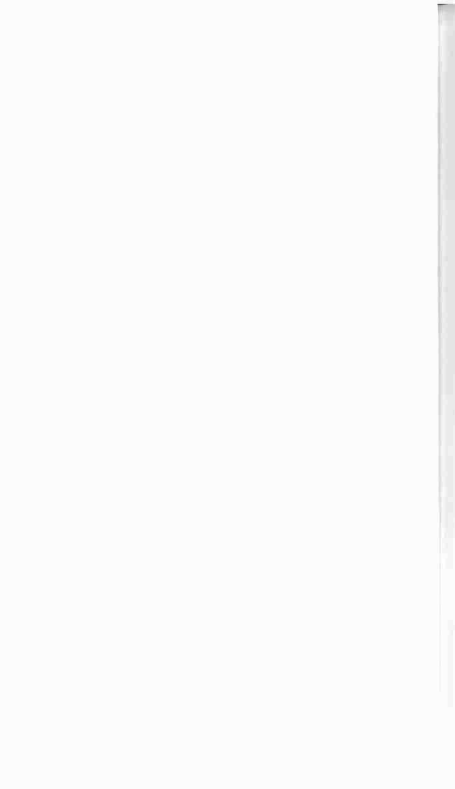


the
genesis
of *konfrontasi*



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MALAYSIA BRUNEI INDONESIA 1945-1965

GREG POULGRAIN

Foreword by
PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER



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FOREWORD*

Welcome to Greg Poulgrain's landmark book, *The Genesis of Konfrontasi: Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia, 1945-1965*, which unwaveringly and in extensive detail enters the history of modern Indonesia. This work offers a better understanding of the period of transition from what is now referred to as the Old Order to the so-called New Order, two eras conflicting in principle as well as spirit.

The first era was one of anti-colonialism-imperialism-capitalism, with its twists and turns and its various players, its supporters as well as those who sought to undermine it. Replacing this era was a new version of the colonial open-door policy, which followed in the wake of the bankruptcy of the system of forced cultivation. Both of these evicted the nameless peoples from their farmland. The earliest entry of private capital during the open-door policy took place primarily in the plantation sector. In West Java, water sources were poisoned, leading to the eradication of the unregistered herds of livestock ('wild' herds) drinking from them.¹ This information is recorded in neither official nor unofficial notes. But in this way, foreign capital gained control over grazing land. Evictions also took place in Sumatra, at the hands of the land brokers, who, at the time, were referred to as 'land residents', alias concession hunters.²

In my own case, the end of Confrontation, and the events following the eruption of what was labelled the G30S³ remains a perplexing puzzle to me within the context of modern Indonesian history. Nowadays, when Confrontation is mentioned at all, its meaning has changed completely, obviously to accord with the version of the New Order:

* The names of Indonesian sources in this foreword have deliberately been omitted. I defer to the scholars, and in particular to the historians, to publish these. For that the author apologizes.

from Confrontation against the British Malaysia project it has changed to Confrontation against members of the same ethnic group. Nehru, the inventor and developer of the name Malaysia, would never have imagined that the name he coined was to become the source of a bloody dispute in South-East Asia. The distortion in the interpretation of Confrontation can be traced in two articles, 'Nostalgia Dua Serumpun', *Panin*, no. 26, 24 August 1966, and '30 Tahun Yang Lalu. Konfrontasi Malaysia Bisa Diselesaikan', *Kompas*, 10 August 1996. I have to explain that when I use the word 'confrontation' I mean 'furthering the anticolonialist ideal', although non-Indonesian readers might tend to associate the word 'confrontation' solely with Indonesian agitation against Malaysia.

I have suspected from the beginning that the G30S was a sophisticated outcome of a joint intelligence scheme, both outside and within Indonesia, both by the foreign intelligence agencies and their Indonesian counterparts and operatives. Stories and analyses surrounding G30S, then, have become a myth. G30S is nothing but the metamorphosis of protracted British opposition to Sukarno's confrontation policy. Until now, generally the suspicion is rather one-sided towards the Americans, the CIA, while in fact the British intelligence played a substantial role in that G30S conspiracy. And why did Confrontation take place?

In this regard, I share the opinion of A.M. Azahari¹ that Indonesia – that is, Sukarno – had been provoked by the English, who used Sukarno's firm stance of anti-colonialism-imperialism-capitalism against him in an attempt to remove him. And England had had plenty of experience in provoking Indonesia. First of all, of course, was the battle of Surabaya, which gave birth to 'Heroes' Day' (*Hari Pahlawan*). Second, the British provoked the youth in East Sumatra, who then succeeded in liquidating all nobility in that area. The event, subsequently known as the 'social revolution', which listed among its many victims the poet Amir Hamzah, had a clear target: the fate of the East Sumatran nobility eliminated the possibility of Indonesian influence being channelled into the English colonies of Malaya, Singapore and North Kalimantan. This is also indicated by Greg Poulgrain in this work. The third instance is the period discussed in the present volume, the political aftermath of the elimination of the East Sumatran nobility, as part of a British intelligence operation which more or less succeeded. The influence and effects of the Indonesian Revolution, and of Sukarno himself, surged beyond the mansions of the sultans of Malaya and North Kalimantan, while the influence of Tan Malaka

was becoming more pronounced among the Overseas Chinese (Hoakiau), particularly in Brunei. The wind of Indonesian national independence, of which the hallmarks were anti-colonialism-imperialism-capitalism, made England nervous as to its South-East Asian dominions. This old colonial country was not prepared to lose its source of dollars in Malaysia, Singapore and North Kalimantan. Malaysia was an important producer of tin, rubber and palm oil. North Kalimantan, in this case Brunei, was a major source of oil, while Singapore, apart from its importance as a transit port for South-East Asian import and export, was also a centre of regional control and power exerted through intelligence operations or by supplying arms and troops, as was the case with British aid for the PRRI-Permesta uprising intended to establish a separate country. Yes, along with its ally, the supposedly anticolonial United States of America.⁵

The end of World War II did not mean an end to England's problems. On the contrary, finances for English naval power, the principle element of 'Britain rules the waves' had reached a nadir. Other problems included indebtedness to the USA as a result of the lend-lease agreement, which allowed England to lease American war equipment. After World War II, the USSR refused to settle its debt because it deemed that American war equipment had been used for a common purpose in the defeat of fascism. England, however, was unable to adopt the same stance towards its own ally. It was thus dependent on the dollars it could extract from Malaya, Singapore and North Kalimantan. To ensure that these dollars would continue to flow, Indonesian influence had to be eliminated in the three colonies. To this end, Indonesia was provoked. The list of British provocations by land and air covers the period January 1963 to August 1964 in West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan and East Kalimantan (140 times), and between June 1964 and September 1964 in Riau (seventeen times). Furthermore, provocation by air over Sumatra and South Kalimantan occurred fifty-six times in 1964.⁶

The British apparently chose their time well. Provocation was deployed at the time that Indonesia had recently emerged from its Trikora operations to free West Irian from the Dutch and clearly needed to recuperate. In addition, were Indonesia to take the bait, England would have reason to accuse Indonesia of territorial ambitions, as had been the case with the struggle for West Irian. Indonesia was incited and retaliated against British armed provocation with its own weapons. A number of coordinating ministers urged Bung Karno to accelerate

confrontation by declaring support in the form of arms shipments; it turned out, however, that the arms that were supplied consisted only of scrap metal, while support was limited to a declaration. On the British side, the parties involved in the armed confrontation consisted not only of English soldiers and their 'Gurkhas', but also included the Malayan army, and armies from its allies in South-East Asia.

During the Confrontation and Anti-Confrontation period, there were those who asserted that Indonesia had territorial ambitions. More level-headed people refused to believe this. Sukarno, one of the founding fathers of the Republic of Indonesia was anti-colonialism-imperialism-capitalism from his youth to the day he died and, in the days approaching the Proclamation, had emphasized that Indonesian territory comprised exactly the former Dutch East Indies, no more and no less. It would have been different had Bung Karno been a soldier in the Dutch colonial army (KNIL), the instrument used to conquer and subjugate the Indonesian people. He even refused to cooperate with the colonial side. He was one of the strongest non-cooperators in the history of the movement for independence.

Colonial domination over the dollar sources in Malaya, Singapore and North Kalimantan was the heart of the matter. From this heart beat provocation towards Indonesia. And Indonesian confrontation was nothing but a natural reaction to British anti-confrontation; it was neither a policy by design nor a premeditated scheme by Sukarno.

Then the G30S erupted. It would be overly naive to imagine that this was an isolated event, for in the life of a society nothing stands alone. As soon as the G30S had completed its actions, its lack of planning became apparent. The G30S commander immediately broadcast over the radio the promotion in rank for those who had taken part in the operation, and demotion in rank of all superior officers. The events that followed were not only more convoluted, they were also strange: the establishment of a Revolutionary Council (*Dewan Revolusi*) which dissolved the Cabinet. No-one knows who announced the establishment of the Revolutionary Council. That remains unclear to this day. That the G30S kidnapped generals were faithful to Sukarno indicates that the wishes of Sir Andrew Gilchrist (British ambassador in Jakarta at that time) were carried out. But Sukarno's supporters were not limited to the murdered generals. It was not easy to get rid of Sukarno without getting rid of millions of his supporters, all of whom were united in the convergence of revolutionary powers (*'samenbundeling van alle revolutionaire krachten'*). These were the people who became

the targets of a mass slaughter, who were robbed of their individual freedom and property without judgement from any court of law, and who lived in torture camps all over Indonesia; people who continue to be blamed, who stand accused for as long as the New Order has stood, who have been stigmatized along with their children and their grandchildren. Within a few hours the perpetrators of the G30S had been captured eventually to be sentenced to death. It is clear that they repeated the experience of Kebo Ijo in the 13th century, who was sentenced to death by court judgement while a conspiracy appointed Ken Arok king of Tumapel/Singasari to replace the king he had murdered. However, unlike 1965, history does not indicate that Arok ever carried out a mass slaughter. Neither is there any indication of the robbing of personal freedom. This excerpt from the story of Ken Arok and Kebo Ijo in Javanese history may well provide an interesting case for comparison.

The heart of the matter, which is the focus of Greg Poulgrain's study, has been forgotten by the cruelty of those in power on the one hand and the fear among the masses on the other. Those who do not take the side of the murderers must lie low and can do no more than listen and keep their silence. The monopoly over information and the fact that also the intellectuals – the illuminating conscience of society – are lying low, have made people afraid to question the G30S affair, and even more afraid to question the heart of the matter.

Rumours fly concerning the United States and the CIA as the masterminds behind the entire affair. It is easy to understand that the latter was involved. Has not Noam Chomsky reminded us that since the discovery of America by Columbus, coloured people and their countries have been the fields of exploitation by white-skinned nations. The declassification of US documents concerning the G30S confirmed the intervention of the CIA. Rumour has it that British government archives are declassified after 50 years. So, we still have 15–20 more years to wait.

During the Second World War, when the Lend and Lease Act was signed in March 1941, British gold and dollar reserves had been severely depleted. This war thus saw Britain change from being the biggest lender to becoming the biggest borrower. At the end of the war Britain was drawing 42 per cent of her imports from the West while only 14 per cent of her exports were being distributed there. Here was the heart of the matter. This was why Britain's South-East Asian colonies were so important to it.

Greg Poulgrain's dissertation, completed in 1993, deals with the period from 1945 to Confrontation. In July 1996 the Observer, London, published an article entitled '*British role in slaughter of 500,000*' which revealed that the British Ambassador to Indonesia had recommended '*a little shooting*' for Indonesia in 1965. This article described recently declassified confidential files which pointed to Britain's role in aiding the slaughter of more than half a million individuals by the Indonesian Army in 1965. The British Ambassador, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, wrote to London: '*I have never concealed from you my belief that a little shooting in Indonesia would be an essential preliminary to effective change.*' The confidential documents also explain that Britain asked that Indonesian generals take action against the PKI, slander its name by using the example of PKI cruelty and the role of the People's Republic of China in the shipment of arms. The document also includes cooperation with the USA. America's role had been revealed in earlier declassified American documents. The cooperation between Britain and the USA – or, to be more precise, all capital rich Western states – to open up Indonesia and make it a dollar mine is not something new, as Noam Chomsky has reminded us. It is only that these two countries are the most glaring examples. According to the CIA memorandum dated June 1962, the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and the American President John Kennedy, '*agreed to liquidate President Soekarno, depending on the situation and the available opportunities.*' Thus, Gilchrist's actions merely constituted technical implementation. Kennedy himself was never to witness how Soekarno was toppled. He toppled earlier, shot on November 22, 1963, 17 months after the memorandum. There are two versions in two Kennedy museums in Dallas, the city in Texas where he was assassinated. The first museum puts forth a version of Kennedy's assassination that is considered a government fabrication hiding the truth behind it. The second museum offers a version of the assassination as a conspiracy. A third museum, which is the largest, was built in Boston in 1967; it offers no explanation of the mystery shrouding his death.

Decades later, another version appeared, which might well be titled, '*The Indonesian Connection.*' Greg Poulgrain reveals striking new aspects. Dean Rusk, the former American Secretary of State, relates (in correspondence with Greg Poulgrain) that Kennedy in fact already had plans to help Sukarno end Confrontation with Malaysia. Kennedy, having met Sukarno, planned a return visit to Indonesia for this purpose. It is well known that Kennedy had taken an active role in assisting

Indonesia to end Trikora by effecting the return (from Dutch control) of West Irian to Indonesia. However, Kennedy's plans to meet Sukarno in Indonesia never came to pass: that we all know, for he was murdered in a great conspiracy that remains a mystery. Greg Poulgrain does not say Kennedy was assassinated to prevent the outcome of his planned meeting with Sukarno; the available information precludes this conclusion. Yet now, with greater awareness of the political implications, we can say that as a result of the Kennedy assassination, Confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia continued. The development of Indonesia after the birth of the 'New Order' – and in particular the phenomenon of Indonesian economic growth after the fall of Sukarno – urges us to trace the network behind the events that took place during the lives of Sukarno and Kennedy.

After a meeting in the White House, these two charismatic leaders formed a better understanding of and respect for one another. Unlike CIA leadership, Kennedy did not consider Sukarno a communist, nor did he believe that Sukarno aspired to bring Indonesia under communist domination. He interpreted Sukarno's nationalism as an appropriate stance in the context of the latter's ideal of establishing unity among the peoples in his country. There were similarities between the two leaders, who both had long-range visions: Kennedy with his idealistic and youthful 'New Frontier' and Sukarno with his concept of 'The New Emerging Forces'.² But both idealistic leaders met the same fate: they had to disappear from the stage of history.

Kennedy's willingness to support Sukarno did not stem from instant admiration for the latter; rather, it was based on reality and reason. By supporting Sukarno he anticipated preventing Indonesia from turning communist. Opposing Sukarno would have had an adverse effect. At the time that Kennedy met Sukarno, neither was aware, nor had they been informed of the vast oil resources in West Irian. In fact, recently it has been revealed that in addition to silver, the area contains enormous deposits of gold, larger than the gold mines of Witwatersrand in South Africa, long considered the richest goldmines in the world. Kennedy and Sukarno had made plans to continue their dialogue. It appears, however, that another scenario between the oil kings on the one hand and the CIA group on the other, was being plotted. The first party, the big capitalists, were very much interested in West Irian for its rich mineral resources, but they were not at all interested in a West Irian governed by a president like Sukarno, whose populist attitude was absolutely incompatible with their interests. For the pur-

poses of the capitalists, another president was required, one who would be more ready to cooperate or, to be more precise, one who could be invited in as a co-conspirator. In the other party, CIA leadership, it was well-known that during (and after) Allen Dulles' time as head, he assiduously carried out the directions of his real bosses; that is, top-level businessmen. Kennedy's criticism of certain CIA practices was unwelcome, particularly those the new president considered led to a 'government within a government'. In this scenario of interest and opportunity conflicting and coinciding, appearing on the surface as though there was no connection, Kennedy and Sukarno had to step aside.

Most Western researchers are very cynical of talk of the role of the CIA and other foreign intelligence agencies. To them it is but ludicrous fantasy. However, Greg Poulgrain, and other scholars such as George Kahin, Peter Dale Scott and Wertheim, have proven through CIA documents just how intensely focused the CIA role was in developing countries, particularly in Sukarno's Indonesia. The engineering of that CIA intelligence and the very often forgotten British intelligence network is truly a specific Third World phenomenon. Under Sukarno's leadership, Indonesia stood at the front line of opposition to the Vietnam War, and attempted to develop the new emerging forces to confront the old established order that, with the power of their capital, required the continuous exploitation of new terrain in developing countries.

I, as but one among the more than 1.5 million victims robbed of individual freedom by the New Order, must express my gratitude to Greg Poulgrain for his exhaustive study of the Confrontation. Because of his work, a number of people will feel validated in their belief that the G30S was in truth the metamorphosis of the British stance of anti-confrontation. I thus agree with the personal statement made by a master of ceremony at the launching of the book *Gerilya dan Diplomasi* on 6 January 1997, that the G30S affair should be resolved to ensure that it does not drag on into infinity, breeding strings of lies, especially from the moment that G30S was reconstructed as G30S/PKI. This will also help to bring to an end a strange psychological symptom: that those who have benefited the most from the G30S are in fact those who have most actively condemned it. It is the 1 million people, by the most conservative estimates, whom they slaughtered that they must have available any time they need a scapegoat. And the slaughter took place without a war, without so much as a rebellion. So many people killed without a war. During this entire New Order era,

not one among the mass murderers has been brought to trial. It is logical that when murderers are allowed to establish themselves in power, then deceit, robbery and repression become but minor matters. None of this was necessary.

Pramoedya Ananta Toer
Jakarta, 7 January 1997

Notes

1. This was revealed to the author in an interview with a retired employee of the Tanjungpriok port, 1956.
2. Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Sang Penula*, Hasta Mitra, 1985, p. 261.
3. G30S stands for 'Gerakan 30 September'. The alleged coup in 1965 was by an army unit who called themselves the '30 September Movement'.
4. Interview with the author, Bogor, 1996.
5. See Audry R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy, The Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia*, The New Press, 1995, New York.
6. Government of the Rep. of Indonesia, *Why Indonesia Opposes British-made 'Malaysia'*, pp. 76-100.
7. See *Ensiklopedi Nasional Indonesia*, 1988, vol. 2, p. 286.
8. Mark Curtis, 'Democratic Genocide'. (I wish to thank Liem Soei Liong and M. Cohen for sending these materials).
9. Greg Poulgram in a separate essay concerning Sukarno and Kennedy.

PENGANTAR*

Selamat datang pada Greg Poulgrain yang tanpa ragu turun memasuki sejarah modern Indonesia dengan tesisnya *The Genesis of Konfrontasi: Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia, 1945-1965*, sebuah hasil studi yang meluas dan terperinci. Dengan karyanya orang lebih mudah dapat memahami masa peralihan dari apa yang dinamai era Orde Lama ke era Orde Baru, dua era yang bertentangan sudah pada azas dan semangatnya.

Era pertama adalah era anti kolonialisme-imperialisme-kapitalisme dengan segala liku dan lekuk dengan berbagai pemain, yang mendukung dan mendongkel. Era yang menggantikannya adalah edisi baru Opendeur-Politik Kolonial setelah bangkrutnya tanampaksa, sama-sama menghalau rakyat yang tak bernama dari tanah garapannya. Masuknya modal swasta dalam Opendeur-Politik pada awalnya memang terutama di bidang perkebunan. Sumber-sumber air untuk minum peternakan-liar besar di Jawa Barat diracuni, sehingga peternakan-liar besar tumpas.¹ Dan, tanpa pernah ada catatan resmi atau pun tidak resmi tentangnya. Dengan demikian padang-padang penggembalaan dengan mudah dapat dikuasai modal asing. Penggusuran juga terjadi di Sumatra oleh para calok tanah yang waktu itu dinamai 'residen tanah' alias pemburu konsesi.²

Bagi saya sendiri lenyapnya Konfrontasi dalam hubungan dengan sejarah modern Indonesia setelah meletusnya apa yang dinamai G30S, dan mengapa itu terjadi, telah mengusik saya sepanjang era Orde Baru ini. Kalau Konfrontasi toh disebut-sebut juga, maknanya jadi berubah dan barangtentu menurut versi Orde Baru: dari Konfrontasi terhadap proyek British Malaysia menjadi Konfrontasi terhadap bangsa serumpun.

* Nama sumber-sumber Indonesia dalam pengantar ini sengaja tidak disebutkan. Biarlah para sarjana, terutama sejarawan, yang melakukannya. Untuk itu penulis minta maaf.

Nehru, penemu dan pengembang nama Malaysia, tidak pernah menduga nama temuannya pernah menjadi sumber sengketa berdarah di Asia Tenggara. Pemelencengan makna Konfrontasi dapat diikuti dalam "Nostalgia Dua Serumpun", *Panin* no. 26, 24 Agustus 1966, dan dalam "30 Tahun yang Lalu: Konfrontasi Malaysia Bisa Diselesaikan", *Kompas*, 10 Agustus 1966. Perlu saya jelaskan, bahwa apabila saya menggunakan kata "Konfrontasi" maka pengertiannya adalah 'membantu gerakan perjuangan anti-kolonial', meskipun pembaca bukan Indonesia cenderung menafsirkan kata Konfrontasi semata-mata sebagai kampanye agitasi Indonesia terhadap Malaysia.

Sudah sejak semula saya menduga, G30S tak lain adalah produk canggih gabungan badan-badan intel di luar dan di Indonesia sendiri, kerja intel-intel asing bersama rekan-rekan Indonesia mereka. Berbagai cerita dan analisis mengenai G30S kemudian seperti kita ketahui menjadi sebuah mitos besar. Ia sebenarnya tak lain dari suatu metamorphosa oposisi Inggris yang meningkat berkepanjangan terhadap politik Konfrontasi Sukarno. Sampai sekarang secara umum kecurigaan agak berat-sebelah tertuju ke CIA Amerika, padahal dalam kenyataan intel Inggris memainkan peran penting dalam konspirasi G30S itu. Dan mengapa terjadi Konfrontasi?

