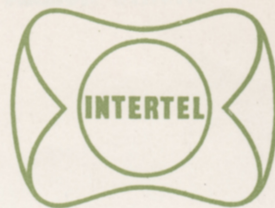


TEN MILLION STRONG



DOCUMENTARY

BILLING

TEN MILLION STRONG

A REPORT ON MALAYSIA

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IN BRIEF

Malaysia is a new nation of 10 million people in the Far East. Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah—North Borneo—were joined together to form this new federation within the British Commonwealth. But can Malaysia survive? Can Chinese, Malays, Indians and tribal peoples forget their separate national identities and unite into one nation 10 million strong?

AN INTERTEL PRODUCTION

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**TIME SLOT
55 MINUTES**

Right: Teng Siew Ping, a Chinese restaurant singer in Singapore. Her recording of "Malaysia Forever", a popular patriotic song, is used as a theme for the programme.

Far right: The two daughters of a Sea Dyak chief with the tribal witch doctor.

Overleaf:

Children of a Malayan village south of Kuala Lumpur.



THE BACKGROUND

"Ten Million Strong" comes from the words of a popular song. It is a measure of Malaysia today that a patriotic jingle can reach the top of the hit parade.

The film looks at the problems of a new nation. Some are external—some from within. The Prime Minister of Singapore—Mr. Lee Kuan Yew—has said: "Malaysia is inevitable—but no one can say that the success of Malaysia as an economic and political unit is inevitable."

By far the biggest internal problem, is the racial grouping within Malaysia. In each of the four countries—Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah—there is a big Chinese community. Indeed the Chinese form the biggest single racial group in Malaysia. Tensions rising from this fact are discussed by Tunku Abdul Rahman, Lee Kuan Yew, an Opposition member of the Malayan Parliament (Mr. D. R. Seenivasaga), and the only Malay professor at the University of Malaya—Ungku Aziz.

In Singapore, the Chairman of the Opposition Socialist Party, Dr. Lee Siew Choh—condemns Malaysia as a British imperialist plot.

The programme shows something of the military effort needed in Sarawak to police the wild border country with Indonesia. In Sarawak also there is an examination of a stone age people groping towards the 20th century. Active and intelligent, they have a great thirst for knowledge. The film follows a young Iban (Sea Dyak) schoolteacher as he leaves a teachers' training college in Kuching and travels across the country along the twisting turbulent rivers to a communal long-house school in the heart of Sarawak.

Here, and in North Borneo, the problems facing the Chinese, and the tensions arising from what they consider to be discrimination against them, are examined and discussed.

Powerful personalities put forward conflicting views on the future of Malaysia.



PRESS

Around 10,000 miles of travelling took the unit through Brunei, North Borneo, Sarawak, Malaya and Singapore. In North Borneo the shooting concentrated on the immense physical problems involved in opening up this rich land.

From the timber camps near Sandakan to the new city of Jesselton and the tumbledown shacks in the nearby kampongs (villages)—the film cameras probed into the life of the people—and what they thought about Malaysia. Sarawak posed different problems—a land frozen in time for 2,000 years—with virtually no roads and few airstrips. The camera-gear was stripped down to the bare essentials—just the equipment that would fit into the long-boats, the only means of travel in many areas. Room had to be found for the four big gas lamps which enabled the team to film interior sequences hundreds of miles from electric power.

Life in a communal long-house proved far from glamorous. Iban cooking must rank among the world's worst. A glutinous mass of rice cooked in a bamboo stem was the staple diet.

Communal living extended to the point where a betel-nut chewing chief shared a tooth-brush with one of the crew. And sleeping under a basketful of human skulls hanging from the rafters did not promote sweet dreams for the film makers.

Despite the warmth of Iban hospitality, the team was glad to get to Malaya with its first-class hotels, cool clean water, strange and exotic foods and fruits. The team shot film in and around the capital—Kuala Lumpur—travelled north to Ipoh—inland to many isolated villages—then north to Kota Bahru. Malaya is the focal point of ideas about Malaysia. Those recorded on film came from the man who has been called the father of Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman—and several of his opponents.

