang-stripper: a worker who was paid for removing the overburden of the mining land at piece rate, viz. at so much per chiang i.e. 30 feet by 30 feet and Wi feet deep; or for lifting up the tin sand.
21. SSF056/98.
From the employer's viewpoint, it was safer to engage laukheh who were less likely to abscond from the mines. More risks were involved in the employment of sinkheh labour where the tendency to abscond was higher, especially after the abolition of the Discharge Ticket System which had acted as a partial deterrent against abscondment by coolies. The disadvantages of working as indentured labourers became more widely known among Chinese immigrants as the years passed, so that by mid-1897, the majority of Chinese migrants into Selangor consisted of 'free' workers employed on the tribute system.  

Although the Chinese Protectorate faced difficulties in enforcing the regulation pertaining to the endorsement of labour contracts, it achieved some success in implementing other conditions of the Labour Code of 1896. Provisions relating to sanitation and hygiene on the mines were strictly enforced. For example, Hare or his assistants personally conducted inspection tours of the mining settlements in order to oversee that the Miners' Kongsi or Association and the labourers quarters were maintained in a healthy and hygienic State. If the Protector felt that the housing quarters of a certain mine were badly sited or in need of repair, he could instruct the mine owner to renovate the building or build new ones. Moreover employers were bound by law to send sick labourers to hospital. Failure to comply with these regulations meant that mine-owners could be fined on conviction.

Though the Labour Code of 1896 can be considered imperfect in many ways since many points in it needed revision, it was nevertheless progressive because for the first time, the diversified and complicated regulations on the subject of labour were codified.

In 1897 and 1898, the miners of Selangor faced a labour shortage. The number of Chinese immigrants into the state in 1896 and 1897 were 42,286 and 26,630 respectively, while immigrants had totalled 33,785 and 31,083, for these years. In the first half of 1898, the number of immigrants exceeded emigrants by just over a thousand. The inadequate labour supply on the mines was accentuated when the state government competed with mine-owners for coolies to work on public projects such as the construction of roads and railways.

The Selangor Miners' Association sent a letter to the Resident-General in November 1897 complaining that competition from government departments, such as the Railway Department, for Chinese labour had tended to increase the wages of coolies. Consequently, many low-grade mines had to be abandoned due to high overhead costs incurred in employing labourers. It claimed that the only solution lay in the direct importation of Chinese immigrants by the state government for its own construction projects.

22. Ibid.
24. Regulation VI of 1895, op.cit.
25. Returns of Chinese Immigration and Emigration; SSF 1283/04.
26. Ibid.
27. Miners' Association of Selangor to Resident-General, 2 November 1897; SSF 1108/97.
tion failed to realise was that a scheme to recruit coolies directly from China had been undertaken by the Selangor Railway Department with the assistance of a leading miner, Loke Yew, early in 1897. The venture proved abortive for the majority of immigrants absconded as soon as they entered Selangor.\(^{28}\)

Though the proposal of the Selangor Miners' Association for government sponsorship of immigrant coolies did not carry much weight with the Resident-General, it nevertheless had the effect of creating a greater awareness among top government officials of the problems encountered by tin miners. Whilst most of them agreed that miners generally had suffered severe financial losses in recent years because of labour shortage and increased coolie wages, they could not arrive at a common decision on what assistance to offer the miners. Belfield, the Resident of Selangor, maintained that the government ought to import its own labour if it wanted to ensure the economic prosperity of the state.\(^{29}\)

Since tin was the primary export commodity, the abandonment of mines owing to an inadequate labour supply would result in decreased revenue which would then mean that less funds could be expended on government projects. Hare, on the other hand, felt that despite their financial difficulties, miners should bear the sole responsibility of recruiting coolies.\(^{30}\)

Under the residentship of Rodger, who succeeded Belfield in 1898, the state government eventually decided to grant loans at fixed interest rates to mining employers who needed funds to import coolies.\(^{31}\)

The existence of triad or secret societies had been greatly stifled after the formation of the Chinese Protectorate. The introduction of regulations making it compulsory for all societies, benevolent or political, to be registered with the Protectorate had made many secret societies go 'underground' whilst some were even disbanded. The number of Chinese who belonged to these organizations did not exceed five per cent in 1898.\(^{32}\) Despite the fact that the powers of secret societies had greatly diminished by then, no pains were spared by the Protectorate to clear the state of 'undesirable' characters. Under the Banishment Ordinance of 1900, dangerous criminals and persons who were considered to be a menace to society were banished to China. This Ordinance went a long way to prevent the resurgence of triad activity; by 1903 secret societies no longer ceased to constitute any danger to the state.