Dalam hal ini saya sependapat dengan A.M. Azahari¹ bahwa Indonesia, di sini berarti Sukarno, terjebak oleh provokasi Inggris, dengan menggunakan ketegaran anti kolonialisme-imperialisme-kapitalisme Sukarno untuk menyingkirkan Sukarno sendiri. Dan Inggris sendiri sudah berpengalaman memprovokasi Indonesia. Pertama tentu saja pertempuran Surabaya yang kemudian melahirkan Hari Pahlawan. Kedua dalam memprovokasi para pemuda di Sumatra Timur dengan berhasil melikwidasi para bangsawan wilayah tersebut. Apa yang kelak dinamai 'revolusi sosial', yang salah seorang kurbannya adalah penyair Amir Hamzah, ini sasarannya jelas: menghapus pengaruh Indonesia lewat para bangsawan Sumatra Timur terhadap aristokrasi Melayu di Malaya, Singapura dan Kalimantan Utara yang ketika itu masih menjadi koloni Inggris, sebagaimana disebutkan juga oleh Greg Poulgrain. Yang ketiga adalah babak yang dibicarakan sekarang, yaitu akibat penumpasan bangsawan Sumatra Timur sebagai bagian operasi intel Inggris yang boleh dikatakan berhasil. Pengaruh Revolusi Indonesia dan pribadi Sukarno sendiri, semakin menggelumbang di luar gedung-gedung para sultan Malaya dan Kalimantan Utara, sedang pengaruh Tan Malaka semakin menentukan di kalangan Hoakiau terutama di Brunai. Angin kemerdekaan nasional yang anti kolonialisme-imperialisme-kapitalisme

dari Indonesia membikin Inggris gelisah di kawasannya di Asia Tenggara tersebut. Negara kolonial tua ini, tak rela kehilangan sumber dollarnya dari Malaya, Singapura dan Kalimantan Utara. Malaya adalah penghasil besar timah, karet, sawit, Kalimantan Utara, di sini Brunai, adalah tambang minyak bumi terkemuka, sedang Singapura pelabuhan transit impor-ekspor Asia Tenggara, juga salah satu pusat pengendalian kekuasaan regional baik dengan intelijen maupun dengan pemasokan senjata dan serdadu, sebagaimana dari sini pemberontakan PRRI-Permesta yang hendak mendirikan negara sendiri itu, dibantu. Ya, bersama sekutunya, Amerika Serikat, yang katanya anti-kolonial.⁴

Usai PD II bagi Inggris tidak berarti usai pula kesulitannya. Sebaliknya, bahkan untuk membiayai kekuatan lautnya, unsur pertama 'Britain rules the waves' sudah pada taraf kedodoran. Kesulitan lain adalah hutangnya pada Amerika sebagai akibat perjanjian Land & Lease, pinjam sewa alat-alat perang Amerika. Sovyet Unie menolak melunasi hutangnya karena penggunaan alat-alat perang Amerika adalah untuk kepentingan bersama dalam mengalahkan fasisme. Inggris tidak bisa berbuat demikian terhadap sekutunya sendiri. Dollar yang bisa diperas Inggris dari Malaya, Singapura dan Kalimantan Utara yang menjadi andalannya. Agar dollar tetap dapat mengucur pengaruh Indonesia harus dihalau dari tiga koloni tersebut. Untuk itu Indonesia dikilik-kilik dengan provokasi. Daftar provokasi Inggris di darat dan udara dari Januari 1963 sampai Agustus 1964 baik di Kalimantan Barat, Kalimantan Tengah, Kalimantan Timur, dan antara Juni 1964 sampai September 1964 di Riau, 140 kali dan 17 kali, belum lagi provokasi-provokasi udara di wilayah Sumatra dan Kalimantan Selatan, yang dalam 1964 saja sebanyak 56 kali.⁵

Nampaknya Inggris pandai memilih waktu. Provokasi dilancarkan pada waktu Indonesia baru saja keluar dari tugas Trikora (Konfrontasi Irian Barat) dan dengan sendirinya membutuhkan istirahat. Di samping itu bila Indonesia terkilik oleh provokasinya ia punya alasan menuduh Indonesia mempunyai ambisi teritorial seperti perebutan Irian Barat. Indonesia memang terkilik dan melayani provokasi bersenjata Inggris dengan kekuatan senjata pula. Beberapa Menko malah mendorong Bung Karno agar menggencarkan Konfrontasi dengan menyatakan mendukung dengan pengiriman senjata, dan ternyata senjata yang dikirimkan rongsokan besi tua belaka. Sedang yang dinamai dukungan hanya sebatas pernyataan. Pada pihak Inggris yang dilibatkan dalam bentrok bersenjata bukan hanya tentara Inggris, termasuk Gurkanya, juga serdadu Malaya, juga dari negara-negara sekutu militernya di Asia Tenggara.

Dalam masa Konfrontasi dan anti-Konfrontasi dengan sendirinya ada yang membenarkan bahwa Indonesia mempunyai ambisi teritorial. Mereka yang berotak dingin tidak bisa mempercayai. Sukarno, salah seorang bapak pendiri Republik Indonesia sejak pemuda hingga gugurnya adalah anti kolonialisme-imperialisme-kapitalisme, bahwa menjelang Proklamasi pun sudah ikut menggariskan, bahwa wilayah Indonesia hanyalah bekas Hindia Belanda, tidak lebih dan tidak kurang. Akan lain jadinya sekiranya Bung Karno semasa kolonial jadi serdadu KNIL, alat untuk menaklukkan dan menundukkan rakyat Indonesia. Bahkan kerjasama dengan pihak kolonial pun ia tak sudi. Ia salah seorang non-koperator terkuat dalam sejarah gerakan kemerdekaan.

Penguasaan koloni sumber dollar, Malaya, Singapura, dan Kalimantan Utara, adalah jantung ihwal, the heart of the matter. Dari jantung ini didenyutkan provokasi pada Indonesia. Konfrontasi Indonesia yang pecah kemudian adalah reaksi wajar terhadap politik anti-Konfrontasi Inggris, konfrontasi bukanlah suatu kebijaksanaan politik yang memang diagendakan, bukan persekongkolan yang sudah direkayasa sebelumnya.

Kemudian meletus G30S. Terlalu naif bila menganggap peristiwa tersebut suatu kejadian yang berdiri sendiri, sebab tak ada sesuatu apa pun yang dapat berdiri sendiri dalam kehidupan masyarakat. Begitu G30S selesai beraksi mulai kelihatan tidak matangnya perencanaan. Komandan G30S langsung pidato melalui radio tentang kenaikan pangkat bagi yang menyertai operasi, dan penurunan pangkat semua perwira yang berada di atasnya. Kelanjutannya bukan hanya lebih runyam, juga aneh: pendirian Dewan Revolusi yang mendemisionerkan kabinet. Entah siapa yang mengumumkan pendirian Dewan Revolusi tersebut. Sampai sekarang tidak jelas. Bahwa yang diculik G30S adalah justru jenderal-jenderal yang setia pada Sukarno menjelaskan dilaksanakannya kehendak Gilchrist. Tetapi pendukung Sukarno bukan para jenderal yang terbunuh itu saja. Takkan semudah itu Sukarno disingkirkan tanpa menyingkirkan jutaan pendukungnya – semua saja yang berpadu dalam *'samenbundeling van alle revolutionaire krachten'*. Mereka ini yang jadi sasaran pembantaian massal, perampasan kebebasan pribadi, harta-benda tanpa vonnis pengadilan dan hidup dalam kamp-kamp penganiayaan di seluruh Indonesia, dan terus disalahkan, didakwa sepanjang era Orde Baru, diberi stigma pula sampai anak-cucunya. Para pelaku G30S dalam beberapa jam telah ditangkap kemudian dihukum mati. Jelas mereka mengulangi pengalaman Kebo Ijo dalam abad ke-13 yang dihukum mati melalui putusan pengadilan, sedang di balik itu konspirasi telah mengangkat Ken Arok jadi raja Tumapel/

Singasari menggantikan raja yang dibunuhnya. Walau demikian sejarah tidak pernah menyebutkan Arok pernah melakukan pembunuhan massal seperti pada 1965. Perampasan kebebasan pun tidak. Nampaknya penggalan kisah Ken Arok dan Kebo Ijo dari sejarah Jawa ini cukup menarik untuk dibuat perbandingan.

Jantung ihwal, yang jadi pusat studi Greg Poulgrain, menjadi terlupakan oleh kekejaman kekuasaan di satu pihak dan ketakutan massa di lain pihak. Yang tidak berpihak pada para pembunuh pada tiarap, tinggal bisa membisu dan mendengar. Monopoli informasi di satu pihak dan ikut tiarapnya para sarjana sebagai nurani pemberi terang masyarakatnya, membikin orang tak berani mempertanyakan duduk perkara G30S, apalagi jantung ihwalnya. Sassus memup bahuw Amerika dan CIAnya adalah biang-kerok dari semua ini. Bahwa yang belakangan ini punya keterlibatan mudah dapat dipahami. Bukankah Noah Chomsky sudah memperingatkan, bahwa sejak Columbus menemukan Amerika, sampai sekarang, bangsa-bangsa kulit berwarna dan negerinya menjadi ladang pemerasan bangsa-bangsa kulit putih. Setelah masa deklasifikasi arsip Amerika Serikat tentang G30S orang membenarkan adanya campurtangan CIA. Sementara masa deklasifikasi arsip Kerajaan Inggris disassuskan 50 tahun. Jadi orang masih harus menunggu 15-20 tahun lagi.

Semasa PD II cadangan emas dan dollar Inggris sudah mulai kering pada waktu Lend and Lease Act ditandatangani dalam Maret 1941. Maka dalam masa perang tersebut Inggris telah berubah dari pemberi hutang terbesar menjadi penghutang terbesar, sedang sehabis perang impornya dari dunia Barat sebesar 42% sedangkan eksportnya hanya 14%. Di sinilah letak jantung ihwal pentingnya wilayah jajahannya di Asia Tenggara.

Disertasi Greg Poulgrain menggarap masa dari 1945 sampai Konfrontasi dan penulisan selesai pada 1993. Dalam bulan Juli 1996 *Observer*, London, mengumumkan artikel "*British role in slaughter of 500.000. Ambassador recommended 'a little shooting' for Indonesia in 1965, reveals Marc Curtis*". Artikel itu membeberkan arsip rahasia yang baru saja dideklasifikasi bahwa Inggris telah membantu pembantaian lebih dari setengah juta orang oleh tentara Indonesia pada 1965. Sir Andrew Gilchrist, Duta Besar Inggris ketika itu, menulis pada London: "*Saya tak pernah menyembunyikan kepercayaan saya dari kamu, bahwa sedikit tembakan di Indonesia akan menjadi keharusan awal terjadinya perubahan yang efektif*". Dokumen-dokumen rahasia juga menjelaskan bahwa Inggris minta pada para jenderal Indonesia bergerak terhadap PKI, membusuk-busukkan PKI, misalnya kekejaman PKI dan peranan Tiongkok (RRT) dalam pengiriman senjata. Kerjasamanya dengan

Amerika Serikat juga terangkum di dalamnya. Tentang yang belakangan ini sebelumnya sudah banyak terungkap berkas deklasifikasi Amerika.

Kerjasama antara Inggris dan Amerika untuk membuka Indonesia menjadi tambang dollar – lebih tepatnya: semua negeri Barat yang sarat modal – bukan sesuatu yang baru sebagaimana Noah Chomsky sudah mengingatkan. Hanya saja yang dua ini yang paling menonjol. Menurut memorandum CIA Juni 1962 Perdana Menteri Inggris Harold Macmillan dan Presiden Amerika Serikat John Kennedy “*setuju melikuidasi Presiden Sukarno, tergantung bagaimana situasi dan kesempatan yang tersedia*” Dengan demikian apa yang telah dilakukan Gilchrist hanya merupakan pelaksanaan teknis semata. Kennedy sendiri tidak pernah menyaksikan bagaimana Sukarno ditumbangkan. Ia tumbang terlebih dahulu karena ditembak 17 bulan setelah memorandum tersebut pada 11 November 1963, dengan meninggalkan dua macam versi oleh dua museum Kennedy di Dallas, tempat ia dibunuh. Museum pertama dengan versi yang dianggap bikinan pemerintah yang dianggap menyembunyikan duduk-perkara sebenarnya, yang lain, museum yang menyuguhkan adanya konspirasi. Museum ketiga, terbesar, dibangun di Boston pada 1967 tidak menjelaskan misteri tentang kematiannya.

Berpuluh tahun kemudian muncul versi lain, yang mungkin cocok dinamai “The Indonesia Connection”. Greg Poulgrain dalam bukunya ini mengungkapkan hal-hal baru yang menarik. Dalam korespondensi Greg Poulgrain dengan Dean Rusk, mantan menlu Amerika itu menceritakan kepadanya bahwa Kennedy sebenarnya sudah punya rencana untuk membantu Sukarno menghentikan Konfrontasi terhadap Malaysia. Setelah berjumpa Sukarno, Kennedy merencanakan suatu kunjungan-balasan ke Indonesia. Seperti diketahui, belum lama sebelumnya Kennedy juga pernah aktif membantu mengakhiri Trikora dalam mengembalikan Irian Barat dari Belanda ke tangan Indonesia. Tetapi kita semua tahu, niat Kennedy bertemu Sukarno di Indonesia tidak pernah kesampaian – ia sudah terbunuh lebih dulu oleh suatu konspirasi besar yang sampai kini masih tetap merupakan misteri.

Greg Poulgrain tidak mengatakan bahwa Kennedy dibunuh untuk mencegah tercapainya sesuatu hasil dalam pertemuannya dengan Sukarno, informasi yang tersedia tidak memungkinkan mengambil kesimpulan seperti itu. Akan tetapi sekarang, dengan pengetahuan lebih banyak tentang segala implikasi politik yang terjadi, bisa kita katakan bahwa akibat terbunuhnya Kennedy, konfrontasi antara Indonesia dan Malaysia berjalan terus. Perkembangan Indonesia setelah lahirnya ‘Orde Baru’ – terutama fenomena pertumbuhan ekonomi setelah tersingkirnya

Sukarno – mengusik kita untuk meneliti lebih jauh tali-menali yang melatar-belakangi berbagai peristiwa yang terjadi semasa Sukarno dan Kennedy masih hidup.

Sejak pertemuan mereka di Gedung Putih, dua tokoh berkharisma itu saling lebih mengerti dan menaruh respek satu terhadap lainnya. Berbeda dengan pimpinan CIA, Kennedy tidak menganggap Sukarno seorang komunis, apalagi membawa Indonesia ke bawah kekuasaan komunis. Ia menafsirkan nasionalisme Sukarno secara wajar dalam konteks cita-cita Sukarno membangun persatuan dan kesatuan bangsa dan negerinya. Kenyataan bahwa Kennedy mau membantu Sukarno tentulah bukan disebabkan kekagumannya yang tiba-tiba muncul terhadap Sukarno, melainkan berdasarkan perhitungan kepentingannya sendiri yang realistik. Dengan membantu Sukarno, Kennedy mengharapkan dapat mencegah Indonesia hanyut dalam pengaruh komunis – memusuhinya malah sebaliknya yang mungkin akan terjadi. Selain itu, ada kesamaan antara kedua tokoh yang punya pandangan visioner jauh ke depan itu: Kennedy dengan “The New Frontier”nya yang idealistik dan penuh semangat muda dan Sukarno dengan gagasan “The New Emerging Forces”nya.⁴ Tetapi kedua tokoh idealis itu bernasib sama, mereka harus lenyap dari pentas sejarah.

Pada saat Kennedy bertemu Sukarno, keduanya tidak tahu-menahu dan memang tidak diberitahu tentang sumber minyak sangat besar yang dikandung bumi Irian Barat, bahkan belakangan ini di samping perak terungkap juga deposito emas yang konon lebih besar lagi jumlahnya daripada tambang emas Witwatersrand di Afrika Selatan yang selama ini dianggap terkaya di dunia. Kennedy dan Sukarno punya rencana melanjutkan dialog mereka, akan tetapi pada saat bersamaan rupanya berjalan suatu rencana skenario lain antara raja-raja minyak di satu pihak dan komplotan CIA di lain pihak. Pihak pertama, para pemodal besar, sangat berkepentingan pada Irian Barat yang kaya sumber alam itu, akan tetapi bukan suatu Irian Barat yang dikuasai oleh seorang Presiden seperti Sukarno yang punya sikap politik populis, sesuatu sikap yang tidak sejalan dengan kepentingan kaum kapitalis. Untuk itu diperlukan seorang Presiden lain yang lebih cocok untuk diajak bekerjasama atau lebih tepat untuk mau diajak berkolusi. Di pihak kedua, sudah menjadi pengetahuan umum bahwa sewaktu CIA dipimpin Allen Dulles (dan juga sesudahnya), dia selalu gigih sekali melaksanakan keinginan-keinginan majikannya yang sesungguhnya, yaitu para kapitalis pengusaha besar. Kritik Kennedy terhadap beberapa praktek CIA tidak bisa diterima, terutama menyangkut apa yang dianggap

Kennedy mengarah pada "pemerintah dalam pemerintahan". Dalam skenario itulah kepentingan berbeda dan kesempatan bertemu seiring-sejalan – di permukaan seakan tidak ada saling kaitan, tetapi Kennedy dan Sukarno harus munggir.

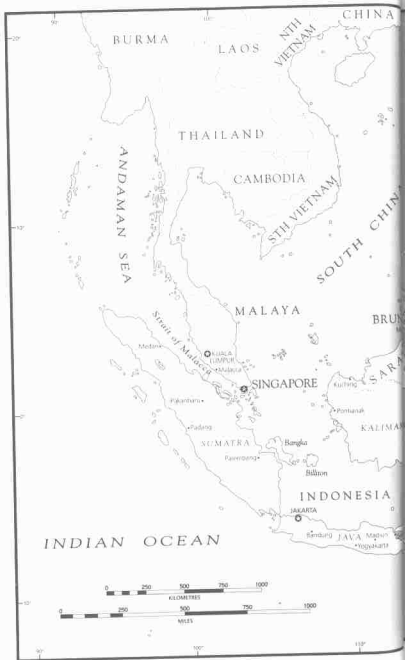
Biasanya para peneliti Barat akan bersikap sinis kalau kita berbicara tentang "peranan CIA" dan badan-badan intelejen asing lainnya. Mereka menganggapnya sebagai fantasi yang tidak masuk akal. Akan tetapi Geg Poulgrain dan para ilmuwan seperti George Kahin, Peter Dale Scott dan Wertheim, membuktikan dengan dokumen-dokumen CIA sendiri bagaimana CIA intens sekali berperan di negeri-negeri berkembang, terutama Indonesia-nya Sukarno. Rekayasa oleh intelejen CIA dan jaringan intelejen Inggris yang sering dilupakan, sungguh merupakan Fenomena Khas Dunia Ketiga. Indonesia di bawah pimpinan Sukarno berdiri di paling depan menentang Perang Vietnam ketika itu, dan mencoba menggagalkan the new emerging forces di seluruh dunia menghadapi kekuatan the old established forces yang dengan kekuatan modalnya tidak henti-hentinya memerlukan lahan perahan di negeri-negeri berkembang.

Saya sebagai salah seorang dari satu setengah juta korban perampasan kebebasan oleh Orde Baru perlu mengucapkan terimakasih pada Greg Poulgrain dengan disertasinya tentang Konfrontasi. Dengan studinya itu ada sejumlah orang yang mendapatkan dasar bagi keyakinannya bahwa benar G30S adalah methamorphosis anti-Konfrontasi Inggris. Maka juga saya menyetujui ucapan pribadi seorang protokol dalam peluncuran buku *Gerilya dan Diplomasi* (6 Januari 1997) agar G30S dibikin jadi tuntas agar tidak berlarut-larut tanpa ujung, membiakkan tali-tembali kebohongan, apalagi setelah G30S dirajut menjadi G30S/PKI. Juga agar berakhir gejala psikologi yang aneh: mereka yang paling diuntungkan oleh adanya G30S adalah justru yang paling giat memaki-makinya, dan paling tidak satu juta orang yang telah mereka bautai itulah yang setiap saat bila mereka perlukan ditampilkan sebagai terdakwa, dan pembantaian terjadi tanpa adanya perang, pemberontakan pun nada.

Begitu banyak orang telah dibunuh tanpa perang. Dalam sepanjang era Orde Baru tak seorang pun di antara para pembunuh massal itu pernah diseret ke pengadilan. Logikanya bila pembunuh dibenarkan untuk mendirikan kekuasaan, maka pembohongan, perampasan, penindasan menjadi soal kecil. Sebaiknya semua itu tak perlu terjadi.

Catatan kaki

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INTRODUCTION

Konfrontasi, the Indonesian term for confrontation, entered the lexicon of international relations during an intense phase of the Cold War in the early 1960s. In the Indonesian context, as pointed out by J.A.C. Mackie, the term had been in general currency for many years. It originally referred to the contrast between traditional and modern modes of thought and cultural expression. The eternal conflict between two parties in the *wuyang* drama was depicted very literally as a 'confronting' of one by the other, the characters being grouped opposite each other on stage in highly formalised array and engaging either in verbal debate or physical battle in which their supernatural power was the decisive weapon.¹

Two consecutive anticolonial campaigns by Indonesia under President Sukarno infused the term with contemporary political significance. Netherlands New Guinea was the focus of one; Indonesian opposition to the Federation of Malaysia was the other. The second campaign erupted three months before the official end in May 1963 of the anticolonial dispute with the Dutch. Whereas the New Guinea dispute harked back to the exclusion of the territory from the Netherlands East Indies when sovereignty was relinquished in 1949, the origins of the Malaysian dispute were never clearly delineated.

Territorial acquisition, the object of the first campaign, was also deemed by critics of Sukarno to be an inextricable part of the second campaign. Sukarno at no time aspired to claim territory beyond the former Netherlands East Indies, even in the wartime Committee for the Preparation of Independence nearing the end of Japanese occupation. Yet in the 1960s the nebulous political goal of 'frustrating the formation of Malaysia' was suffused with the notion of territorial expansion, as though it had become presidential policy. The British Foreign Office invoked this fear when soliciting military assistance from Australia in early 1963, asserting that confrontation was driven by Sukarno's territorial ambitions. Sukarno's intentions, according to the Foreign Office, were:

to seize not only the three Borneo territories and Portuguese Timor, but

also Malaya and the Philippines; furthermore, it claimed, he would seek the remaining half of New Guinea, then the whole of Melanesia and thus become a major Pacific power.⁷

Konfrontasi in 1963 started in the three Borneo territories, Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo (now Sabah). Two-thirds of the island of Borneo was Indonesian Kalimantan, inherited from the Netherlands in 1949. While denying any aspirations of claiming the British portion, the Indonesian government nevertheless condoned a campaign of small-scale skirmishes across the border. These guerrilla tactics failed to prevent, or subsequently disrupt, the integration of Sarawak and Sabah into the Federation of Malaysia. Brunei, for other reasons, opted to remain separate when Malaysia was formed in September 1963.

In the second half of 1964, the focus of Indonesian confrontation changed from east to west Malaysia, from the Borneo region to the Malayan peninsula.⁸ At the same time, British tactics in Sarawak were secretly upgraded. In Operation Claret, the British government authorised General Walker in Borneo to use British troops in strikes against Indonesian forces inside Kalimantan.⁹ Claret remained a secret operation, so the Indonesian response seemed all the more aggressive. By the end of 1964, the build-up of forces on both sides 'contributed to an atmosphere of emergency'¹⁰ just when British Parliamentary Private Secretary Tam Dalyell was calling for the withdrawal of British troops from Borneo because of the absence of conflict between Malaysian and Indonesian forces.¹¹ The implications of a strengthened British presence in Sarawak when 'Claret' renewed the sense of emergency were particularly pertinent for the urban population of Kuching, the capital of Sarawak. Dalyell, speaking in the House of Commons in October 1965 after visiting Sarawak, explained that 'the urban population of Kuching ... was distinctly hostile to the British presence because it had formed the impression that London backed their corrupt government'.¹² Despite these political implications, however, *Konfrontasi* has long been described as the outcome of Indonesian expansionism.

Konfrontasi, according to Guy J. Pauker, was the manifestation of the Indonesian preference for 'external expansion' rather than 'internal development'.¹³ Sukarno's role was similarly publicised by another foreign-affairs commentator, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, as territorial expansion. He wrote that *Konfrontasi* was:

the opening move in a play to annex Sarawak and Sabah and oil-rich

Brunei, after which Sukarno would see how best to move in on Singapore, one of the world's great ports, and then on Malaya itself.¹

Frederick Bunnell, however, speaking at the Asia Society in New York in May 1965, succinctly dismissed such charges by pointing out that 'territorial expansion would have been more convincing if there had been contemporary evidence of Indonesian leaders laying claim [first] to the Borneo territories of Sarawak, Sabah and Brunei'.² According to Bunnell:

The origins of Indonesia's confrontation with the Federation of Malaysia remain uncertain. What is definite is that Indonesia's strident propaganda against the formation of Malaysia arose only after the Brunei revolt of December 8, 1962.³

The origins of Malaysian confrontation were not clearly defined when it started in 1963; they remained unclear throughout its three-year duration and unclarified in subsequent historical accounts of this period. The plethora of publications on how confrontation evolved during 1963-64, and how it was resolved in late 1965-66, is in stark contrast to the obscurity still surrounding its origins.⁴ In the opinion of Thomas Critchley, Australian high commissioner in Malaya at that time, the origins of Malaysian Confrontation are still no clearer today.⁵ Accordingly, attention should be drawn to the title of this study, in which the operative term, 'genesis', denotes the origins rather than the evolution of Malaysian confrontation. The time span of 1945 to 1965 remains pertinent, insofar as the political outcome of confrontation is included in the text, although this study concludes with the declaration of confrontation made by Dr Subandrio, Indonesian Foreign Minister, on 20 January 1963.

Published two decades ago, the principal research on this subject has remained Mackie's *Konfrontasi*, one-third of which is devoted to historical background and origins. Mackie was the first to point to his shortcomings. For example (reflecting general historical unanimity on this point), Mackie asserted that the Brunei revolt in December 1962 was a crucial event in the start of *Konfrontasi*. Yet Mackie admits his puzzlement as to why the leader of the revolt, A.M. Azahari, should have adopted such a course of action;⁶ even thirty years after the event, C.M. Turnbull has thrown no new light on the origins of the revolt.⁷ Mackie did not ascertain Azahari's viewpoint, and the conclusions reached as to the origin of *Konfrontasi* and the degree of

President Sukarno's culpability suffer distortion as a consequence of having neglected this vital evidence.

The author has attempted to rectify this by conducting an extensive interview with Azahari, over several months, in the privacy of the former political leader's family home in Bogor, Indonesia. In recognition of the continuity and duration of this interview, references to it throughout the text are not allotted specific dates, but rather it is designated as 'Azahari interview, 1991'.¹⁰ In total, the research in Indonesia covered a period of ten months, during which interviews pertaining to the origin of the conflict were held with many Indonesians who had been in relevant positions of power during and before *Konfrontasi*. To name three such persons: Oei Tju Tat, a Chinese lawyer from Jakarta appointed by President Sukarno as the leading civilian to coordinate Indonesian participation in confrontation; General Soehario, former head of the Indonesian army in East Kalimantan, adjoining Sarawak, which was the British colony where confrontation began; and General Nasution, former Indonesian chief of staff. Three months of research in the United Kingdom also enabled further interviews with such persons as Sir Alexander Waddell, the former governor of Sarawak; Roy Henry, the former head of Special Branch (the political police) in Sarawak and Brunei; and a number of former oil company employees from British Malayan Petroleum, which became Brunei Shell. In the late 1950s, these persons participated in the exploration which culminated in the discovery, or at least the timely announcement in 1963 of the discovery, of the giant offshore oilfield known as South West Ampa, just off the coast of Brunei.

Both the Indonesian army and the Indonesian communist party were prepared to confront Malaysia, as evidenced by the stance each adopted in early 1963, but neither of these Indonesian participants in *Konfrontasi* pre-empted the conflict. Accusations of Indonesian subterfuge, as though *Konfrontasi* was the outcome of a calculated strategy, warrant closer inspection because the degree of British preparedness suggests otherwise. Accusations, for instance, by the prime minister of the Federation of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman, that Indonesia was 'involved in the Brunei revolt' of December 1962 prompted Subandrio's response that 'Indonesia will get very angry if accused too much'.¹¹ Behind such retaliatory jousting, however, an examination of the British side in the conflict before January 1963 reveals strategies in place to obtain a predictable response from the Indonesian government. The Indonesian domestic political scenario made the

confrontationist response a predictable one. Not without the initiative of British intelligence (Special Branch, MI5-MI6) did the political climate of the British Borneo territories, still under colonial rule, kindle the confrontationist response in Indonesia; and not before the opportunity arose did Indonesia formulate a policy of confrontation against Malaysia. As posited by Hindley and Pluvier, the policy of confrontation served the interests of the political elite in Indonesia. "Dr Subandrio, it should be pointed out, was the most prominent of this elite."

Expounding on British preparedness opens a Pandora's box on the subject of decolonisation. The origins of confrontation draw on the same postwar period in which the colonial subjects of British Borneo, in prewar days considered one of the remotest parts of the empire, were readying themselves for decolonisation. Their preparation, it will be shown, with particular reference to Sarawak, was inseparable from the origins of confrontation. The format of decolonisation was a federation of Singapore, Malaya and the Borneo states, to be known as Malaysia. While this was officially withheld from public announcement until 1961, the format was drawn up by the Colonial Office as early as 1953. Public Record Office documents thus clarify M.N. Sophe's study of the early 1970s, in which extensive interviews were conducted with leading Malayan politicians. Sophe traced the planning for the formation of Malaysia earlier than Tunku Abdul Rahman's so-called historic announcement on 27 May 1961, and, in the same breath, cast doubt on the widespread assumption that a resolution of 'the Singapore problem' was the primary rationale behind the composite form of the federation. "This study utilises oral and archival evidence to illustrate the crucial importance of Brunei and Sarawak in the process of decolonisation, which was the outcome of strategies executed not only by the British Colonial Office but also by an assortment of intelligence agencies and one other all-pervasive factor: the interest of major oil companies.

Within the component states of the proposed federation, there was disparate economic development and potentially disruptive political opposition to a merger on British terms. Singapore in the mid-1950s witnessed large-scale riots, for which the blame was levelled at the communist-led unions, yet Public Record Office documents reveal that the largest riots – called the Communist Front Riots of October 1956 – were deliberately provoked by the authorities to enable the arrest of some prominent anti-British Chinese. "Eliminating communism became a blanket rationale in the Cold War. Once under Lee

Kuan Yew, however, Singapore was far less a Colonial Office problem-child. The success of the planned federation to include the Borneo states hinged on Sarawak, where Chinese comprised a third of the population and were dominant commercially and politically.

The formation of Malaysia was a masterstroke of British decolonisation, not merely because Sarawak was well on the way to becoming an independent state, but because the most prominent political party was Chinese-dominated with communist underground support. This party was the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP). Mackie readily acknowledges that the political direction of Sarawak was changed by *Konfrontasi*; the threatened hostility made British decolonisation possible in the form of Malaysia. Yet Mackie attributes sole culpability to Indonesia for initiating confrontation when a motive clearly existed for colonial authorities to play a role in fomenting disturbance. The historical role of Sukarno as the initiator of confrontation should be revised in the light of new evidence, such as that of the former head of Sarawak Special Branch, who admitted a direct hand in starting the Brunei revolt.²² Documentary evidence from the Public Records Office in London supports the theory that Britain employed two guiding principles in the postwar process of decolonisation in South-East Asia: one, that the new political leaders who assumed the reins of power when the Colonial Office departed should be known to be amenable to continued British investment; and the other, that the political environment envisaged by the British as best suited to such regional development did not include Sukarno as leader of neighbouring Indonesia. Second-in-charge of the British embassy in Jakarta in mid-1963, Ralph Selby, admitted that when Ambassador Gilchrist replaced 'Bunny' Fry that year, Gilchrist 'was sent there to be hostile'.²³ Gilchrist confirmed this in correspondence with the author when he wrote that it was 'my well-known view that the departure of S[ukarno] was an essential preliminary to conciliation'.²⁴ The same intention (employing a different mode of hostility) was evident in 1960, in Jakarta, when Ambassador Fry had discussed with an Indonesian 'confidant', Ruslan Abdulgani, the possibility of a *coup d'état* against Sukarno using 'the military and political opposition'.²⁵ *Konfrontasi* created a threat to the states which were to form the proposed Federation of Malaysia, a threat which adequately cemented these states together to form Malaysia in 1963. *Konfrontasi* continued two more years and became the swan song of the Sukarno era.

Long-term hostility between Indonesia and the British colonial

authorities in Singapore, Malaya and Borneo, had festered since the end of World War II, when British troops had attempted to reclaim the Indies on behalf of the Dutch. The British were confronted by revolutionary Indonesian nationalists whose opposition to European colonialism had undergone a metamorphosis during the Japanese occupation. Although intended to shore up the British recolonisation of Malaya, Singapore and Borneo, the antithetical effect of this ill-fated postwar venture not only reduced British manpower so seriously as to jeopardise the recolonisation of Malaya, but also incurred the undying wrath of Indonesia.

Britain, as the colonial power neighbouring Indonesia, became a reluctant but ready inheritor of the colonial stigma of former Dutch rule. During the early 1950s, Indonesia asserted her independence on two contentious issues; the loss of revenue from its export-oriented economy being channelled to Singapore, and the role of the Chinese middlemen. Export restrictions led to a trade-war with British authorities in Singapore and Penang. British plans for decolonisation in Malaya and Singapore had already been delayed by postwar nationalist turmoil and communist insurrection, so when the trade-war brought further economic downturn it prompted some Malayan businessmen to press for independence from Britain earlier rather than later. Indonesian revolutionary ideals of *merdeka* and anticolonialism compounded British problems and aggravated bilateral relations.

During the 1950s, the Colonial Office and British intelligence maintained an anti-Indonesian vigil to thwart any untoward influence on the Borneo territories, Brunei in particular. This Islamic sultanate covered but a fraction of its former demesne, which, in centuries past, had included the island of Borneo and extended to the Philippines. As though preordained, the minuscule portion of coastal territory that was 20th-century Brunei, became the largest oil-producer in the British Commonwealth and was tenaciously protected from Indonesian influence. When Sarawak and North Borneo eventually linked with Malaya and Singapore to form the Federation of Malaysia, Brunei did not. The sultan presided over an oil-rich enclave, in essence a British monopoly, defended by the former colonial power.

The interplay between British colonial authorities and the leading political figure in postwar Borneo, A.M. Azahari, a Brunei citizen and veteran of the Indonesian war of independence, is the leitmotif of this book. The fate of Sarawak's decolonisation was tied to Azahari's concept of a federation of the three British Borneo territories, a re-

formation of the British portion of the once-great sultanate.²⁶ Only as one unit, Kalimantan Utara, did Azahari envision the three Borneo states becoming part of the larger British federation, Malaysia. The British alternative was for the three states individually to take part in the Federation of Malaysia, but this was plagued by an element of uncertainty over whether the sultan would side with the British or with Azahari. The sultan manipulated this uncertainty to gain anti-colonial concessions from the British in the 1950s. After many years being drawn up, the Brunei constitution was promulgated in 1959, providing a stamp of colonial disapproval for Azahari's advancement of democratic reform.

As early as August 1957, the Colonial Office adopted a plan to eliminate Azahari politically. This covert and reprehensible operation was, to an extraordinary degree, influenced by 'Hector' Hales, the managing director of the oil company in Brunei and Sarawak, British Malayan Petroleum (BMP). Hales, who ran a separate intelligence network, demonstrated that his authority was superior even to that of the governor of Sarawak. Ultimately, having penetrated Azahari's political party, the People's Party of Brunei, even to the level of the executive, the upper echelons of British intelligence, together with a few Colonial Office representatives, hatched a scheme for a rebellion in Brunei that would spill into Sarawak. By this means, a large influx of British troops from Singapore quickly resolved the political situation in Brunei, and in Sarawak; and the Chinese from Sarawak who fled as refugees into nearby Indonesia quickly won the support of the anticolonial lobby in Jakarta. Sukarno, however, did not perceive the degree to which the political situation had been contrived to prompt Indonesian response. But once Indonesia entered the fray, Britain was relentless in pursuing confrontation to the end.

Not only were the origins and aims of *Konfrontasi* indistinct, but even the emotive description Indonesians themselves used – 'Ganjang [Crush] Malaysia' – conveyed different connotations. Bernard Gordon raises the point that *ganjang* does not literally mean 'crush'; alternative meanings were 'chew', 'swallow' or 'devour'. Significantly, Gordon does not comment on the cultural context or the manner in which Sukarno offered these interpretations, during a speech at Jogjakarta on 25 September 1963. Much of his purportedly violent intent became a factor only in translation. 'Some people use the word "swallow"', Sukarno said, playing to both nationalist and regionalist sentiment in his audience, 'but I think Jogjakarta citizens like the word "devour" better.'²⁷

There was no doubting the word *ganjang* implied a degree of hostility, yet the inherent oral emphasis was indicative more of characteristic presidential banter than any *ultima ratio regum*: Sukarno was willing to embark on a political argument, an oral exercise but not a war. Yet in December 1961 he had exhorted his countrymen to prepare to fight the Dutch, and even though this incident too contained a strong element of political theatre, it set a precedent that redounded to Sukarno's disadvantage. During 1963, it became obvious there were three main Indonesian groups involved in operations against Malaysia, and that Sukarno's real battle was in maintaining control over them – the BPI intelligence service under the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Subandrio; the Indonesian communist party, PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*); and the Indonesian army, TNI (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*).

The familiarisation of the term *konfrontasi* has helped to implant the assumption that Indonesia admitted culpability. Neither Britain nor Malaysia has disputed this; nor has Indonesia – implying a premeditated role in *Konfrontasi* by Indonesia. The rise to power of the Indonesian military regime which supplanted Sukarno, however, was facilitated by confrontation with Malaysia, and it should be recalled that Sukarno's demise which was prompted by a *coup d'état* was:

predicated on economic collapse ... Most important was the desertion of the urban middle classes, hard pressed by inflation and the general decay of infrastructure. It was their support [for Suharto] in 1966 which made the final discrediting of Sukarno easier.⁷⁵

On the subject of inflation, Mackie has pointed out that: 'Prices and the volume of money roughly doubled every twelve months between September 1961 and October 1965, solely because of budget deficits.'⁷⁶ Confrontation with Malaysia became an economically downward spiral which led to the termination of the Sukarno era.

Perpetuating the image of Sukarno as the major culprit for *Konfrontasi* served the interest of his successor. The greater the degree of Sukarno's apparent culpability, the greater the degree of legitimacy of the succeeding regime. This point is illustrated by one of the more widely read Indonesian accounts, *Twenty Years Indonesian Foreign Policy*, by Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, who attributed Sukarno and Subandrio with an element of joint premeditation in Malaysian Confrontation. Their expansionist designs, he claimed, and the covert aid given prior to the Brunei revolt, were not declared before the resolution of the New Guinea dispute because of the need to court American

assistance.³⁹ Comments such as these touch on an aspect of the Indonesian political structure which is not yet fully explored: that is, the degree to which various prominent members of the Indonesian ruling hierarchy, civilian and military, were in league with those very powers that Sukarno so publicly branded the 'old established forces', against which he pitted Indonesia as the ideal exponent of the 'newly emerging forces'.

The concept fitted neatly into the *konfrontasi* paradigm outlined (above) by Mackie. Sukarno was well aware of differences between Great Britain and the United States during the postwar Indonesian struggle for independence. Indeed, the postwar rivalry between the two was intense. Two decades later, there was rivalry still; for example, British aspirations for maintaining political leverage within the ruling Indonesian hierarchy seem to have found a place within the civilian politicians, whereas the Americans invested substantially in the Indonesian army. It should be stressed, however, that the groundwork done by British intelligence prior to the Brunei revolt may not have succeeded in drawing Indonesia into its confrontationist mode without some assiduous if covert assistance by William Andreas Brown, at that time a member of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), based at the American embassy in Singapore, and who in the 1990s was the American ambassador in Israel. *Konfrontasi*, in other words, was a joint program set by British and American intelligence, at times overriding lesser-ranking individuals in the Colonial Office. Given the conditions which prevailed in Sarawak in late 1962 and early 1963, the principles of anticolonialism espoused by Sukarno inevitably drew him and Indonesia into *Konfrontasi*.

Outline

Starting with the presence of British troops in Indonesia in 1945-46, British postwar colonial involvement in South-East Asia culminated in 1963-66 with confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia. This study casts new light on the British policy of decolonisation in Malaya, Singapore and the three Borneo territories, Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo - that is, the proposed Federation of Malaysia - because it shows the British played a part in fomenting confrontation to facilitate the inclusion of Sarawak in the formation of Malaysia. At the crux of this was the Brunei revolt of December 1962. In examining the political conditions in Brunei prior to the instigation of revolt,

and the reactions from Indonesia at the time of the revolt, this research vindicates the leading role of A.M. Azahari of Brunei, who had anticipated a federation of the three Borneo states headed by the sultan of Brunei as constitutional monarch.

In the opening gambit, the focus is on Anglo-American postwar rivalry, highlighting a British military-intelligence operation in East Sumatra, in 1946. This operation assisted the British in shoring up recolonisation in Malaya at a time when revolution across the straits in Indonesia accentuated both familial and ideological links.

The Atlantic Charter conferred stability on the Anglo-American wartime alliance, but only for as long as the agreed price of victory for the European colonial powers was understood to be the relinquishment of the economic monopoly attained in prewar colonial rule. Doubtless, the strength of American anticolonialism in South-East Asia was sharpened by the wartime deployment of men and *matériel*. The reluctance of the Netherlands to relinquish sovereignty of the East Indies gave Britain insight into the problems to be overcome to recolonise Malaya, on two counts: first, Indonesia, with its revolutionary stance towards European colonialism, could influence the population in British Malaya and Borneo; and second, the United States was capable of exerting considerable economic opposition.

Indonesian ethnic bonding with Malaya significantly influenced the British response to the Indonesian revolution. In East Sumatra, the local ruling families were all related to their ruling counterparts across the Malacca Straits. This proved to be a crucial link in the political future of the Malay sultans under British colonial rule, for when their relatives in nearby Indonesia fell victim to revolutionary violence, the natural reaction in Malaya was to oppose the spread of Indonesian influence. Consequently, the Malayan sultans did not support the Malay Nationalist Party, the political party in Malaya most closely linked with Indonesia and most susceptible to nationalist, anticolonial ideology in its Indonesian revolutionary format. Britain thus gained vital time to prepare for decolonisation on its own terms. This episode established not only a depth of ill-feeling between British colonial authorities and Indonesians, but also revealed a formula for British involvement in Indonesian affairs that was used again in the 1960s, pertaining to the start of *Konfrontasi*: that is, British military intelligence as *agent provocateur*.