Meanwhile in 1899, the Federal government passed the Secretary for Chinese Affairs Enactment.\(^ {33}\) Besides defining and extending the powers and duties of

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28. Resident-Engineer of Railways to Resident of Selangor, 29 April 1899; SSF 1865/98.
29. Resident of Selangor to Acting Resident-General, 25 November 1897; SSF 1108/97.
30. SSF 1108/97.
31. Resident of Selangor to Resident-General, 19 September 1898; SSF 822/98.
32. Annual Report by Secretary for Chinese Affairs, 1898; SSF 1332/99.
the Secretary, the Enactment also consolidated his position. For instance, the Secretary was vested with the power to summon, examine and arbitrate in court cases where Chinese were involved. He could summon any person of Chinese descent to appear before him to provide information in cases where he was instructed to conduct a public enquiry or report on matters affecting the Chinese community. Occasionally, the Secretary would have to act as Public Prosecutor in criminal proceedings where either or both the prosecution and defence were Chinese.

The Secretary also had the right to settle disputes among the Chinese on questions relating to the custody of women and children, divorce and separation, adoption and betrothal or on any other subject pertaining to the management of "any public or private temple or other religious institution, prefectural or district clubs, trade guilds, clan and surname societies, provident associations, medical or educational institutions, or private or public burial grounds." 34

The Secretary would be the official translator of the government though he could engage student interpreters from among the Chinese, provided that consent from the Resident General was first obtained. Moreover, as the intermediary between the British government and the Chinese at state level, the Secretary at the request of the Resident, was empowered to establish Advisory Boards, known as Hua Jin Chem Su Kek in any district of Selangor. The aims and objects of such a board were "to assist the government in discussing any legislation affecting the general interests of the Chinese community, any scheme for giving help to the poor or the sick or for promoting education or for charitable purposes, any proposal for raising subscriptions for public purposes, and any other matter referred by the Resident to the Board." 35 The Secretary could also be appointed by the Resident to serve as an ex-officio member of the governing body of any institution which was maintained by the Chinese "for educational, charitable, religious, medical, provident or other philanthropic purposes." 36

Vested with such wide powers under the Secretary for Chinese Affairs Enactment of 1899, Hare as Secretary, felt that it was imperative for an Assistant Secretary to be appointed in Selangor to relieve him of some state functions so that he could concentrate more on the work at federal level. After some deliberation, Pountney, a cadet officer who had returned from training in Canton, 37 was selected as Assistant Secretary of Selangor in mid-1900.

It was inevitable that the work of the Protectorate should be augmented after the Secretary for

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34. Ibid., p. 115.
35. Ibid., p. 120.
36. Ibid., p. 123.
37. To establish a unified Civil Service in the Federated States, a cadet scheme to train junior officers was drafted in 1896. Candidates selected through competitive examinations, were sent overseas viz. to China and India to learn the respective languages there for a period of two to three years. Canton was the centre for Cadets who undertook training in the Chinese language.
Chinese Affairs Enactment had been enforced. Many cases which Hare or Pountney had to handle involved complaints pertaining to women and girls, arbitration issues, and the settlement of disputes among the mining community. In 1900 and 1902, the Secretary dealt with 341 and 130 complaints relating to women and girls respectively. The number of arbitration awards which he made totalled four in 1900 and six one year later. With the increasing popularity of the tribute system, the Secretary frequently had to settle disputes between employer and coolies on the tin mines over the amount of remuneration which each party was entitled to claim.

A major reform occurred in 1900 when the collection of opium revenue, which was a principal source of income to the state government, passed from the opium farms into the hands of the Chinese Protectorate. It had been the practice of the British officials shortly after the establishment of the central bureaucracy in Kuala Lumpur in 1900 to lease out 'farms' to Chinese Headmen who would collect duty not only on the import of opium, but also on the sale of spirits and liquors and the maintenance of gaming houses. Hence the opium farmers considered it a great financial setback when a century-old business practice was withdrawn from them at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The reasons for the change in government policy can be traced back to 1896, when Rodger, then the Resident of Selangor, suggested to the Resident-General that the collection of opium revenue should revert to the state after the expiry of the opium leases in 1899. He hoped that the Federal government would attempt to alleviate the depressed financial position of the 'farmers' during the tin recession of that time by taking one of two courses of action. It could either reduce the rent of the opium farms or undertake the collection of opium revenue altogether. If it resorted to the second alternative, it would have to bear the financial loss due to decreased consumption when the opium price was high and reap a substantial profit by importing a larger quantity of the drug when the reverse situation occurred. The Federal government accepted Rodger's latter proposal and when the lease on the opium farms expired at the end of 1899, it shifted the task of revenue collection from the farms to the Protectorate in Kuala Lumpur.

With regard to other types of revenue farms, such as liquor, gaming and pawnbroking farms, the Secretary for Chinese Affairs Enactment was amended in 1901 to empower the Secretary to conduct enquiries on the management and working of these farms. Under the new regulations, any 'farmer' or his agent was "legally bound to state the truth to the Secretary, and to produce any such books or..."
documents for inspection for transcription as directed by him."43 The amendment in the Enactment was designed to give some measure of control to the Protectorate over these farms and to ensure that they were maintained according to specifications of the government.