Friction between Indonesia and the British colonial authorities in Singapore, Malaya and Borneo in the first half of the 1950s showed

early signs of confrontation. In the early 1950s, Indonesia attempted to redirect the flow of Indonesian exports away from Singapore, where Chinese middlemen profited to the detriment of the Indonesian economy. Smuggling aggravated the problem. The trade war that erupted brought a significant downturn in the economy of Malaya. Several years of protracted communist insurgency had already seriously depleted Malaya's finances. Unlike the political effects of the Emergency, however, which secured Malay approval of the presence of the colonial power, the continuing role of the British was criticised by the Malayan commercial interests that were disadvantaged during the trade war with anticolonial Indonesia. British colonial authorities paid close attention to any sign of incipient nationalism in all three Borneo territories. They were, however, most wary of Indonesian influence on Brunei, the north-west Borneo protectorate with the highest-producing oilfields in the British Commonwealth – vital as a source of American dollars for the postwar British economy. The most active political leader in Brunei in the early 1950s was a charismatic figure who had just returned from Indonesia, where he had joined the nationalist struggle for independence – A.M. Azahari.

In introducing Brunei, new depths of British involvement are explored, such as in the 1950 crisis of succession in Brunei when Sultan Tajuddin died suddenly in Singapore. The sultan had intended to renegotiate the oil royalty agreement in London by threatening to introduce American oil interests into Brunei, a prospect the Colonial Office would have viewed with the utmost concern. The high commissioner of Sarawak, whose area of responsibility also covered Brunei, was greatly influenced in his assessment of Azahari by the British Malayan Petroleum (BMP) intelligence network. As the influence of the oil company seemed to permeate the Colonial Office bureaucracy, the influence of Azahari spread throughout the population of Brunei. In 1956 Azahari established a political party, the *Partai Ra'ayat Brunei* (PRB).

Colonial Office documentation (from the archives in Kew, London) establishes the origin of the federation concept by which the Borneo territories as individual states joined with Singapore and Malaya. Although this plan existed in 1953, an alternative merger for the Borneo states was proposed five years later. In 1958, the Colonial Office floated the idea of merging North Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak into one unit. This was assured of failure, however, because the sultan of Brunei would never have agreed to the serious diminution of his status

incorporated in the proposal. Why was such a proposal made? The main political goal of the PRB involved a similar merger of the Borneo states, so Azahari predictably supported the British plan. Thus the political effect of the proposal tended to separate Azahari and the sultan. At the same time, the political goal of the main political party of the Sarawak Chinese, also in favour of such a merger, seemed to be in parallel with the PRB. The 1958 merger proposal for the three Borneo territories may be interpreted as the implementation of a joint decision, reached in August 1957 by British intelligence and the Colonial Office hierarchy, to undermine the political support which Azahari enjoyed in Brunei. As well, the implications of the parallel political aims of Azahari and the Sarawak Chinese, both of whom wanted independence for the Borneo territories, provided an important political milestone in the genesis of *Konfrontasi*.

Relations between Indonesia and Britain were further strained by the Outer Islands Rebellion in 1958. While the Indonesian dispute over sovereignty of Netherlands New Guinea was also a dominant issue in the region at this time and in the following five years, British involvement remained peripheral to most of the international political lobbying. Despite the apparent British acquiescence to American intervention in the dispute, the territorial annexation of West New Guinea created a precedent that coloured the British perception of Indonesian ambitions in Borneo. On the other hand, the proximity of the 1958 rebellion in Sumatra left British colonial authorities no alternative but to become entangled in Indonesian affairs, particularly after the Sumatran rebels established a centre in Singapore. This incurred the wrath of the central government in Jakarta. Indonesian hostility to the Chinese tended to crystallise during the 1958 rebellion, not only because of the role of Singapore, but also because some prominent Chinese editors in Java publicly sided with the Sumatran secessionists. With the failure of the rebellion and the consequent political ascendancy of the Indonesian army, retribution was sought from the rebels in particular, and from the Chinese in general. Dr Subandrio, the Indonesian Foreign Minister who rose to international prominence during the Netherlands New Guinea dispute, displayed an uncompromising nationalism against the Chinese, resulting in repatriation for many thousands.

In the international arena, however, Indonesia ultimately sought reconciliation with the People's Republic of China. This gained the support of China in the Indonesian quest for Netherlands New Guinea.

Sukarno, however, sought support also for his concept of the New Emerging Forces, outside the context of the non-aligned movement, which involved a more direct East-West bifurcation. China remained a wild-card in the atomic detente between Moscow and Washington. Sukarno's international image as spokesman for the 'new emerging forces' attempted to bypass the Cold War and concentrate on anti-colonialism. The principles espoused by Sukarno were put to the test with the Brunei revolt. Interpreting events in Brunei and Sarawak in December 1962 and early 1963 as the voice of anticolonialism, Sukarno gave tentative moral support. Closer scrutiny of the situation in Brunei before the revolt, however, reveals how British authorities blocked avenues of democratic reform in expectation of the PRB responding with violence.

Because the Brunei revolt proved ultimately to be decisive also for Indonesia, a closer look is taken at the way the Colonial Office rebuffed Azahari's proposed reforms in Brunei. In preparing a constitution for Brunei, the Colonial Office refused to countenance the possibility that the ruling body in Brunei, the Legislative Council, comprise a majority of elected members. Azahari sought the professional assistance of a constitutional lawyer from London to help draft a submission to the Colonial Office. However, acting on advice which often seems to have originated from BMP, or at least the oil company intelligence network, the Colonial Office rejected any such compromise.

The only change in the determination of British intelligence to oust Sukarno from political prominence in South-East Asia was that, in the early 1960s, they were joined by like-minded elements from American intelligence – against the directives and policy of the newly-elected President Kennedy. A timely and opportunistic territorial claim to North Borneo made by the Philippines in 1962 introduces this American influence. A Filipino lawyer, Nicasio Osmena, promoted this dispute so that the Philippine government took up the case of the descendants of the sultan of Sulu as claimants against the British Crown. The nub of the dispute, while largely superfluous to this study in the historicity of its legal argument, provided Osmena with the opportunity to suggest a tantalising political deal to Azahari. With the apparent backing of the government in Manila, Osmena offered support for the Kalimantan Utara proposal. In the event of a successful federation of the three British territories, Manila would forgo the claim to the territory of North Borneo and assist Azahari to present his independence proposal at the United Nations. Clearly, this was an agreement

that, in retrospect, must have exerted significant influence on the decision to stage the Brunei rebellion. On what grounds did the British claim this revolt was inspired by Indonesia?

Dormant since the Indonesian struggle for independence, the ties between Azahari and Jakarta were revived in the early 1960s. The British feigned disapproval of this reunion, yet had a hand in bringing it about. The Brunei revolt in December 1962 led to the exodus of left-wing Chinese refugees from Sarawak to West Kalimantan. These refugees had previously met with William Andreas Brown, who not only primed their anticolonialism, but also arranged for them to be armed by the CIA. As refugees, they served to galvanise Indonesian anticolonialism. Foremost in arranging acceptance of these refugees, the Indonesian political party, Partindo, also initiated the campaign in opposition to the planned Federation of Malaysia. In pre-empting even the PKI response to Malaysia, Partindo was spurred on by the advice of one of its leading members, Iskandar Kamel, formerly Ibrahim Ya'acob, a prominent anticolonial leader from Malaya who had fled to Jakarta at the end of World War II. The role of Indonesian Foreign Minister Subandrio prior to the Brunei revolt also warrants close scrutiny; so too the duplicity of British intelligence, which maintained the pretence – right up to the outbreak of the Brunei rebellion – that it was unexpected. This pretence was crucial: had the prior involvement of British intelligence been apprised at the time of the rebellion, the Indonesian response which led to *Konfrontasi*, in turn 'facilitating' the formation of Malaysia, may well have been less precipitate.

Notes

1. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi – The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966*, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1974, p. 11.
2. Peter Edwards, with Gregory Pemberton, *Crises and Commitments – The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948-1965* (The Official History), Allen & Unwin with the Australian War Memorial, Commonwealth of Australia, 1992, p. 258.
3. On 17 August 1964, forty Indonesians were involved in seaborne landings at Pontian, north of Johore Strait, and on the night of 1 to 2 September about 100 Indonesian paratroops landed at Labis, in Johore. Mackie, pp. 259-60.
4. Australian troops also were involved in 1965. David Horner (ed.), *Duty First – The Royal Australian Regiment in War and Peace*, Allen & Unwin,

- Sydney, 1990. See Chapter 7, 'Confrontation: Malaysia and Borneo, 1960-1966', pp. 148-77.
5. Mackie, p. 263.
 6. Tom Schonenberger, 'The British Withdrawal from Singapore and Malaysia: Influence of the Labour Party on the Decision', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1981, p. 118.
 7. Tam Dalyell in the House of Commons, quoted in Schonenberger, p. 118.
 8. Guy J. Pauker, 'Indonesia: Internal Development or External Expansion?' *Asian Survey*, February 1963, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 69-75. Pauker was a Rand Corporation Indonesia-analyst linked with the CIA. He wrote: 'I was indeed the first Western scholar to study the role of the TNI [Indonesian army, *Tentara Nasional Indonesia*] in the political and economic life of Indonesia and one of the very few who saw in the mid-1950s the major future role the military were to play.' Pers. comm., 7 January 1992, up to 1996.
 9. *New York Reporter*, 4 June 1964, cited in Norman Harper, *A Great and Powerful Friend - a study of Australian-American Relations Between 1900 and 1975*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1987, p. 309. Hamilton Fish Armstrong was a lifelong friend and confidante of Allen Welsh Dulles, director of the CIA in the 1950s and early 1960s. See Peter Grose, *Gentleman Spy - the Life of Allen Dulles*, Andre Deutsch, London, 1995.
 10. Frederick Bunnell, 'Guided Democracy Foreign Policy: 1960-65', *Indonesia*, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, no. 2, October 1966, p. 43.
 11. *Ibid.*, pp. 58-9.
 12. For a cross-section of Indonesian, Malaysian and other publications or studies, see: Department of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia, *The Malaysia Issue - Background and Documents*, Djakarta, (1964?); Government of Republic of Indonesia, *Why Indonesia Opposes British-Made 'Malaysia'*, Djakarta, 1964; Kusumah Hadimigrat, *Sedjarah Operasi 2 Gabungan Dalam Rangka Dierkora*, Departemen Pertahanan Keamanan Pusat Sedjarah ABR1, 1971; Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, *Twenty Years Indonesian Foreign Policy 1945-1965*, Mouton, The Hague, 1973; Dr A.H. Nasution, *Memenuhi Panggilan Tugas*, Jilad 6, Gunung Agung, Jakarta, 1987; Government of Malaysia, *Background to Indonesia's Policy Towards Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur, 1964; Willard A. Hanna, *The Formation of Malaysia*, AUIFS, New York, 1964; Jan M. Pluyter, *Confrontations - A Study In Indonesian Politics*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1965; Bernard K. Gordon, *The Dimensions of Conflict in Southeast Asia*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1966; Michael

- Liefer, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1983;
- Lee Kwang Foo, *The United States and the Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute, 1963-1965: An American Response to a Regional Conflict*, MA thesis, Cornell, 1980; Frederick Bunnell, *The Kennedy Initiatives in Indonesia, 1962-1963*, PhD thesis, Cornell, 1969.
13. T.K. Critchley, interviewed in North Sydney, 9 July 1990. Critchley had a special rapport with Indonesian leaders for his role in helping to bring the 1945-49 struggle for independence before the United Nations.
 14. Mackie, p. 122.
 15. C.M. Turnbull, 'Regionalism and Nationalism', in Nicholas Tarling (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*, vol. 2, Cambridge University Press, p. 612.
 16. The extended personal interview with Azahari, in Bogor, was conducted between 6 January and 26 April 1991. For all other times when I interviewed Azahari, specific dates are given. Other interviews were held later in the year when several points were reconfirmed; and earlier, in 1990, when the main interview was first arranged. As such, these other meetings are distinguishable from the main 1991 interview. I last spoke with Azahari in October 1996.
 17. *Straits Times*, 15 December 1962.
 18. See Donald Hindley, 'Indonesia's Confrontation With Malaysia: A Search For Motives', *Asian Survey*, vol. 4, June 1964, pp. 904-13; Pluvier, pp. 65-85.
 19. Subandrio's parents belonged to the aristocratic *priyayi* class; in 1950, he was appointed ambassador to the United Kingdom, and in 1954 to the Soviet Union; in 1957, he became Foreign Minister and in 1960 took over the Indonesian central intelligence (BPI - *Badan Pusat Intelijen*); by 1965, Subandrio was 'Sukarno's heir apparent'. See Justus M. van der Kroef, 'Sukarno and the Self-made Myth', *World Review*, July 1965, p. 30; Michael van Langenberg, 'Dr Subandrio - an assessment', *Australian Quarterly*, vol. XXXVIII, no. 4, Dec. 1966, pp. 67-80; Eduard Quiko, *The Role of Foreign Minister Subandrio in Indonesian politics: An Analysis of Selected Foreign Policies, 1957-1965*, PhD thesis, Southern Illinois University, 1970.
 20. See Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, 'The Advocacy of Malaysia - before 1961', *Modern Asian Studies*, 7,4 (1973) pp. 717-32; and the main work by Sopiee, *From Malayan Union to Singaporean Separation: Political Unification in the Malaysia Region 1945-65*, Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1974.
 21. Public Record Office, Kew, Colonial Office (CO) 1030 578 79/2/02.

22. Roy Henry. Interviewed at the Royal Commonwealth Society, London, 15 August 1991.
23. Ralph Selby. Interviewed on Hayling Island, UK, 2 June 1991.
24. Sir Andrew Gilchrist, KCMG, Arthur's Crag, Hazelbank by Larack, United Kingdom. Pers. comm., 31 October 1992.
25. Fry to MacDermott, FO 371 152433 DH 1015/37.
26. The suggestion by Mackie that Azahari harboured pan-Indonesian visions is refuted; it was not referenced, and is best explained as innuendo. See Mackie, p. 23.
27. Bernard K. Gordon, *The Dimensions of Conflict in Southeast Asia*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1966, p. 68.
28. Richard Robison, *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital*, Asian Studies Association of Australia, Canberra, 1986, p. 97.
29. Mackie, p. 89.
30. Idr Anak Agung Gde Agung, *Twenty Years Indonesian Foreign Policy 1945-1965*, Mouton, The Hague, 1973, p. 458.

REVOLUTION ACROSS THE STRAITS

To survive World War II, Britain, the pre-eminent colonial power, joined in a Grand Alliance with the United States and the Soviet Union. In the triumvirate with Churchill, both Roosevelt and Stalin professed anticolonialism as a tenet of their respective ideologies, although, when Soviet power loomed large at the end of the war, Sir Winston Churchill was instrumental in reshaping the alliance in favour of a 'fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples'.¹ Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech was delivered on 5 March 1946. The new US president, Truman, introduced him to the audience at Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri. Deferring to his American hosts, who now were 'at the pinnacle of world power', Churchill referred to himself as a 'private visitor'.² Yet the influence he wielded on Anglo-American relations was timely, for Britain was fighting to survive the peace.

Churchill recognised that the postwar centre of power was in Washington.³ In respect of the European colonial territories in South-East Asia, where American wartime expenditure far exceeded that of its allies, the United States had become a powerbroker between nationalists and colonialists: on the one hand, ideologically disparate forces of nationalism; and on the other, European colonial powers attempting to reassert their former prerogative. At stake were the colonies of the French, the Portuguese in East Timor,⁴ the Dutch in the Netherlands East Indies, and the British in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaya, Borneo and Burma. The Philippines, although having had to 'peg the peso to the [American] dollar ... and provide American forces with bases',⁵ became the first beneficiary of the Atlantic Charter. This joint Anglo-American declaration, a preamble and eight points, was signed by Churchill and Roosevelt after their first wartime conference, which took place between 9 and 12 August 1941, at anchor off Newfoundland. It denounced territorial changes 'that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned'; affirmed 'the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live'; and favoured 'the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field', with equal access to trade and raw materials for

all nations.' The charter was not formally signed, yet its effect (according to Robert Sherwood, the historian of the first Roosevelt-Churchill summit) was 'cosmic and historic'.⁷

When British troops, accompanied by a token Dutch force, arrived in Indonesia to supervise the surrender of the Japanese, there were slogans emblazoned on the sides of buildings which equated the charter and *merdeka*. Their demands for 'Freedom from Dutch Imperialism' were echoed in Malaya, with the Malay Nationalist Party (MNP) seeking freedom from the British. In Malaya, a colonial presence began more than a century before World War II, while in the Netherlands East Indies the European inroads had begun early in the 17th century. An important exception in the sweeping time-scale of Dutch colonial rule was the portion of the Indies across the Straits of Malacca from Malaya – East Sumatra. Because colonisation did not begin here until the 1860s, traditional Indonesian-Malay ties remained strong. Such was the trade between East Sumatra and the Malayan peninsula that it resulted in a dual currency, the British Straits dollar remaining as common a currency as the Indies guilder until 1910.⁸ Contrary to the spirit if not the words of the charter, Britain remained intent on reclaiming most of the 1500-kilometre-long Malay peninsula by recolonising Malaya and Singapore; likewise, the Netherlands had no intention of relinquishing the adjoining 5000-kilometre-wide archipelago with its 60 million people,⁹ ten times the population of Malaya.

As early as mid-1942, when Roosevelt indicated that the old situation in Malaya 'could not possibly be restored',¹⁰ Britain was aware that the American anti-imperialist stance was stiffening. As well, the Colonial Office learned that American planners 'would certainly feel "cheated" if peace resulted in the restoration of the *status quo ante* in Malaya'.¹¹ Churchill's domestic response, that he did not become the king's First Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire,¹² drew on the twin wellsprings of patriotism – king and country.

By February 1943, American interest was evident in the rubber industry of the Indies and Malaya, which comprised nearly 80 per cent of prewar world production.¹³ Prefiguring their postwar role, the Americans were already pressing the British regarding the rehabilitation of the rubber industry in the Far East, an enquiry which prompted the War Office to initiate postwar planning for Malaya.¹⁴ By 1944, as British awareness of its 'financial dependence upon the United States grew more oppressive, the fear increased that Washington would demand colonial changes as the price of continued economic assistance'.¹⁵

Even as the Allies were accepting the official Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay, friction developed between American and British commercial interests in Burma. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) stated that:

Experienced American businessmen in India and other responsible observers believe that the current system of British business controls in Burma is resulting in very definite discrimination in favour of a few British firms who had substantial interests there before the war.

An unfastening of the colonial hold in Burma, and in India, met with American approval, reducing Anglo-American rivalry, but this was not the case with the French and Dutch. When President Roosevelt in 1942 expressed sympathy for China's great power aspirations in the Far East, he proposed a trusteeship over Indo-China which was accepted by Chiang Kai-shek, openly displaying American intentions to thwart French ambitions.²⁰ In the Indies, Indonesian nationalists first proclaimed independence – the historic *Proklamasi* – on 17 August 1945, two days after the war ended. The preamble to the Indonesian constitution was redolent with defiance and anticolonial sentiment not unfamiliar to Americans:

Since independence is the right of every nation, any colonial system in this world is contrary to humanity and justice and must therefore be abolished.²¹

The final years of the war had bled the British economy. Meanwhile, the United States transformed the 1939 federal budget of \$9 billion into \$166 billion by 1945.²² Under the banner of anticolonialism, American economic power was brought to bear on Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies. In September 1945, the OSS, forerunner of the CIA,²³ raised the question in the State Department whether the Netherlands had any future as a colonial power.²⁴ The debilitating effect of war accentuated American economic superiority. Postwar reconstruction in Europe and recolonisation, without American economic assistance, posed an insurmountable cost. In this light, the Fulton speech – in addition to stressing the threat of communism and thereby diverting for a time the full force of American anticolonialism²⁵ – was an important fillip in mustering American approval in mid-1946 for a postwar loan. On the subject of the loan, Yergin commented:

It was intended to help Britain pay for necessary imports in the face of an immense, war-aggravated balance-of-payments crisis ... For a

\$3.75 billion loan, the Americans exacted major concessions, the effect of which was to subordinate Britain to an American-dominated international economic order.¹⁷

As revolution engulfed Indonesia at the end of World War II, so too did it threaten Malaya. The Dutch were confronted in the Indies by nationalist revolution, and in 1949 confronted in the Netherlands by an American threat to withdraw reconstruction aid. The outcome was that the Netherlands relinquished its colonial sovereignty to Indonesia.¹⁸ So dependent was the Netherlands on United States economic and military aid to reclaim colonial control of the Indies that the outcome of the Indonesian revolution, as it eventuated, was hinged on American anticolonialism. The revolution which threatened Malaya, in 1945–46, had its origin in a coalescence of ideology and race, an amalgam of Indo-Malayan *merdeka* as issued by the MNP and its Indonesian political counterpart. The Indonesian component comprised a significant numerical portion of the Indonesian revolutionary youth, the *penuda*, and was led by one of the most prominent Indonesian revolutionaries of that time, Tan Malaka.¹⁹ The geographical point of contagion was East Sumatra, Tan Malaka's home territory, separated from Malaya and Singapore where the Straits of Malacca are their narrowest. Tan Malaka returned after twenty years in exile, having been politically active during that time in the Netherlands, Berlin, Moscow, Canton, Manila, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Shanghai and Singapore. Incognito, he crossed to East Sumatra in the first year of the Japanese occupation of Indonesia.²⁰

Neither the Netherlands nor Britain were prepared for revolution in Indonesia. Though the British became embroiled in the struggle to establish the Indonesian republic, they were able to prevent the spread of revolution to Malaya. British postwar policy in the Far East, it should be stressed, centred on Malaya as 'one of the richest and most vital producing areas of the world'.²¹ As well, the Brunei oilfields became the most readily available means of earning American dollars in the reconstruction era. Had independence for Indonesia occurred before the British postwar custodial role there had ended, British status would have suffered accordingly, and its future as a colonial power in South-East Asia would have been short-lived. The US State Department stressed these political implications, as shown in a report in November 1945:

The British are concerned over the situation in Indonesia not only because of its intrinsic difficulty but also because of its probable repercussions in other parts of Asia, including British possessions ...²²

Britain in 1945-46 necessarily reassessed its stance in Malaya and its presence in Indonesia through dual lenses, cognisant of the regional repercussions and of the international significance in the field of Anglo-American relations. In Northedge's assessment of British foreign policy after the war, it should be recalled that recolonisation remained a thorny issue:

By far the greatest issue in Anglo-American relations was the conflict between British imperialism and American ideals of self-determination ... At the end of the war it seemed as though the dis-establishment of the British Empire was the first object of American policy ... At the Yalta conference in February 1945, Roosevelt evoked some of Churchill's strongest indignation by his demand to convert the Empire into international trusteeships.⁷

The political intricacies of the inherent threat in early 1946, created by the links between Indonesia and Malaya, have not been fully explored by specialists on Indonesia or Malaya because, all too often, the subject has been delimited by colonial boundaries. In Borneo, along the contiguous land-border between Indonesian and British territory, there was strong ethnic and cultural affiliation. But spanning the Malacca Straits between the Malay peninsula and East Sumatra, in addition to racial and cultural bonds, there was an expressed willingness to share the Indonesian revolution. This revolutionary bonding and the threat it created for the British reached a climax in early 1946, when recolonisation of Malaya was already problematic. Nevertheless, as a result of deft action in East Sumatra, the British gained sufficient leeway and political leverage in Malaya to avoid the ignominy that the Netherlands faced when its colonial tenure was lost in revolution, then prised from its grasp by American economic pressure.

The Malay link

At the end of World War II, there was an essential difference between the Indonesian polity and its Malayan counterpart. In Indonesia, the Japanese occupation bequeathed a revolutionary nationalist movement with tumultuous popular support; in Malaya, the wartime occupation and resistance had taken another course, determined largely by demographic differences and the enmity between Japanese and Chinese.

In demographic terms, Chinese in Malaya in 1945 comprised a far higher proportion of the population than Chinese in Indonesia, in

the order of 38 per cent⁵⁷ compared to 2 per cent.⁵⁸ Local resistance to the Japanese in wartime Malaya and Borneo was conducted mainly by Chinese, with Malay and British participation limited to exceptional individuals.⁵⁹ On the other hand, those who collaborated with the Japanese included radical nationalist Malays, some of whom had been arrested by the British before the war. Sukarno and many prominent Indonesian nationalists who had suffered under the Dutch similarly collaborated out of necessity. In Malaya the anti-British component of nationalist ideology lacked political bonding with the Chinese inhabitants. Consequently, the MNP was deprived of Chinese support immediately after the war, when it was most crucial to form a united anticolonial front. This situation was not addressed by the MNP until late 1946,⁶⁰ by which time Anglo-American relations and Malayan political priorities were clarified, favouring the British rather than the MNP.

Apart from the Chinese, in late 1945 there was still insufficient popular support from within the Malay community for the MNP to generate a revolutionary movement. Malays comprised slightly more than half the population in the peninsula but, unlike Indonesia, there was no spontaneous support for the anticolonial, radical MNP. The MNP failed to cement their anticolonial call to the framework of traditional Malay society by the end of 1945, and the British military administration exploited this failure by driving a wedge between the radical and traditional Malays before the civil administration began in April 1946. By late 1946 the British had ensured that Malay support which might otherwise have benefited the MNP was instead turned against them. British military-intelligence activity in East Sumatra ensured that the Indonesian revolution, which would have more than compensated for any shortfall in domestic support for the MNP, did not spread to Malaya. The majority of Malaysians adhered to the traditional loyalty between the Malay sultan and his subjects, as in prewar days, when this social fabric was utilised by the British administration, as it was by the Dutch with its equivalent in Indonesia. In Java, however, which was the crucible of the Indonesian revolution to establish a republic, nationalist leaders secured the support of the four rulers of the central Javanese principalities.⁶¹ The sultan of Jogjakarta was the most notable. Balinese rajas and the king of South Sulawesi also proffered support for the republic, but many sultans and traditional rulers in the outer islands – East Sumatra in particular – were more readily susceptible to the stronger Dutch presence there, and so were prone to vacillate.

While the Indonesian republican leaders at the time of the *Proklamasi*, Sukarno and Hatta, and the new leader in November 1945, Sutan Sjahrir, did not propose to spread the revolution to Malaya, another political luminary – Tan Malaka – did. Born in Minangkabau and trained as a teacher in Sumatra, Tan Malaka was in the Netherlands during World War I and also at the time of the Russian Revolution. When he returned to the Indies, he became a leading figure in the *Partai Komunis Indonesia*, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), within a year after he joined in 1921. The following year, his arrest by the Dutch colonial authorities was the start of two decades of political exile. During the Indonesian revolution, however, Tan Malaka's followers (termed 'national communists') remained distinct from the PKI, with one important exception, East Sumatra, where a united front was formed in February 1946. The PKI became a potent force at a later stage of the revolution. By mid-November 1945, the leaders of the three main political groups in Indonesia were Sukarno and Hatta, Sutan Sjahrir, and Tan Malaka; and the three political fronts of the newly declared Republic of Indonesia were supported by half a dozen large, but irregular, armed organisations.⁷

The largest of these was the *Laskar Rakjat* (People's Army), while three other main ones were the *Pesindo* (Indonesian Socialist Youth), the Moslem contingent of *Hezbollahi*, and the Japanese-sponsored *Barisan Pelopor* (Pioneer Legion), which became exclusively attached to Tan Malaka. His was one of the largest Indonesian factions politically and militarily opposing recolonisation. Calling for monolithic political solidarity in early January 1946, Tan Malaka formed *Persatuan Perjuangan*, or the United Action group. In the opinion of George Kahin, who was then a young American observer in Java, this political organisation was designed to 'compete with and ultimately supplant the existing government as the leader of the Indonesian revolution':⁸ despite Tan Malaka's plea that to attain freedom all Indonesians must struggle as one, and that they be the 'widest possible national support behind the government rather than opposed to it'.⁹ Tan Malaka's claim to leadership of the revolution was strong and his adamant refusal to negotiate with any colonial power received widespread popular support. 'We are not willing to negotiate with a thief in our house,' he declared.¹⁰

For the British in Malaya, and still at this time in a custodial role in Indonesia, Tan Malaka was a threat not only because his anticolonial ideology was uncompromising, but also because he espoused a unified

Indonesia and Malaya.⁴⁰ The radical MNP, having seized the political initiative in Malaya after the Japanese surrender, idealised the same goal of Malay-Indonesian unity to eradicate colonial influence. Beyond an independent Indonesian state, Tan Malaka envisioned a new state embracing all of South Asia; this he termed Asia,⁴¹ a word he coined from Asia and Australia. An intelligence assessment by the US State Department forecast that the proposed union with Malaya and Singapore would be merely the first step.⁴² Such expansionist nationalism, espoused by Tan Malaka in the early stages of the Indonesian revolution, impinged not only on British postwar policy in Malaya, but also on the British role in Indonesia in 1945-46.

The ethnic links between the peninsula and the archipelago were particularly significant. In Sumatra, where these links were strongest, they had most effect. Between Malaya and East Sumatra, contact was maintained through cultural and commercial ties and through the aristocratic lineage shared by both across the Malacca Straits. Malays populated the coastal lowlands of East Sumatra except in the northern extremity, Aceh. A Malay Muslim population extended from the fertile coastal plain in the north to the formidable swamps in the south. Islam had first occupied this region centuries earlier. The Malay sultanates were characterised by a feudal style of government both before and during the colonial period, which, in East Sumatra, began in the ten-year period 1860 to 1870 with the arrival of Europeans, some planting tobacco and others Christianity. In 1884, a tobacco-plantation manager, A.J. Zijlker, discovered oil in Langkat, 70 kilometres north-west of Medan. This discovery was the basis on which Standard's greatest rival oil company, the Royal Dutch, was founded in 1890.⁴³ Royal Dutch merged with the British Shell company in 1907 and formed the BPM subsidiary, *Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij* – Batavian Petroleum Corporation. In the 1930s, the sultans were ensconced within the Dutch colonial plantation economy but, outnumbering the Malays, the largest single ethnic group in East Sumatra were Javanese who had been introduced to replace Chinese as plantation labourers.⁴⁴ The four main sultanates were Langkat, Deli, Serdang and Asahan. Under each sultan was a court bureaucracy and a ruling structure of local chieftains – the *rajas*, *tengkus*, *datuks* and *orangkayas*. This elite was known as the *kerajaan* and 'all were related to one or other of the Malay ruling families across the Malacca Straits'.⁴⁵

As well, there was a wider ethnic link shared by Malaya and Indonesia, voiced as pan-Malay sentiment, in which the Philippines too

had an integral part. Tan Malaka espoused revolutionary unification of this region, as he had done for the previous two decades.⁴⁵

According to an article in the *Philippines Free Press* of 10 September, in 1927 Tan Malaka was advocating a pan-Malayan confederation with Davao in Mindanao as the capital.⁴⁶

The historical roots of this pan-Malay movement, with its incipient anticolonialism, began in the 19th century, and the Filipino nationalist, Dr Rizal, was an early proponent, yet one who (in Tan Malaka's opinion) 'remained an intellectual in relative isolation from the masses'.⁴⁸ As Brackman has stated:

Rizal ... envisioned a union of the peoples of Malay origin comprising Borneo, the East Indies, Malaya, and the Philippines. In the 1930's, the slogan 'Malaya Irredenta' was adopted by the Young Philippines, a nationalist student organization.⁴⁹

This group drew attention to the geographical extent of former Malay civilisation with the example of Madagascar, which was a Malay kingdom before being annexed by France. Also during that decade before World War II, Muhammad Yamin in Indonesia idealised a Greater Indonesia, or Indonesia Raya, while in Malaya a similar concept was promoted by Ibrahim Ya'acob. Both Yamin and Ya'acob, who was an MNP figure, wielded indirect but significant influence on postwar British policy, and their influence continued into the 1960s.

Yamin, a lawyer from Padang, West Sumatra, was an *enfant terrible* of the prewar radical nationalist movement. He was a rarity among Indonesians in that his oratorical powers were comparable to Sukarno. Although he started his political career by aligning his fervent nationalism with the PKI, he joined the moderate party, Parindra, after the 1926 suppression of the PKI when a rebellion against the government of the Netherlands East Indies miscarried. The Indies government had forewarning of this planned rebellion, for which Tan Malaka and other leaders already in exile in Singapore never gave their approval.⁵⁰ The early arrest of some ringleaders compounded a lack of coordination, so the rebellion was easily suppressed. More than 17 000 persons were arrested and gaoled, and 1200 radical nationalists and communists were exiled to Boven Digul, Netherlands New Guinea. An intelligence briefing on the 1926 uprising (prepared for the US Department of State in 1945) noted:

The PKI were effectively smashed, although some of its leaders including Tan Malaka, Alimmi and Muso escaped arrest because they were not in

Indonesia at the time of the rebellion. There are indications that the decision to take action at this time was prompted by the interception of information that the Netherlands East Indies government was about to suppress the PKI. Following the failure of the 1926 rebellion, Communist activities, directed from Singapore, continued underground in Indonesia.⁴

Yamin's radicalism increased in the 1930s. In July 1939 he founded another party, Parpindo (*Partai Persatuan Indonesia* – Party of Indonesia-Union). In the People's Council, *Volksraad*, which had advisory powers only, Yamin occupied the party's one elected seat. During the war, he was employed by the Japanese as a propagandist and was part of the Indonesian committee that prepared the national constitution. At the Fourth Congress of the *Persatuan Perjuangan*, at Madiun in March 1946, Yamin and Tan Malaka were the two main speakers.⁵

Ya'acob, from Pahang, Malaya, was a founder in 1938 of the first radical Malay nationalist party, the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* – Union of Malay Youth (KMM). The anticolonial creed of the KMM gained fervent support among the more politicised Malays in Singapore. As well, significant support came from Indonesians, among whom were refugees from the 1926 uprising. These included many *hajjis* whose religious affiliation with Malay Muslims reinforced the political bridge created by their *lingua franca*. The language of Indonesia and Malaya, coming from the same source, was interchangeable, and so led to a 'fraternal association' of Malay-speaking peoples capable of transcending colonial boundaries. The language engendered a sense of cultural and geographical cohesion between Indonesia and Malaya, particularly among students at the Sultan Idris Training College, at Tanjung Malim, where Ya'acob was trained, subsequently pursuing stronger measures of anticolonialism. Ya'acob fervently supported and joined Sukarno's Indonesia National Party (PNI).⁶ Later, the KMM adopted a militant Malay nationalism which promised:

political salvation for the Malays by means of expulsion of the British and the union of Malaya with a yet to be formed independent Indonesia. Immigrants from Indonesia were attracted to the KMM and they contributed to its radical and revolutionary flavour.⁷

As the KMM leader and editor of the radical nationalist paper *Warta Melayu*, Ya'acob was arrested in 1940 by the British. Only after the fall of Singapore was he released. Under the Japanese, he led a volunteer military force (PETA), which had its counterparts in both Java and

Sumatra; in the closing stages of the war he also led a Malay nationalist movement (KRIS),⁵⁷ whose political aim was the linking of Malaya and Indonesia. A corresponding group (BPKI)⁵⁸ in Indonesia had approved the formation of a Greater Indonesia, as suggested by the Japanese. At Taiping, near Kuala Kangsar in Perak, Ya'acob met BPKI leaders, including Sukarno and Hatta, only days before the end of the war that had brought such plans to an unexpected halt. Ya'acob and his wife emigrated immediately to Jakarta.⁵⁹

The Japanese occupation and after

The Japanese arrived in 1942 with the aura of liberators but the occupation soon changed this. Millions of Indonesians became involuntary labourers, known as *romusha*. From among the personnel of the former colonial power, the Japanese retained a large number of semi-officials and planters in advisory functions; in North Sumatra, where the local rulers under the Dutch administration were deposed prior to the Dutch surrender in March 1942, the Japanese reinstalled them.⁶⁰

Wartime links between Sumatra and Malaya highlighted the possibility of armed forces crossing the Malacca Straits. The two were jointly administered from Singapore by the Japanese 25th Army up to May 1943. But the threat of Allied counterattack forced a change in the administration in Malaya, and new headquarters were established in Central Sumatra at Bukittinggi, 2000 metres above the coastline of the Indian Ocean. The Japanese in Sumatra recruited a special task force against the predominantly Chinese guerrilla movement in Malaya, and in charge of it placed Xarim M.S., a political leader from 1926 who had spent six years in exile. Duplicating the role of Ya'acob in Malaya, under Japanese auspices, Xarim recruited for the military auxiliary force in Sumatra (known by its Japanese term, *Giyungan*).⁶¹ In early 1945, an additional unit was formed numbering 50,000 men, 'aimed at countering pro-Allied activity – particularly the Sumatran contacts being made by Malayan and Chinese guerrillas in preparation for eventual Allied landings'.⁶²

The harassment of the Japanese army of occupation in Malaya was carried out by predominantly Chinese resistance forces called the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). There was a strong communist influence in its ranks. Partly in recognition of the MPAJA war effort, but mindful also that friendly postwar relations with China would be beneficial to Malaya,⁶³ the Colonial Office promoted a pluralist

policy for postwar Malaya. It formulated a concept called the Malayan Union, in which Malays, Chinese and Indians would have equality of citizenship. According to figures in 1941, which included Singapore, the numerical proportion of the population was 43 per cent Chinese, 41 per cent Malay and 14 per cent Indian.⁴² When this policy was formulated, the anticipated withdrawal of Japanese forces from China was expected to produce none other than Chiang Kai-shek as leader.⁴³ But immediately after the war, his Kuomintang (KMT) nationalist forces were so unpopular that without American support for the KMT, the victory of Mao Zedong's People's Liberation Army in 1949 undoubtedly would have come earlier.⁴⁴ In Malaya, where Chinese communists already had the upper hand over their KMT counterparts because of the MPAJA, the planned Malayan Union would have incorporated the Malay Communist Party (MCP) into the body politic. The political strategy behind this policy became more implausible with the diminishing prospect of a KMT government in China.

In Malaya, the pluralist ideal was short-lived. It was expendable in terms of future relations with China and became a necessary sacrifice in the British strategy to dictate the political agenda in Malaya. The British postwar colonial presence depended on delimiting, or eliminating, the MNP and its anticolonial creed. The solution lay within the bulk of the Malay community, which was still politically inactive. This was the mass support which the MNP failed to mobilise. Instead, they became part of another political movement, which was formed to voice public opposition to the union concept. The divestiture of powers traditionally held by the sultans, for which Sir Harold MacMichael initially secured agreement, was a political prerequisite before the formation of the Malayan Union. Subsequently, however, the signing over of their traditional power to form a union that might well be dominated by Chinese brought a storm of Malay objection. But the protesting was actually in the hands of pro-British, conservative Malays. The British utilised the traditionalism of the Malay polity. The change away from left-wing nationalist agitation came about as a result of the British tactics of 'animating Malay patriotism', so described by Francis Stuart,⁴⁵ who from 1947 to 1950 was the Australian government's representative on the Joint Intelligence Committee, Far East, based in Singapore. The alternative for the British in Malaya was to suffer the consequences of the radical nationalists increasing both their Malayan power base and their Indonesian links with Tan Malaka's revolutionary anticolonialism. In 1948 a more restrictive political format

but still with the essential unitary concept, replaced the union with the Federation of Malaya. According to Albert Lau:

The apparent British volte-face in accepting the more restrictive Federal Citizenship in 1948 surprised and disappointed many non-Malays and provoked a strong anti-Federation reaction from amongst sections of non-Malay opinion. The reasons for the change in policy are still largely not known.⁶⁶

The British postwar colonial presence in Malaya, and the changeover from a Malayan Union to a Malayan Federation, were greatly influenced by the Indonesian nationalist revolution. When the British were directly involved during 1945–46, Indonesia was extremely volatile. The republican forces were sorely tested by both the internal quest for leadership of the revolution and the external quest to repulse the colonial reoccupation. Because the peremptory challenge to Indonesian nationalism pursued by the Netherlands met with a violent revolutionary response, and because Indo-Malay ethnic divisions did not coincide with Anglo-Dutch colonial divisions – and both of these were factors promoting the rise of Tan Malaka – the revolution in the archipelago seemed likely to spread to the peninsula. In Sopheie's extended account of postwar politics in the region that became Malaysia, the links between Indonesia and Malaya at this time warranted a mention, but his focus on Malaya precluded further analysis:

The British Government was only too aware of the communal violence in India and of the violent challenge mounted by the Malay's kith and kin against the Dutch in neighbouring Indonesia. And the Colonial Office had been informed of the Malay vulnerability to being stirred up by Malaya's own Indonesia-orientated Malay politicians. Malaya could not be allowed to go the way of Indonesia.⁶⁷

The imposed colonial boundary along the Malacca Straits did not alter the traverse of local culture or the exchange of people and ideas, nor was it an impediment to the flow of revolutionary idealism from Indonesia to Malaya. In ethnic terms, many of the people who live on either side of the Malacca Straits are Malay. The proximity of Malaya and Sumatra created an historical conduit, not only longitudinal – up and down the famous Malacca Straits – but also transverse. Had Indonesian anticolonialism, harboured for centuries, crossed the narrow, watery division between archipelago and peninsula and taken hold, then Britain's tenuous postwar position in Malaya would have been

further jeopardised. The political upheaval in both Indonesia and Malaya during the year following the surrender of Japan was conducive to the spread of revolution, but London became aware of this only when the British postwar military presence in Indonesia was already enmeshed in the revolution.

The British underestimated what was in store for them in Indonesia, having been handed the task of reoccupation by the Americans as if it required no more than a brief administrative presence. Only weeks before the Japanese surrender, the Indies, of which all but Sumatra had been within General MacArthur's command, were transferred to Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten. In its entirety, the change of command included Indochina (south of 16°N), Java, Borneo and Celebes (Sulawesi). This added half a million square miles of land to the million square miles, and a further 80 million people to the 48 million already within Mountbatten's jurisdiction.¹⁶ From the British perspective, their presence in the archipelago was a temporary tidying-over for a neighbouring colonial power. Although President Roosevelt had obtained a promise from Queen Wilhelmina in 1943 (in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter) that 'the Indies would be granted dominion status with the right of self-rule',¹⁷ Britain accepted the commitment to uphold Netherlands sovereignty in the Indies. An historical precedent existed for this apparent magnanimity; during the Napoleonic era, Britain had previously returned the Indies to the Netherlands. The American offer to have British rather than American troops reoccupy the Indies was not made until the eve of the Japanese surrender but nevertheless seemed conciliatory in respect of colonial policy differences. The most notable voice in opposition to this last-minute change¹⁸ was the Netherlands East Indies deputy governor-general, Hubertus van Mook, who had been evacuated from Java and promoted to lieutenant governor-general of the Indies.¹⁹ Ostensibly, the British and the Americans agreed to the change so General MacArthur's forces would be available for the contemplated assault on Japan in November 1945.²⁰ However, Mountbatten's intelligence officer, David Wehl, has revealed that the planned assault had already been scrapped by the time Britain agreed to replace the Americans. Despite this, American troops were not redirected to assist Mountbatten.²¹ His South-East Asian Command became vast, his troops now numerically insufficient even to proceed adequately with his primary concern, Operation Zipper, the plan for an orderly reoccupation of Malaya and Singapore.²²

There was an undercurrent of suspicion in Anglo-American rela-

tions. Both Britain and America had ulterior motives in effecting a transfer. It was President Roosevelt's idea, according to a wartime confidante of the president, Averill Harriman, whose rationale for the transfer was that Roosevelt 'had no intention of letting the United States become involved on the wrong side of a colonial dispute'.⁷ But as a consequence of Roosevelt's untimely death, Truman brought the idea of the transfer to Churchill's attention at the first Potsdam Conference in mid-July 1945. It was obvious to both that if America proceeded with reoccupation of the Indies, and did not respect Dutch sovereignty, it would prejudice Anglo-American relations; and yet, when the Dutch-American agreement was respected, the anticolonial status of America would be prejudiced. At the second Potsdam Conference on 24 July, by which time Churchill was replaced by Attlee, agreement to the transfer proceeded without closer scrutiny. There is no evidence to suggest Roosevelt's initial idea of a transfer was to avoid revolution in Indonesia, although this eventuality may have been considered by others in the State Department or American intelligence.⁸ From the British point of view, the placement of their troops in Indonesia, despite the paucity of numbers, was preferable to an American presence whose accompanying anticolonialism would hinder British intentions of establishing a semblance of the prewar regional status quo. Acceptance of the transfer from the Americans was most likely swayed by concomitant advantages which the British anticipated for their reoccupation of Malaya.