With the consolidation of the Secretary's position in 1899, it was evident that the Capitanan China was relegated more and more into the background. In 1902 when Yap Kwan Seng died, the British government abolished the post despite a petition from a group of Chinese requesting that Yap Hon Chin, the son of the late Yap Ah Loy, should be elected as the new Capitan China.44 To the British, it was futile to perpetuate the office of Capitan China which had become* redundant since the appointment of Secretary for Chinese Affairs. However, to pacify the Chinese, the Federal government nominated Chan Sow Lin, a well-known Chinese miner, to the State Council.45

The Chinese Protectorate in Kuala Lumpur witnessed a reshuffle when the Secretary was transferred to Singapore in 1903. Since Hare had held the dual role of Secretary and Protector, Pountney was appointed to replace him as Protector in Selangor when Hare left for Singapore. With the transfer, the Protectorate had to deal only with matters connected solely with the Chinese in Selangor, while the Secretary would supervise the work of the Protectorates in the Federated States from his office in Singapore. Officers of the Protectorate in Kuala Lumpur who had formerly been placed on the Federal Establishment list since they carried out functions pertaining not only to the Protectorate but also to the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs, were henceforth to be paid from the Selangor estimates.46

As the years passed, the attempts of the Protectorate to administer the Chinese were, according to the British, "appreciated by the people they are designed to assist."47 In accordance with the Secretary for Chinese Affairs Ordinance of 1899, student interpreters were employed in the Protectorate one year later. In order to gain greater proficiency not only in Chinese but also in English, these interpreters had to undergo instruction courses in various Chinese dialects and in the English language.

With regard to the endorsement of labour contracts by the Protector, the number of contracts declined rapidly each year. This decrease in Selangor can perhaps be attributed to the fact that after the transfer of the Chinese Secretariat to Singapore, most contracts were registered in the Straits Settlements. In 1905 the figure for contracts signed before the Protector was 188; by 1906 it had decreased to 20.48 Contracts signed outside Selangor were estimated at...

43. Voules, op.cit., p.122.
44. Petition from Chinese resident to Resident of Selangor, 18 March 1902, SSF 2030/02.
45. SSF 2030/02. When Loke Yew resigned from the Selangor State Council in 1899, the British government did not nominate another Chinese member until 1902 when Chan Sow Lin was appointed.
46. SSF. 3891/04.
98 and 17 in 1905 and 1906 respectively.

Invariably, it can be said that labour control was practically the only field where the Protector did not make much headway since miners preferred to work according to their own regulations and customs.

In the history of the Chinese Protectorate in Selangor in the decade after Federation, the appointment of the Secretary for Chinese Affairs symbolised the establishment of direct from indirect rule over the Chinese population by the British administrators. This transformation did not come as a surprise to the Chinese, but was considered to be an inevitable process of change after some economic and administrative functions of the Capitan China had been transferred to the Protectorate which was set up in the 1880's. Initially vested with limited authority and responsibilities to deal with specific Chinese problems which had been formerly undertaken by the Protector, and providing the link between the British government and the Chinese, the powers of the Secretary were considerably widened when the Secretary for Chinese Affairs Enactment was passed in 1899. The Enactment ensured the Secretary not only administrative and fiscal control over Chinese affairs but also judicial and social influence, for hereafter, he could act as arbiter in domestic disputes and sit on Chinese committees. The Secretary, however, had to take Chinese customs into account when he exercised English law.

In the early years of administration, it was not an easy task for the Secretary and his staff of Chinese-speaking officers to win the confidence of the Chinese who had been accustomed to the traditional form of government by leaders of their own race. This difficulty persisted as long as the Capitan China was alive. Hence the Federal government did not hesitate to abolish the post of Capitan China altogether on the demise of Yap Kwan Seng in 1902. As an act of appeasement, the British appointed a Chinese member to the State Council; alas, this was hardly a compensatory device as the State Council had developed into a mere rubber stamp by this time. Apparently, the Chinese became more amenable to the assistance rendered by the Chinese Protectorate when the Capitan China was removed from the scene.

The transfer of the Chinese Secretariat to Singapore tended to loosen the tight grip of the Secretary on the Protectorate in Selangor and led to the reappointment of a Protector for the state. At Federal level, the transfer did not have any direct impact on the individual state Protectorates because no attempts were made by the Secretary to amalgamate the state departments.

Definite steps were taken by the Federal government to make British rule predominant during this period. In the course of these

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1905</th>
<th>1906</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contracts signed within Selangor</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts signed outside Selangor</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>37</td>
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political changes, Chinese traditions and customs became outmoded in order to give way to Western practices. Henceforth, the Chinese in Selangor and the other federated states were geared more towards the economic sphere while leaving administrative matters to the British.