One month after the Japanese surrender in Java, an OSS observer commented that the British Command regarded Indonesia as 'the most critical [operation] in the South East Asia theater'.⁹ Indonesian nationalists pressing for self-government were so strong that Mountbatten, his administration paralysed without their cooperation, was soon forced to ignore distant Dutch pleas and grant the Indonesian republic de facto recognition. The Dutch were distant because their home country was still in disarray after the Nazi occupation, and in Australia, where the Netherlands Indies Civil Administration (NICA) had sought wartime refuge, a seemingly interminable boycott of Dutch ships delayed their return.¹⁰ In any case, MacArthur had already claimed 80 per cent of the NICA fleet as part of wartime requisitions.¹¹ In the wartime tactic of 'island-hopping' by General MacArthur, the vaunted military aspect overshadowed the future political goals. Designated Supreme Commander of Allied Forces, MacArthur similarly delayed the arrival in Indonesia of Mountbatten's ships. From 15 August 1945

until 2 September, when MacArthur officially accepted the Japanese surrender aboard the USS *Missouri*, Mountbatten was expressly requested not to enter the Indies. MacArthur communicated this blunt request to Mountbatten, who was steaming from Ceylon to Singapore at the end of the war (supposedly to rendezvous with the NICA flotilla in Batavia). These delays, but particularly the restriction imposed on Mountbatten, contributed to the critical situation that confronted the British in Java. Ben Anderson, commenting on the Indonesian nationalist revolution that awaited them rather than the Americans, suggested that 'American Intelligence apparently had a shrewder inkling of the real situation' and cited an OSS report (dated 13 August 1945) to prove his point. The nationalist politicians, it said:

might conceivably consider the crucial period between actual Japanese surrender to the Allies and the firm re-establishment of the Netherlands East Indies administration as their only precious chance to gain a strong bargaining position in relation to the government.⁶⁰

P.S. Gerbrandy, the wartime prime minister of the Netherlands, considered the delay vital,⁶¹ as did Mountbatten.⁶² First-hand reports of a revolutionary situation came from a group of Allied officers who parachuted in three weeks before the first British troops, a battalion of Seaforth Highlanders of the 23rd Indian Division, were landed. Lieutenant General Sir Phillip Christison, who flew in on the same day, became commander-in-chief of Allied forces throughout the archipelago, six weeks after Sukarno had declared independence. Soon there was sporadic fighting. Accompanying the British (and in various places preceding them) was a token NICA force. Because the British were manning numerous colonial fronts in South-East Asia, they more readily recognised the need for caution and conciliation. Such was the policy announced by the British Minister of War, J.J. Lawson: 'Britain's obligations [do] not involve fighting for the French against the people of Indochina or for the Dutch against Javanese nationalists.'⁶³ The Indonesian administration withdrew to Jogjakarta, on the southern coastline of Central Java; the British advanced to Bandung and Semarang, on the north coast, where there had been hostilities between the Japanese and Indonesians. The OSS commented on the British conciliatory attitude by suggesting that:

the British may well feel that by furthering the Indonesian nationalist aspirations to a certain extent, at this time, they are not endangering the status of their own imperial possessions.⁶⁴

The role of the OSS raised the possibility that the Americans had pre-empted the predicament of the British. Mountbatten's chief aide, Rear Admiral Douglas-Pennant, drew attention to the withholding of military intelligence at the time of transfer of the Indies from MacArthur's command – the South West Pacific Area (SWPA) – to Mountbatten. The non-exchange of military intelligence contravened a 1942 agreement between British and American officials in the Far East. Speaking alongside Mountbatten at the Sydney General Post Office on 29 March 1946, Rear Admiral Douglas-Pennant addressed representatives of the Australian Waterside Workers' Federation:

We immediately came up against this Indonesian independence movement. We did not know anything about it before, for the simple reason that Java and the Netherlands East Indies nearest Australia were in General MacArthur's theatre of war. They were only turned over to us the day the war ended. He gave us no intelligence – no information.⁵⁵

The position of the British, once ensnared in the Indonesian revolution, would not be alleviated by recriminations, and apart from this instance, none was made public. In a report to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Mountbatten mentioned only briefly that intelligence was withheld when he stated that 'none was provided by SWPA on hand-over of responsibility'.⁵⁶

An OSS report based on Japanese radio broadcasts by Sukarno and Hatta, monitored one week before the Japanese surrender, pointed to the possibility that the Indonesian nationalists were 'prepared and will try to confront the returning Netherlands authorities with an organised independence movement supported by the population'.⁵⁷ This information was not shared with the British, who unsuspectingly entered a political morass. Mountbatten at first regarded Sukarno's government as no more than a puppet of the Japanese. On 4 September 1945, he ordered the puppet Republic of Indonesia to be dissolved immediately. He reminded the Japanese in the Netherlands East Indies that they were compelled to maintain order, preserve authority and deliver it into Allied hands. With the concern of a detached observer, the OSS commented: 'The required delivery of authority into Allied hands is a most complicated problem.'⁵⁸

Before Dutch troops began to arrive regularly in Jakarta by December 1945, Surabaya, the second largest city in Indonesia at the eastern end of Java, erupted in violence. British Brigadier Mallaby (who had accepted a drop in rank from major general to take up the opportunity

of active service before returning to England) arrived there on 25 October and three days later his force of 6000 Indian troops, vastly outnumbered, was attacked by Indonesians. Many Dutch nationals who were making their way from Japanese wartime camps to Surabaya harbour for evacuation to the Netherlands were caught in the carnage.⁹ Mallaby arranged a ceasefire but on 4 November he was killed, apparently a deliberate assassination by an unknown assailant, firing into the street from the upper level of Mallaby's own HQ.¹⁰ More British troops were called in, and Surabaya was bombed and strafed before being taken. Charles Wolf Jr, the American vice-consul in Jakarta at that time, showed little remorse for the British ally caught unprepared in the revolution:

If there had been no blow up, Indonesia might never have attracted the publicity and world interest which were to play so important a part in restraining future action against the new republic. The importance of a show of force in the anatomy of successful revolution cannot be underestimated.¹¹

With the political climate deteriorating in Malaya and Indonesia, Britain was keen to withdraw from the archipelago. Lord Killearn, Britain's special commissioner for South-East Asia, in mid-1946 gathered the Dutch and Indonesian parties together at Linggadjati, a small hill-town in Central Java, and prepared a format for peace that would permit a dignified but hasty British exit. An American intelligence report concluded that food shortages in early 1946 played a 'significant role' in these negotiations.¹² It was similarly noted that the potential repercussions in Malaya of the critical world shortage of rice were also significant.¹³ The American report drew attention to a problem that the British already saw as serious – the possibility of unrest in Malaya linking up with the revolution in Indonesia.

Malaya at this time was experiencing widespread political protest orchestrated by the Malay Nationalist Party (MNP), which advocated a pan-Indonesian campaign. If British troops had acted to quell this nationalist group, their tactics would be seen as indistinguishable from the Dutch tactics in Indonesia. Moreover, they would have risked the same outcome as the Dutch because of dependence on American economic aid. And yet if unchecked the MNP would have continued to draw support from anti-British and anticolonial sources and increase its hostile potential. The MNP was formed in mid-October 1945 (as a successor to the wartime KRIS and the prewar KMM)

'with the express aim of continuing the work of the exiled Ibrahim Ya'acob'.⁹⁴ According to the MNP platform, Malaya should become part of Greater Indonesia.⁹⁵ The first president of the MNP was Javanese-born Moktar U'd-din, a name translated phonetically into American intelligence files as Tarrudin.⁹⁶ As many as 60 000 MNP members were reported to be Indonesian,⁹⁷ of a total membership (according to the MNP) of 150 000.⁹⁸ Even Funston's estimate of 100 000 members would have made the MNP comparable to, if not larger than, UMNO – the United Malays National Organisation – which was established with British assistance as an alternative to the MNP. According to Funston:

It has been widely accepted that MNP and its offshoots did not gain a popular following, but the available evidence suggests a different conclusion.⁹⁹

MNP ties with Indonesia and its most widely known revolutionary, Tan Malaka, were promoted at the inaugural congress at Ipoh, from 30 November to 5 December 1945. It was reported in the *Democrat*, that Tan Malaka attended the congress, but Jarvis has shown this not to be the case.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, British intelligence made a further claim that the real identity of 'Taruddin', the first MNP president, was Tan Malaka, but this too was incorrect.¹⁰¹ Tan Malaka was idealised as 'Father of the Indonesian Republic' in articles by Yamin¹⁰² in December 1945 and January 1946. In the political train closely associated with Tan Malaka was Yoshizumi, one of the two Japanese naval intelligence agents¹⁰³ involved in the *Proklamasi*, and whose assistance continued in the training of Indonesian commandos. Sympathy with the Indonesian nationalist movement was openly expressed at the Ipoh congress: Malaya was considered a part of Indonesia.¹⁰⁴ The MNP denounced British imperialism, and proposed a united front of Chinese, Malays, Indians and Indonesians. Conservative Malays from the Klang branch who were present at the historic meeting in Ipoh balked at this, and withdrew from the congress. Means has stressed that while nearly all Malays were in favour of Indonesian nationalism, the principal loyalties of Malays were to their rulers and their Malay state.¹⁰⁵

Three Malay nationalists, one of whom was Ya'acob, were the leaders of this new radicalism. The other two were Dr Burhanuddin Al-Helmy, who had attended school in Indonesia,¹⁰⁶ and Ahmad Boestaman. In the prewar KMM, banned by the British, Burhanuddin and Ya'acob were associates. Dr Burhanuddin had revived the KMM in 1945 and

merged it with the MNP before the December congress, and assumed leadership of the MNP. Another associate of Ya'acob who had also been imprisoned in 1941, Ahmad Boestaman, became the MNP secretary. His efforts to generate outside interest in the party brought some extra support from the Malay youth, among whom the political concept of unity with Indonesia held appeal because there the revolutionary youth, *pemuda*, were the standard-bearers of the anticolonial struggle. Early in the battle for Surabaya, for example, more than 100,000 *pemuda*, many armed with no more than bamboo sticks, had overwhelmed British positions. In December 1945, an Indonesian Labour Party was set up in Singapore, with Christian and Islamic sections. Tan Malaka was their contact. Also in Singapore was a Chinese-based Friends of Indonesia Society, which supported both the MCP and the MNP.¹⁰⁷

Despite its professedly radical-revolutionary complexion, the British gave the MNP semi-official recognition as a spokesman for the Malays by inviting it to name a member for the committee which was formed in early 1946 to consider the issue of citizenship for the Malayan Union.¹⁰⁸

The British seemed reluctant to act against the MNP. In nearby Sumatra, however, a political scenario was brewing that by the end of March 1946 would effectively end any chance of the MNP achieving real power.

On-site military intelligence

British troops in Sumatra, six times the area of Java,¹⁰⁹ occupied only three cities. On the west coast, the British controlled Padang, while on the eastern side, only Palembang, the oil centre, and Medan, which became British headquarters. Medan was across the Malacca Straits, not far from Kuala Lumpur. The shortage of British troops forced Mountbatten to retain 26,000 Japanese, through whom was devolved the task of maintaining civil order throughout Sumatra.¹¹⁰ Initially, British troops reoccupied the former Japanese Army headquarters at Bukittinggi (in Dutch days, it was Fort de Kock), but vacated it soon after. The Japanese experienced increasing difficulty in controlling unruly bands of *pemuda*, particularly in East Sumatra, where now they faced the same youths who had received special wartime training to counter guerrilla activity from the Malayan peninsula. Because of East Sumatra's ready access to the peninsula and Singapore for the purpose

of trade, and the region's potential (particularly in rubber) to generate capital in the postwar years, the Dutch were at pains to resume a compliant relationship with the *kerajaan*. For that reason, 'the Dutch presence was established more quickly and energetically in Medan than elsewhere in Sumatra and Java'.¹¹¹ An advance party in Medan pre-empted even the arrival of the British there on 10 October 1945. A wealthy Medan trader, Mahruzar, who was a brother of the nationalist leader Sjahrir, requisitioned a complex of buildings in the centre of Medan as republican regional headquarters and a recruitment centre. Violence broke out only four days after the British arrived, starting with a minor altercation between a Dutch officer and an Indonesian youth wearing a red-and-white emblem on his shirt. A minor scuffle quickly developed into an armed attack against the Dutch headquarters. Eight Dutchmen and ninety Indonesians were killed.¹¹²

The flag of the Republic of Indonesia was hoisted in East Sumatra in October, and the following month, having acquired arms from the Japanese and inspiration from the battle of Surabaya, *penuda* forces and contingents of the new republican army tested the stated British unwillingness to fight. The tension increased when extremist *penuda* groups harassed the Japanese who were manning the outlying areas. In December 1945, after the wanton slaughter of some Japanese hostages by unruly bands of *penuda*, a thousand Japanese troops with tanks, for several days, took retaliatory action. The Indonesian death toll (according to a Swiss Red Cross official) was as high as 5000 victims.¹¹³ For a month or so afterwards, the *penuda* groups and the republican army (then known as the TKR, *Tentara Keamanan Rakyat*, or People's Peace Preservation Army) were subdued by the shock of this.

Regarding the other sector of society in East Sumatra, the *kerajaan*, Langenberg noted that by November the 'relations between senior British officers and the Medan establishment, especially the *kerajaan* had become very cordial'.¹¹⁴ Amongst the *kerajaan* and the Malay ethnic community, there existed an extensive and well-organised opposition to the republic.¹¹⁵ The Dutch too placed a priority on securing the cooperation of the *kerajaan*, who were in effect the landlords of the plantations in the East Sumatran region.

East Sumatra was prized for its plantation-based export agriculture, mainly rubber and tobacco.¹¹⁶ East Sumatra, Malaya and Ceylon (Dutch and British colonies) dominated the supply of world rubber before the war. America took 70 per cent of world supply in the decade after World War I,¹¹⁷ and, in an arrangement made at the time of the Japanese

surrender, 100 per cent of rubber exports from the Indies were allocated to the United States.¹¹⁰ Tin from the islands of Banka and Billiton (Belitung) off eastern Sumatra was also a valuable prewar export from the Indies, as it was from Malaya. Again, world supply was dominated by this region. The preponderance of investment in East Sumatra was Dutch, but the British had long maintained a sizable presence and, by 1917, there were also four large American companies with plantations, including US Rubber and Goodyear. Before World War II, most American investment in the Netherlands East Indies, in oil and plantations, was concentrated in Sumatra.

Enormous stocks of rubber, sisal and oil palm had accumulated during the war and were held under Japanese control. In December 1945, republican units gained access to a Japanese stockpile and sold 6000 tons of rubber in Singapore. Mahruzar (the same brother of the Indonesian prime minister who was then negotiating with the Dutch) conducted this transaction on behalf of the republican army (TKR). In exchange he obtained weapons and military drill, which, in his opinion, provided the East Sumatran TKR with 'the best uniforms in Indonesia'.¹¹¹ Considering the British commander, General Chambers, announced on 24 December 1945 his intention to recognise the TKR as an official peacekeeping force outside Medan and that the British would provide weapons for some republicans to operate within Medan, it would seem likely that the rubber-for-weapons transaction would have been implemented with British approval:

The Dutch estimated that 30,000 tons of rubber worth 10.7 million Straits dollars were 'smuggled' from Sumatra to Singapore in the period February–April 1946 alone. In the first ten months of 1946 a total of 129 million dollars worth of Sumatran goods arrived in Singapore, most of it produce and goods from the estates of East Sumatra.¹¹²

All rubber exports from Sumatra through Singapore continued to be exported to the United States, benefiting the Americans, the British in Singapore, and the Indonesians, but not the Dutch. The British were not averse to this arrangement, for the sale of rubber was a significant means of gaining American dollars. Nor did the Americans interfere; to do so would have been impolitic. Chinese on both sides of the Malacca Straits operated the lucrative smuggling trade:

Despite periodic Dutch protestations, the British authorities were unwilling to interfere with the freeport economic activity of Singapore

and Penang, since the trade was contributing significantly towards rebuilding the postwar economy in Malaya and Singapore.¹¹

The rubber-for-weapons transaction was a remarkable turning point as an early statement of the British position in relation to the Dutch. The transaction had further significance because it seemed paradoxical for Britain to be arming the *pemuda* in East Sumatra, precisely where revolution was most likely to spread to Malaya. Mohammed Said, who was a participant in republican politics in East Sumatra at this time, has commented that 'not one gun would have got through had they [the British] really been opposed'.¹² Said provided other evidence of British attempts to promote social disorder,¹³ but the sale of weapons (from December 1945) was not a sign that the British were attempting to aggravate factionalism then rife within the republic. Rather, it was indicative of a new British stance towards the Indonesian republic, a post-Surabaya recognition not yet evident to the Dutch that the spirited populace of Indonesia would prove indomitable. It was soon apparent to both the British and the Indonesians that:

nearly everything the Republican forces required could be bought in nearby Singapore. All that was needed was money.¹⁴

So while the Americans armed the Dutch, the British successfully turned a blind eye to the republican arms-trade in Singapore, provided that British interests were not excluded from the profit-taking.

The *kerajaan* also took stock of their changed circumstances in the revolution. They became perceptibly cautious when rumours of a massacre of traditional leaders in Aceh (the *Uleebalang*) reached East Sumatra in early 1946. On 12 January, the sultan of Langkat and representatives from both Serdang and Deli sultanates started to negotiate with republican leaders because of the fear that *pemuda* in East Sumatra, armed and unruly, might emulate the revolutionary fervour of the killings in Aceh. By 21 January 1946 the *kerajaan* in East Sumatra were paying lip-service to the republican government, but, changing tack again, were turned away from this by Dutch intervention.¹⁵ Harangued and accused of being 'tools of foreign capitalists' by the East Sumatran republican governor, Hasan, the sultans 'began to intrigue with the British'.¹⁶

Leading the *kerajaan* in this intrigue was the sultan of Deli, who not only enjoyed armed British protection, but also 'allowed his state to become a stronghold of British Intelligence'.¹⁷ The sultan of Deli was new to the throne, having been installed as sultan only on 6 October

1945. His predecessor, who had ruled for more than forty years, died of natural causes. The new sultan adopted the role of spokesman because Medan, and British headquarters, was included in his demesne. Leadership was appointed also by dint of wealth, which he had gained through the premium-quality 'Deli' tobacco leaf. In late February 1946, a representative of British intelligence, Major Ferguson,¹²⁸ was closely associated with political machinations in East Sumatra. Ferguson served under (Sir) Laurens van der Post, who was based in Batavia.¹²⁹

Exploiting the friendship of the sultan, a rumour was started that the sultans of East Sumatra proposed to form a dominion which would be part of British Malaya.¹³⁰ No previous analysis of the 'social revolution' in East Sumatra has mentioned this 'dominion proposal' despite its strategic importance in the internal affairs of East Sumatra and internationally. Its inclusion is crucial to understanding the social revolution that engulfed East Sumatra in March 1946.

The dominion proposal was anathema to the revolutionary idealism of the *pemuda*. For them, the *kerajaan* personified the cumulative injustice of colonialism, and, whether under Dutch or British masters, the *kerajaan* would remain elitist, alien and the administrative implements of foreign oppression. The *kerajaan's* wish to transfer allegiance to the British betrayed *pemuda* idealism and invoked in them an immediate demand for retribution. This was focused on and exacted upon the *kerajaan*, without *pemuda* realising that as a continuum for colonial rule the dominion proposal had no chance of succeeding in the international political arena.

As a political 'float', the dominion proposal has the hallmark of an intelligence stratagem designed to elicit hostility from the *pemuda*. Considering the close relationship between the sultan of Deli and British intelligence, it was highly likely that the subject of a dominion was discussed between the two, no doubt discretely and in an unofficial capacity, before the sultan discussed the proposal with his peers. As spokesman, he then notified the British that his fellow sultans agreed to accept British rule under some form of 'dominion status'.¹³¹ Because British intelligence permitted discussion of the subject to proceed past this point, it forfeited any chance of plausibly denying involvement. Yet culpability fell on the sultan of Deli; after all, it was he who first broached the dominion suggestion in 'public'.

Once the dominion proposal was aired, British authorities ignored the suggestion. Any response other than this would have dangerously provoked American anticolonialism. Sir Laurens has denied the political

importance of the suggestion of a dominion, explaining that British intelligence 'have no record of the Ferguson talks'.¹³² The mere mention of such a proposal could only have adversely effected Anglo-Dutch relations, which were already embittered. Yet according to OSS records, the 'dominion offer' was debated widely in unofficial British and Dutch circles in the Indies.¹³³ Sir Laurens dismissed this with the observation that 'American sources of intelligence, however energetic and busy, tended to make a feast out of very small and shortlived happenings'.¹³⁴ Also in Java at this time, there was an intense debate in republican circles between the government of Sjahrir and Tan Malaka's group, centred on the issue of negotiating or not with the British and Dutch. No sooner had the sultans realised that the British rebuffed the notion of a dominion than they reverted to a policy of cooperation with the Dutch. Major Ferguson and the acting governor of East Sumatra, Dr Amir,¹³⁵ toured East Sumatra with a group of local notables for a few days, returning to Medan on the second day of March. Said observed:

The purpose of the Vice-Governor's tour was stated as being to check up on popular support for the republic ... but the most interesting thing [about it] was that Ferguson joined it.¹³⁶

During this tour of republican strongholds, Ferguson was the likely mouthpiece that leaked the 'dominion proposal' to the fiery *pemuda*. Soon after – in fact, the day after he returned to Medan – a bloodbath began, starting on the night of 3 March 1946 and continuing for more than a week throughout East Sumatra. The *kerajaan* and most of the sultans were massacred – a death toll of more than 200¹³⁷ – apparent victims in the path of revolution.

Langenberg has suggested that a rumour of impending withdrawal 'of all Indian troops from Indonesia' may have prompted the *kerajaan* massacres, and he concluded that the way must have seemed open, to the *pemuda* involved in the killings, 'for an assault on the Dutch and their local allies'.¹³⁸ But it was not a rumoured weakening of the British position that prompted the killing; on the contrary, it was a rumour that the British position was strengthening – along with that of the *kerajaan* – by means of the dominion proposal. That such a proposal was even considered accentuated the duplicity of the *kerajaan*, so far as the *pemuda* were concerned.

Reid has detailed the social revolution which befell the sultanates in East Sumatra, attributing it solely to 'the dichotomy between *pemuda* fighting bands and the conservative *kerajaan* of east Sumatra'.¹³⁹

According to Reid, the motive was given by Indonesian participants as 'the sympathy the rajas had for the Dutch',¹⁰⁶ without recognising the subtle role of British intelligence as *agent provocateur*. The planning of the killings was by 'a radical caucus within the *Persatuan Perjuangan* embracing the leadership of *Pesindo*, *PNI* and *PKI*'.¹⁰⁷ In other words, the killings were organised by three groups whose links with Tan Malaka were more tenuous than those with the republican government in Jakarta. Yet these three groups were part of the 'united front' of Tan Malaka. This apparent contradiction – a government-supporter in Jakarta being at the same time in Sumatra a supporter of the government opposition – may be explained by several factors. The physical distance between Jakarta and Medan contributed to the relative weakness of the central government in Sumatra. That Tan Malaka was from this region in Sumatra added to his popularity. Or the relative success of his policy to unite the revolutionary forces against colonialism was greater in Sumatra than in Java. The end result, however, was that while Tan Malaka's group was blamed for the massacres of the *kenajaan* in East Sumatra, the killings were actually carried out by other *pemuda*, similar to Malaka's group only in that they too were trained during the war by the Japanese. Said actually attended the formation of the 'united front' (which in East Sumatra was called the *Volkfront*) on 14 February 1946. He observed that of the two main leaders of the *Volkfront* – the group responsible for the massacres – one, by the name of Saleh Umar, had only just been released from a British prison, purportedly as a result of a special request by Dr Amir.¹⁰⁸ 'It is not impossible,' Said concluded, 'that Amir and Ferguson were working together.'¹⁰⁹ Amir, who subsequently defected to the British, was the acting governor but had assumed the top position at that time because Hasan was touring Sumatra. With him was Xarim M.S., whose absence also gave Saleh Umar a freedom to dispense social revolution that would otherwise have been more restricted.

Langenberg does not agree with Said's conclusion that, in February 1946, the British conspired to bring about the bloodthirsty *débâcle* in March, during which most of the *kenajaan* were killed.¹¹⁰ Reid does not consider at all the possibility that the British may have worked behind the scenes, abetting the destruction of the *kenajaan*. Said suspected the British were dabbling in conspiracy but he did not establish any decisive rationale for the activities of British intelligence. Despite being an on-site observer – or because of it, and the hurly-burly of revolution in East Sumatra at the time – he did not recognise the full extent of

how the politics of Malaya determined British moves in East Sumatra.

The fate of the sultans of East Sumatra was sealed by the mere suggestion they were considering 'dominion status' under the protection of the British. In the earlier killings in Aceh, there had been 'conflict between the *ulamas* (religious leaders) and *uleebalang*s (traditional feudal aristocrats) who had a longstanding animosity towards each other'.¹¹ Many *uleebalang* were killed, but this occurred without any adverse influence on the sultanates in Malaya other than the grisly precedent it provided British intelligence in East Sumatra. Undeniably, the sultans of East Sumatra were victims of the Indonesian revolution, but at the same time their demise had wider significance in the politics of the Malayan peninsula. Tan Malaka's links with the MNP immediately became a threat to the aristocratic traditional leaders in Malaya too. The demise of the rajas in East Sumatra, therefore, was more than a bloody episode in the Indonesian revolution, for it proved to be a turning point in the tenuous position of the British in Malaya.

The British position in Malaya was greatly alleviated when the political initiative was taken from the MNP. With all the sultans in East Sumatra deposed and many dead,¹² the cultural affinity with Malaya ensured that the political implications there would be profound. In the early postwar period, when American anticolonialism was a Damoclean sword over the British presence in Malaya, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) displaced the radicalism of the MNP, and so removed the precariousness of the British position.

The demise of the sultans in East Sumatra drastically influenced their Malay counterparts, politically motivating them against the MNP - Tan Malaka's allies in Malaya. Dato Onn from Johore was the political figure who first roused public interest in February 1946 against the Malayan Union. During March, UMNO emerged with the full support of the Malay sultans, mobilised by Dato Onn. The catastrophe which otherwise awaited their political inactivity was foreshadowed by the fate of their relatives in East Sumatra. By July, UMNO succeeded in obtaining an agreement with the British to begin negotiations for a new constitution. Negotiations continued from August to November, between British officials on the one hand, and the sultans' representatives and UMNO on the other, while the MNP was excluded:

To match the nationalist aspirations of the radicals, Dato Onn played host to Sjahrir, prime minister of the Indonesian Republic, when the latter visited Singapore and Johore Bahru in April 1947.¹³

The emergence of UMNO provided a political voice for the popular support commanded by the conservative elite. Had the British persisted with the union, their colonial presence in Malaya was bound to have met with opposition led by the MNP domination of the domestic political agenda. The MNP and Indonesia were a combination which could well have brought about involuntary decolonisation, as occurred with the Dutch. The timing of the emergence of UMNO (which proved beneficial in the long-term for the British presence) was inextricably linked with contemporaneous events in Indonesia.

The political paradox behind these events in East Sumatra concerned the enigmatic Tan Malaka. Despite his actual non-involvement, his 'united front' strategy designated him the ideological leader of this 'social revolution' and ultimately responsible for the slaughter. Tan Malaka was in Java during March 1946. He, Yamin and four other leaders in the 'Fighting Front' were dissatisfied with Sjahrir's conciliatory approach in negotiations. When they resolved (in Kahin's words) 'to take matters into their own hands',¹⁴⁹ they were arrested in Madiun on 17 March 1946 – that is, immediately after the massacres – by forces loyal to the republican government in Yogyakarta. The arrests occurred three days after the *Persatuan Perjuangan* secretariat had issued a revolutionary pamphlet, *Is the Government Program the same as the Program of the Persatuan Perjuangan?*¹⁵⁰

In Sumatra, the Fighting Front (*Volksfront*) acted autonomously, creating a sense of disunity with the central government. A republican delegation visited Medan in late March in an attempt to repair central authority, with only partial success. Sir Laurens van der Post accompanied this delegation.¹⁵¹ Instead, the prevailing revolutionary forces in East Sumatra continued more in kind with the left-wing and communist Chinese in Malaya, who after 1946 were relegated into virtual opposition against UMNO and the British. In Sumatra in April 1946 – after Tan Malaka's arrest in Java – a pamphlet was published which a US Department of State report described as 'allegedly written by Tan Malaka'. The report, paraphrasing the pamphlet, stated:

although a community of interest exists between Indonesia, Burma, Siam, Indo-China, Malaya, North Borneo and the Philippines, he [Tan Malaka] would at first restrict his activities to Indonesia, Malaya and British Borneo 'which are indissolubly bound together'.¹⁵²

As well, an editorial in the *Straits Times*¹⁵³ referred to the same pamphlet and warned of 'possible collaboration between the Communists

on both sides of the Straits of Malacca'. While this no doubt expedited the formation of UMNO, it reflected the dilemma of the MNP. Only after Tan Malaka's arrest did the MNP seek wider political support with the Chinese in Malaya, among whom the MCP was a potent force. This merely strengthened the resolve of UMNO. The racial schism in Malayan society was rapidly acquiring political dimensions. In attempting to transpose Malay hostility, the pamphlet linked Chinese communists in Malaya with the perpetrators of the East Sumatran massacres. The political sentiment displayed in the pamphlet showed remarkable prescience in that the response within the MCP to British intervention in Malaya soon turned to armed aggression.

The identification of the MCP as the political opponent of both the British administration and UMNO paralleled the isolation of the left-wing in Indonesia:

On 18 June 1948, a State of Emergency was proclaimed for the whole of Malaya. The MCP was caught by surprise.¹⁵⁵

At the same time, early in June 1948, the tactics of the new Indonesian government of Hatta and Sukarno finally separated most of the left-wing groups in Java from republican forces. This differentiation drew the battle lines that later resulted in the destruction of the left-wing at Madiun in September 1948. Members of Tan Malaka's group (still at odds with the PKI and associated Indonesian left-wing elements, in addition to the republican government) were released shortly before the republican forces moved on Madiun. A State Department report suggested that the Madiun rebellion, like the 1926 uprising, had an element of provocation:

The Republican Government may have been aware of the projected rebellion, and by preparing for it militarily, may have forced the PKI to move prematurely.¹⁵⁶

The lack of parity between the forces at Madiun and the government troops was so great that the end result was a massacre. In December 1948, after Dutch forces had captured the republican government in the so-called 'second police action', Tan Malaka proclaimed a new administration, but was arrested and executed by republican forces in early 1949. American intervention that year historically severed Dutch sovereignty in the Indies through diplomatic and economic channels. Although the State Department had not openly supported Indonesian nationalists until the left-wing was eliminated at Madiun in September

1948, other Americans, such as the OSS, had been at work earlier to bring about the disestablishment of Dutch colonial rule in the Indies.

The arrest and subsequent execution of Tan Malaka denied the anti-colonialist MNP further support from sympathetic Indonesian revolutionaries. Similarly, as a side-effect of the elimination of the PKI at Madiun, the MCP were denied ideological and logistic backup from the archipelago, with which the British may otherwise have had to contend.¹⁵⁵ The Tan Malaka-MNP link was indicative of the historical legacy between Indonesia and Malaya, but communism, which aspired to a 'fraternal association' residing in its ideology, attempted to cross both colonial and racial boundaries. British and American efforts to isolate communist influence was a symptom of the Cold War era. By the time of the Truman Doctrine, one year after Churchill's Iron Curtain speech, a 'containment strategy' was mapped out in Indonesia and Malaya, as it was in Europe. American anticolonialism was tempered by consideration of 'the necessity of British friendship';¹⁵⁶ so much so that by 1948 the British Secretary of State for the Colonies observed:

the United States have largely come round to our point of view ... [and] are at present too much preoccupied with communism to spare much time for 'British imperialism'.¹⁵⁷

After Churchill had stoked the fires of anticommunism, alluding to 'compact oligarchies operating through a privileged party and a political police',¹⁵⁸ Chinese communism ensured the conflagration spread to the East. With the imminent defeat of Chiang Kai-shek, a traditional ally, American anticommunism welled up in recrimination. Mao Zedong, it seemed, snatched the laurel from an American victory.

Consequently, American anticolonial influence on British colonial power in Malaya was subsumed in the larger issue of political bipolarity – the Malayan 'Emergency'. There was no question of American intervention against the continuing presence of the British when the colonial power and UMNO were pitted against a common enemy that was both communist and Chinese.

Notes

1. Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech at Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, 5 March 1946, in David Cannadine (ed.), *Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat – Winston Churchill's Famous Speeches*, Cassell, London, 1989, p.301. Stalin's response was a comparison of Churchill's proposal to Hitler's

- Aryan ideology. See Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace – The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State*, Penguin, 1977, p. 177.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 296–7.
 3. W. Averell Harriman and Elie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin 1941–1946*, Random House, New York, 1975, p. 553.
 4. Macao was not invaded. East Timor was first occupied by the Dutch, reinforced by the Australians, then invaded by the Japanese. Before the end of the war, Portugal agreed to provide postwar facilities for the US Air Force on Santa Maria, in the Azores, in return for assistance in ousting the Japanese from East Timor. This agreement, however, was superseded by subsequent events in 1945.
 5. G.A. Grunder and W.E. Livezey, *The Philippines and the United States*, Norman, 1951, 1973, p. 275, cited in Nicholas Tarling, 'A Prompt Gesture of Goodwill': Anglo-Philippine Relations After the Second World War', *Pilipinas*, Fall 1985, p. 28.
 6. Francis L. Loewenheim, Harold D. Langley and Manfred Jonas (eds), *Roosevelt and Churchill – Their Secret Wartime Correspondence*, Barrie & Jenkins, London, 1975, p. 154.
 7. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
 8. C.N. Barclay, *The Regimental History of the 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles*, London, 1953, pp. 191–2, cited in John Newsinger, 'A forgotten war: British intervention in Indonesia 1945–46', *Race and Class*, vol. 30, no. 4, 1989, p. 54.
 9. G.J. Resink, *Indonesia's History Between the Myths*, van Hoeve, The Hague, 1968, p. 320, cited in Michael van Langenberg, *National Revolution in North Sumatra – Sumatera Timur and Tapanuli 1942–1950*, PhD thesis, Sydney University, 1976, p. 116. The prevalence of the Straits Chinese in trade between East Sumatra and Malayan peninsula resulted in the dual currency.
 10. The total population of Malaya and Singapore as of 30 June 1941 was 5561 100 in the last census before the war. See E.S.V. Donnison, *British Military Administration in the Far East 1943–46*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1956, p. 375. The last census in the Netherlands East Indies was in 1930. The population of Java and Madura was 40 891 093, as against 18 246 974 for the rest of the Dutch Indies. Dept of Economic Affairs, Batavia, 1936, cited in George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1970 ed. (1st ed. 1952), p. 2.
 11. Albert Lau, *The Malayan Union Controversy 1942–1948*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1991, p. 38. Lau cites two sources: CO 825/35.

- No. 55104, Minute by Gent, 20 August 1942; and W. Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay 1941-1945: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1977, p. 191.
12. Lau, p. 30.
 13. Louis, p. 200, cited in John Darwin, *Britain And Decolonisation - The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World*, Macmillan, London, 1988, p. 42.
 14. The Indies, 35.9 per cent; Malaya, 42.5 per cent, on a three-year period centred on 1936. See John Bastin and Robin W. Winks (eds), *Malaysia - Selected Historical Readings*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1966, p. 388.
 15. Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, *From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation - Political Unification in the Malaysia Region, 1945-65*, Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 17.
 16. Darwin, p. 39.
 17. OSS Report, RIA 3239, Business Rehabilitation in Burma. Prepared by the Research and Intelligence Analysis Branch of the OSS, 31 August 1945.
 18. Akira Iriye, *Power And Culture - The Japanese-American War, 1941-1945*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1981, p. 233.
 19. English translation published in the *Voice of Free Indonesia*, no. 1, Jakarta, October 1945; cited in Donnison, p. 420.
 20. Joseph M. Siracusa, *The Changing of America: 1945 to the Present*, Forum Press, Illinois, 1986, p. 12.
 21. One of the most important figures in the OSS and the CIA was Allen Dulles. He entered the US diplomatic service in 1916, took part in the Versailles Treaty and the Washington Conferences on arms limitation, and from 1926 was the Standard Oil company's top legal adviser. The power Dulles wielded, while heading the OSS in Europe with his headquarters in Berne, was evidenced in May 1945, when a Japanese representative made an early move for Japan to surrender. Allen Dulles was the person first approached. See David Bergamini, *Japan's Imperial Conspiracy*, Heinemann, London, 1971, p. 72; and Akira Iriye, p. 259. When President Kennedy in 1961 removed him from his CIA directorship, Dulles resumed his executive position in Standard Oil.
 22. OSS Report No. 3265, Indonesian Unrest Portends Most Critical Situation in Southeast Asia Command, 28 September 1945, p. 3.
 23. Professor Northedge has commented: 'The influential Senator, Claude Pepper of Florida, opposed America's "ganging up" with British imperialism against Russia.' See Walter Millis (ed.), *The Forrestal Diaries*, Viking, New York, 1951, p. 154, cited in E.S. Northedge, *British Foreign Policy*,

- George Allen & Unwin, London, 1962, p. 183.
24. Yergin, p. 177.
25. Up to 1948, the US government continued to assist the Netherlands with loans of several hundred million dollars to purchase war surplus material, transport equipment, food, and textiles for the struggle in Indonesia. After civil conflict within the republican forces destroyed the Indonesian left-wing element, American priorities changed. In 1949, Dutch intransigence over retaining the Indies jeopardised the vital post-war reconstruction aid in the Marshall Plan and the postwar defence treaty in the Atlantic Pact. See Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: The United States and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence, 1945-49*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1981, chapter 9, 'The United States and Indonesian Independence', pp. 304-16.
26. See Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka, strijder voor Indonesie's vrijheid: levensloop van 1897 tot 1945*, Martinus Nijhoff, 's-Gravenhage, 1976. Also, Tan Malaka's political autobiography: Helen Jarvis (ed.), *From Jail To Jail*, 3 vols, Ohio University Center for International Studies, Southeast Asia Monograph No. 83, Athens, 1991.
27. Jarvis, p. lxxxviii.
28. Far Eastern Policy, Minute by Lord Cranborne, 14 July 1942, CO 825/35/55104/1942, cited in A.N. Porter and A.J. Stockwell, Document 13, *British Imperial Policy and Decolonization 1938-64, Vol. 1, 1938-51*, Cambridge Commonwealth Series, general ed., D.A. Low, Macmillan Press, London, 1987, p. 125.
29. Dept of State Report No. 3294, Summary of the Present Position of the Dutch, British, Japanese and Indonesians in the Indonesian Crisis, 9 November 1945.
30. Northedge, pp. 182-3.
31. Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, Oxford University Press, London, 1965, p. 223.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 386.
33. See Spencer F. Chapman, *The Jungle is Neutral*, New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 1949. In the final stages of the war, operations in Borneo were carried out similar to Chapman's in Malaya. Tom Harrison (from the 1932 Oxford University expedition to Borneo) and Major Steve Holley were two persons dropped in the hinterland behind Japanese lines. Interview with W.S. Holley, 31 July 1991, Royal Commonwealth Society, London. Also, interview with Abdullah Majid (who participated in Chapman's wartime group), Kuala Lumpur, 30 July 1990.
34. Gordon P. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, University of London Press, London,

- 1970, p. 92.
35. M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia, c. 1300 to the Present*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1981, p.202.
 36. Kabin, pp.162-4.
 37. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-3.
 38. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-3.
 39. *Ibid.*, pp.172-3.
 40. At the Fourth Congress of the *Persatuan Perjuangan*, held at Madiun on 16 to 17 March 1946, a motion on foreign affairs was passed, that 'the state of the Republic of Indonesia should cover Malaya, north Borneo, the whole of Timor and the whole of Papua ...'. 'Kongres Persatuan Perjuangan,' *Mendekta*, 20 March 1946, cited in Jarvis, vol. 2, p. 243, note 54.
 41. In 1946, in a publication entitled *Thesis*, Tan Malaka identified the geographical extent of Asia which he derived from 'Asia' and 'Australia': 'Make a circle [from Singapore] with a radius of 1500 miles. Inside this circle lie Burma, Siam, the Philippines, the whole of the Republic of Indonesia, and Australia. This is what we call Asia.' Cited in Jarvis, vol.1, p. xcvi.
 42. Office of Intelligence Research, Dept of State, Report No. 3780, 16 March 1947, James Cook University Library.
 43. James W. Gould, *Americans in Sumatra*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1961, p.46.
 44. Langenberg, p. 76. Between 1913 and 1932, the total number of Javanese labourers used was more than one-third of a million.
 45. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
 46. Tan Malaka had suffered imprisonment by the Dutch in 1922, by the US administration of the Philippines in 1927, and by the British government of Hong Kong in 1932. See Jarvis, vol. 1, p. xi.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. xcvi.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
 49. Arnold C. Brackman, *Southeast Asia's Second Front - The Power Struggle in the Malay Archipelago*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1966, pp. 178-9.
 50. Bernhard Dahm, *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1971, p.59. See also Ricklefs, p.170; and Justus M. Van Der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia - Its History, Program and Tactics*, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1965, pp. 16-21. More than 17 000 persons were arrested and jailed, and 1200 radical nationalists and communists were exiled to Boven Digul, Netherlands New Guinea.
 51. Dept of State, Report No. 4909.5, The Potentials of World Communism:

- Far East, Part 11: Indonesia, prepared by the Division of Research for Far East, Office of Intelligence and Research, 1 August 1949, p. 5. This report, on reel 1 of 12 on microfilm containing reports from the OSS, is located at James Cook University Library.
52. Jarvis, vol. 3, p. 279, note 1.
53. William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1967, p. 225. See also Angus McIntyre, 'The "Greater Indonesia" Idea of Nationalism in Malaya and Indonesia', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1973, pp. 75-83.
54. Means, p. 23.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-6. According to Means, KRIS at first stood for *Kesatuan Ra'ayat Indonesia Semenanjung* (Union of Peninsular Indonesians), but later became *Kekuatan Ra'ayat Istimewa* (Supreme Effort of the People). J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi - The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 20, suggests only the former.
56. BPKI was *Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* - body to investigate measures for the preparation of Indonesian independence. See Anthony Reid, *The Indonesian National Revolution 1945-1950*, Longman, Hawthorn, Australia, 1974, p. 19. Reid, citing Yamin, *Naskah-Persiapan Undang-Undang Dasar 1945*, vol. 1, Jakarta, 1954, p. 214, gives the vote for Greater Indonesia as forty-five from sixty-four. Mackie, citing the Malaysian Dept of Information, *Background to Indonesia's Policy towards Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur, 1964, states the vote was thirty-nine from sixty-six.
57. Interview (Jakarta, 21 May 1991) with Ibu (Mrs) Iskandar Kamel, widow of Ibrahim Ya'acob.
58. Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People - Revolution and the End of Traditional Rule in Northern Sumatra*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1979, p. 95. On the reappointment of Dutch officials, it should be recalled that 'the Nazi party' (Australian intelligence terminology for the prewar Indies NSB) had a large following. The NSB was started in 1928, in Northern Sumatra, by wealthy Dutch and German plantation owners. On 18 May 1940, 4000 Dutch National Socialists were interned in the Indies, among them Brundenberg van Olsende (and his Belgian wife), who was the 'Führer of the Indies'. The island of Onrust, off Tanjung Priok, Batavia's port, became a site of internment. The Indies government (according to Lieutenant Colonel Chapman of Australian military intelligence) considered the likelihood of a *coup d'état* an even greater threat than Japanese invasion. See Evaluation of Japanese potential for war in

Far East, 1940 – an appreciation of capabilities of the Netherlands East Indies in the event of Japanese action. Australian War Memorial Archives, Canberra, 243/5/32 556/4 423/6.

59. Reid, *Blood of the People*, p. 118.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 132–3.

61. Wartime relations between the British and Chiang Kai-shek were at times unfriendly. According to General Stilwell, who commanded US forces in that theatre, the British at first refused to have Chinese troops in Burma because of the anticolonial consequences of a possible link-up with Indian troops. Pressure from Washington was required before the disagreement was settled. See Theodore H. White (ed.), *The Stilwell Papers – General Joseph W. Stilwell's iconoclastic account of America's adventure in China*, Schocken, New York, 1972, pp. 160–3.

62. Donnison, p. 375.

63. When MacArthur directed the Japanese forces in Hong Kong to surrender to the British (and not to Kuomintang Chinese forces), a clash between China and Great Britain was averted. The British were adamant, but had they not been appeased, such opposition would have run counter to the American assistance for Chiang Kai-shek, whose future was already uncertain.

64. US troops and KMT forces started to invade 'liberated areas' with an attack on the town of Anping in July 1946, according to Mao Tse-tung. See K. Fan (ed.), *Mao Tse-tung and Lin Biao – Post Revolutionary Writings*, Anchor Books, New York, 1972, p. 50.

65. Australian-Asian Relations, Griffith University, 1989, p. 142.

66. Lau, p. 5.

67. Sopiee, p. 35. As well, Ariffin Omar points out '... the opinion that the Malay states should be united with the Indonesian republic in an independent Indonesia Raya' was that of the Malay left wing. See Ariffin Omar, *Bangsa Melayu – Malay Concepts of Democracy and Community, 1945–50*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1993, p. 37.

68. Donnison, p. 421.

69. President Roosevelt had obtained a promise from Queen Wilhelmina in 1943 (in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter) that 'the Indies would be granted dominion status with the right of self-rule'. See Elliot Roosevelt, *As He Saw It*, p. 223, cited in Chester Wilmott, *The Struggle for Europe*, London, 1952, p. 653. After MacArthur's troops had retaken Netherlands New Guinea, Washington gave priority to recapture of the Philippines, not the Netherlands East Indies, thus changing an agreement made at the Combined Chiefs of Staff conference at Cairo in December 1943.

70. McMahon (citing Public Records Office, Prime Minister's Records 3/326, Eden to Churchill, 13 September 1944) mentions also Eelco van Kleffens, the minister for colonies and foreign affairs in the wartime Dutch government. See McMahon, p.77.
71. Van Mook had been critical of US policy during 1941 when his urgent request for military aid was ignored. In charge of distributing US war material was John Foster Dulles. Preference was given to the European theatre. Van Mook's evacuation (with thirteen other officials) before the surrender of Java was on the orders of the then governor-general, Jhr Tjarda van Starkenborgh Stachouwer. (Subsequently interned in Manchuria, he was released on 19 August 1945, and resigned on 16 October.) Van Mook was promoted from director of economic affairs to lieutenant-governor-general, and soon after (25 May 1942), he left Australia for London to be Minister for Colonies. See Yong Mun Cheong, *H.J. Van Mook and Indonesian Independence - a study of his role in Dutch-Indonesian relations, 1945-48*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1982, p. 223, note 11.
72. David Wehl, *The Birth of Indonesia*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1948, p.31.
73. *Ibid.*, p.31.
74. Newsinger, p.53.
75. Howard P. Jones, *Indonesia - The Possible Dream*, Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, New York, 1971, p. 101. Jones was American ambassador in Indonesia from 1958 to 24 May 1965. The source of Jones's information was Averell Harriman, the American ambassador in Britain in 1946.
76. In August 1942, there was a repatriation exchange of 834 Japanese interned in Australia, on orders from Washington. The internees came mostly from the Netherlands East Indies - and most returned there soon after the exchange. Included was Tomogoro Yoshizumi and several dozen others, whom the Dutch had clearly shown were naval spies. Shigetada Nishijima (interview, Tokyo, August 1983) remained undetected. In Jakarta, 1944, Yoshizumi and Nishijima organised the 'School for Independence' (*Asrama Indonesia Merdeka*); in 1945, they participated in the *Proklamasi*; later, Nishijima was arrested, but Yoshizumi decamped and trained commandos in the revolution. The repatriation of these Japanese in 1942 made Dutch reoccupation after 1945 far more difficult. Dean Rusk, former head of intelligence in Washington in 1942, said responsibility lay with the State Department, not intelligence. Pers. comm., 26 October 1987. See Greg Poulgrain, 'The Loveday Exchange, Australia, 1942: The Japanese Naval Spies Return To Java', *Indonesia*,

April 1993.

77. OSS report, Government of the Republic of Indonesia Confronts Allied Reoccupation Forces in the Netherlands East Indies, 14 September 1945.
78. See Rupert Lockwood, *Black Armada - Australia and the struggle for Indonesian independence 1942-49*, Hale & Remonger, Sydney, 1982. There was widespread anticolonial support in Australia for the struggling Republic of Indonesia. Support grew in 1944-45 after the extraordinary arrival of political refugees from Boven Digul, remnants of the 1926 uprising and others exiled in isolation. General MacArthur preferred them in Australia because, he said, the Japanese might use them for political ends. See *History of the Directorate of Prisoners-of-War and Internees 1939-51*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 780/1/6-492/4 721/1.
79. L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in De Tweede Wereldoorlog*, Volume 11c, Staatsdrukkery, The Hague, 1986, p.630.
80. Benedict R.O'G. Anderson, *Some Aspects of Indonesian Politics Under Japanese Occupation, 1944-45*, New York, Ithaca, 1971, p. 90.
81. PS. Gerbrandy, *Indonesia*, Hutchinson, London, 1950.
82. Wehl, p.31.
83. *Washington Evening Star*, 30 September 1945, cited in OSS report, British Policy Toward Nationalists in Indonesia, 5 October 1945.
84. OSS report, British Policy Toward Nationalists in Indonesia, 5 October 1945.
85. Douglas-Pennant and Mounbatten discussed the release of ships for the Netherlands East Indies. Lockwood, p. 330, chapter 22, note 6.
86. Louis Mounbatten, *Report to Combined Chiefs-of-Staff, 1943-45*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1951, p. 183, cited in Donnison, p. 422.
87. OSS report, Transitional Period in Indonesian Internal Political Situation, 24 August 1945. Without Nishijima and Yoshizumi, who were returned to Java from Australia in 1942 in a repatriation exchange approved by Washington, the Indonesian independence movement would not have been so formidable at the end of the war. See footnote 76, above.
88. OSS report, Government of the Republic of Indonesia Confronts Allied Reoccupation Forces in the Netherlands East Indies, 14 September 1945.
89. According to one Dutchman, who was then a teenager, some British troops, while being lined up to be executed by Indonesians, sang 'God Save The King'. (Interview with Frits Diehl, Armadale, May 1996.)
90. According to Sumarsono, the Indonesian military commander of the

pemuda – the young men who comprised most of the Indonesian fighting force in Surabaya – the Indonesian investigation (which he conducted) into the incident found that Mallaby was *outside* the car when the shots were fired. The accepted version has been that an Indonesian fired point-blank into the back seat of the car. See J.G.A. Parratt, 'Who Killed Brigadier Mallaby?', *Indonesia*, no. 20, 1975, pp. 87–110. (Interview with Sumarsono, Sydney, July 1996.)

91. Charles Wolf Jr, *The Indonesia Story – the Birth, Growth and Future of the Republic*, John Day Co. (issued under the auspices of the American Institute of Pacific Relations), New York, 1948, p. 22.
92. Office of Research and Intelligence, Dept of State Report No. 3499, World Rice Situation 1945–46 with particular reference to the Far East, 2 March 1946, Appendix I.
93. *Ibid.*, Appendix II.
94. A.J. Stockwell, *British Policy and Malay Politics during the Malayan Union Experiment 1942–1948*, Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Monograph No. 8, 1979, p. 45.
95. *Straits Times*, 30 December 1946, cited in Means, p. 89.
96. Dept of State Report No. 3780, p. 63.
97. *Democrat*, 2 June 1946, cited in Dept of State Report No. 3780.
98. John Funston, *Malay Politics in Malaysia – a study of United Malays National Organisation and Party Islam*, Heinemann, Singapore, 1980, p. 69, note 3. Funston disputes the lesser membership figures suggested by Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *The Left Wing In Southeast Asia*, Sloane, New York, 1950, p. 144.
99. Funston, p. 40.
100. Jarvis, vol. 2, pp. 243–4, note 55.
101. British intelligence was given as a source for this claim, referred to by Cheah Boon Kheng in his PhD thesis, *A Contest for Postwar Malaya: Social Conflict August 1945–March 1946*, Australian National University, 1978, pp. 379–80, cited in Jarvis, vol. 2, p. 244.
102. Yamin published a series of articles in the Yogyakarta newspaper *Kedaulatan Rakyat* in December 1945, which became a book, *Tan Malaka, Bapak Republik Indonesia*, in early 1946. Yamin was challenging Sukarno and Hatta, 'the leaders who possibly went astray' – a reference to their collaboration with the Japanese. See Jarvis, vol. 1, p. lxxv.
103. Interview with Nishijima (Tokyo, August 1983). Nishijima explained that Yoshizumi was an officer in naval intelligence. Full details of Yoshizumi's activities before the war were outlined in a Dutch document that was sent to Australia in early 1942. See *Ten Years Toil in the Neth-*

- erlands East Indies, Batavia, 1942. This lengthy intelligence report is located at Brighton Archives, Melbourne. MP 729/6 Box 57 22/401/381. Nishijima said that Yoshizumi was near Surabaya when Mallaby was killed.
104. *Utusan Melayu*, 8 December 1945, cited in Dept of State Report No. 3780. Cheah Boon Kheng (pp. 377-8) also cites British intelligence reports on the MNP congress as concluding: 'Malaya is a division of the Indonesian state.'
 105. Means, p.92.
 106. *Ibid.*, p.95, footnote 25.
 107. Langenberg, p.365, footnote 143.
 108. Means, p. 89.
 109. The area of Sumatra is 773 606 square kilometres. In 1946 its population was about 10 million.
 110. In a statement by Mountbatten in March 1946, he revealed there were 54 000 Japanese in Indonesia still bearing arms and under British control, but 38 000 were still at large in Central Java – presumably aiding the republic. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 March 1946.
 111. Reid, *Blood of the People*, p. 151.
 112. Langenberg, pp. 308-11.
 113. Reid, *Blood of the People*, p. 169. This occurred in the Serdang sultanate, at Tebingtinggi, in December 1945.
 114. *Ibid.*, p. 323.
 115. Langenberg, p. 252.
 116. In 1939, plantations occupied 965 120 hectares, or about one-third of the area of the four administrative divisions, Langkat, Deli-Serdang, Asahan, and Simalungan-Karoland. See Langenberg, p. 109.
 117. Gould, p.97.
 118. Dept of State Report No. 3740, *Sumatra in the Indonesian Crisis*, 20 May 1946, p. 28. James Cook University Library.
 119. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
 120. *Ibid.*, p. 220. For the sake of comparison, the total amount of postwar reconstruction allocated to the Netherlands in 1948 was \$506 million. McMahon, p. 228.
 121. Langenberg, p. 674. Langenberg even provides the name of the main trader in Singapore (Hanson, Wah Giap & Co.) and in Penang (Mahroezer Trading Co.) behind the arms smuggling.
 122. H. Mohammed Said, 'What was the "Social Revolution of 1946" in East Sumatra?', *Indonesia*, 1973, no. 15, p. 168. Said prefaced his account with the information that between mid-February and June 1946, he

- was absent from East Sumatra on a mission to Jakarta, and so was not present for the dramatic events in March.
123. *Ibid.*, p. 155. In October 1945, when the British at first tried to collect weapons from the Indonesians, there was a spate of murder and robbery of Chinese. According to Said, the culprits were 'criminals evidently released from gaol (by the British!) on purpose'. Indonesians later shot the ringleader.
 124. Hans Wagner, 'Where did the Weapons Come From?', *Kabar Seberang Sulating Maphilindo*, nos. 19-20, 1988, Centre for South-East Asian Studies, James Cook University, p. 122.
 125. Dept of State Report No. 3740.
 126. *Ibid.*
 127. *Ibid.*
 128. Said, p. 180.
 129. Sir Laurens van der Post, London, Pers. comm., 14 January 1993. Sir Laurens (knighted 1981, died December 1996) confirmed that Major Ferguson was one of his officers.
 130. Dept of State Report No. 3740. The 'dominion proposal' was the catalyst for the *kenjaan* killings. Ariffin Omar has shown that the revolutionary youth and the *kenjaan* had begun talks to adjust the colonial-feudal social structure but that the former 'were running out of patience with the slow pace of reforms and were probably thinking of a radical solution ... The kerajaan on their part did take preliminary steps towards democratizing their states.' Omar, p.75 (emphasis added). The 'dominion' rumour was seen as feudal subterfuge – equivalent to a slap in the face – and tipped the scales immediately towards a radical solution.
 131. Dept of State Report No. 3740.
 132. Sir Laurens van der Post, pers. comm., 5 February 1993.
 133. Dept of State Report No. 3740.
 134. Sir Laurens van der Post, pers. comm., 5 February 1993.
 135. Said, who accuses Dr Amir of treachery, knew him personally. He described Amir as 'a brilliant psychiatrist without rival in his generation', and his wife was 'a beautiful Dutchwoman, with two children'. Said, p. 161.
 136. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
 137. Reid, *Blood of the People*, pp. 230-8.
 138. Langenberg, p. 391.
 139. Reid, *The Blood of the People*, p. 218.
 140. *Ibid.*, p. 230.
 141. *Ibid.*, p. 230. *Pesindo* (Indonesian Socialist Youth) at this stage of the

revolution was on the side of the central government supporting Sjahrir. The PNI (Nationalist Party of Indonesia) was the traditional support for Sukarno, whom Sjahrir had replaced. The PKI (Communist Party) had only been reformed in November 1945. Amir Sjarifuddin (who declared his PKI sympathy only later) was in government with Sjahrir.

As these were with Malaka's group, Reid's source (A. T. Lubis, interview) has, in effect, included all three of the conflicting strands within the Indonesian republic at that time, without further apportioning blame.

142. Said, p. 173.
143. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
144. Langenberg, pp. 463-4.
145. Yong Mun Cheong, p. 54.
146. When the British departed from Sumatra in 1946, the sultan of Deli was in exile in the Netherlands. He saw his chance to return after the first Dutch police action in July 1947 retook East Sumatra. 'The Sultan of Deli regarded himself as the prenum ruler in East Sumatra - the only sultan who had not been deposed.' See Langenberg, p. 636.
147. Stockwell, p. 125.
148. Kahin, p. 177. The actions of Tan Malaka's group in Sumatra would have proceeded without his involvement in any way. Tan Malaka and Yamin were arrested in Madiun on 17 March 1946. It should be noted that 'Tan' was an abbreviation of Sutan, indicating he originated from a 'titled' family, as did Sutan Sjahrir. Across the Malacca Strait, therefore, the *kerajaan* massacre produced in Malay titled families an even greater revulsion of the Indonesian revolution and its adherents (particularly in Malaya).
149. Jarvis, vol. 3, p. 136.
150. Sir Laurens van der Post, pers. comm., 14 January 1993. Among the Indonesians in the delegation was Amir Sjarifuddin, who was described by Sir Laurens as a 'great personal friend'.
151. Dept of State Report No. 3780. The pamphlet was not given a title in the report. It is significant that the report described the pamphlet as 'allegedly' by Tan Malaka. It is possible that the report was the work of British intelligence providing a not inaccurate but very timely summary - because of its impact in Malaya - of Tan Malaka's known political outlook. Tan Malaka published his account, *Thesis*, on 10 June 1946. See Jarvis, vol. 3, p. 431.
152. *Straits Times*, 9 July 1946, cited in Dept of State Report No. 3780.
153. Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare - The Malayan Emergency 1948-1960*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1989, p. 61.

One year earlier, after the leader of the MCP (Lai Tek) absconded, it was revealed he had long been an agent for the British.

154. Dept of State Report No. 4909.5, p. 19. As claimed by D.C. Anderson, the official American representative, Merle Cochran, met with Sukarno and Hatta on the morning of 17 September 1948 – the eve of the Madiun rebellion. It was 'made explicit' that a republican government which contained left-wing elements would not receive American support. Alimin and Muso, who had been in exile since 1926 returned prior to the Madiun Affair – Muso was PKI leader for eighty days – and both were killed. See David Charles Anderson, 'The Military Aspects of the Madiun Affair', *Indonesia*, no. 21, 1976, p. 27, footnote 63.

See also McMahon, p. 241. The US Undersecretary Lovett told Netherlands Foreign Minister Stikker that the Cochran Plan would 'liquidate Communists within the Republic'.

155. It should be noted that a Foreign Office 'cultural liaison' officer (John Coast) was working closely with the republican leaders for most of 1948. See 'An Englishman Joins the Struggle – an interview with John Coast', in Colin Wild and Peter Carey (eds), *Born in Fire: The Indonesian Struggle for Independence – an anthology*, BBC Publications, Ohio University Press, Athens, 1986, pp. 136–45.

156. Darwin, p. 41.

157. Memorandum by Colonial Secretary, CP (48) 36, 30 January 1948, CAB 129/24, cited in Darwin, p. 145.

158. Cannadine, p. 299. Churchill 'stoked the fires' of the Cold War, which had gathered intensity after Operation Sunrise, which (according to Grose) was 'perceived by many historians as the first battle of the Cold War'. See Peter Grose, *Gentleman Spy – The Life of Allen Dulles*, André Deutsch, London, 1995, p. 226. This referred to the Soviet denunciation of the actions of the chief OSS operator in Switzerland, Allen Dulles, who arranged for the surrender of Nazi troops in northern Italy without ensuring they would not be rechannelled to the Eastern Front. After the accord of the Allied triumvirate at Yalta, Stalin (in communicating with Roosevelt on this German surrender on the Southern Front) wrote: 'It may be assumed that you have not been fully informed' (Grose, p. 239). The two leaders were in reparative mode when Roosevelt's death suddenly halted conciliation. Stalin suspected that Roosevelt was quietly assassinated.

ECONOMIC CONFRONTATION 1951-1955

Singapore was the focus of relations between the British colonial presence in South-East Asia and the newly declared Republic of Indonesia. Crucial as an entrepôt for the export-import trade during the struggle for independence, Singapore did not find its role diminished after *merdeka* in 1949. The momentum of Indonesian revolutionary nationalism was a determinant in bilateral relations; it bred a form of economic nationalism which made Indonesia loathe to continue its reliance on Singapore. The profiteering on Indonesian produce by Chinese traders in Singapore was resented in Indonesia, not merely because smuggling continued unabated, but also because Singapore exploited the absence of any viable alternative port facility. At the risk of damaging its own economy, but fired by a nationalist determination, Indonesia initiated trade restrictions and resolved to cut the Gordian knot of Singapore's indispensability.

In British Borneo, where the Indonesian border was ill-defined, a contiguous tract of jungle, actual differences were minor. Both parties were prepared to negotiate periodically in either Sarawak or West Kalimantan, the adjacent Indonesian province. By far the most important aspect of British-Indonesian relations in the Borneo territories was centred on oil production in Brunei. In the perception of the oil-company management, production was susceptible to Indonesian nationalism in two ways; through the small number of Indonesian employees, or through the support for Indonesia expressed by Brunei Malays and by Sarawak Malays.

A unique episode (dealing with gold bullion recovered after the Japanese occupation) illustrates how Indonesian-British relations throughout the 1950s were characterised by a continuing colonial superiority, verging on official disdain. On the other hand, Indonesia was characterised by an anticolonial righteousness, conducted with the hesitancy of an international newcomer. The difficulty for Indonesia, emerging from three and a half centuries of Dutch colonial rule, was that its closest neighbour was still controlled by the foremost colonial power in the world. Decolonisation of British territories in

Africa and Asia may have seemed inevitable in the long term, but did not attain a uniform momentum. This disparity permitted Britain added time to support its continuing presence in South-East Asia, and to prime the political successors in the territories Britain would be vacating. During the first half of the 1950s, Britain continued to exploit traditional patterns of regional trade too extensive for the fledgling Indonesian government to control. Britain exercised its still significant presence as a world power, in contrast to the Republic of Indonesia, which from its inception was beset with disunity. The gold bullion episode, starting immediately after the war, provides a vignette of international tension in which Indonesian independence was in effect repudiated.

In various bank-vaults in Singapore, British authorities in 1946 recovered some of the loot of war – 19 000 carats of diamonds, some platinum and jewellery, 3 tons of bullion and a quantity of gold which had been mined during the war.¹ Initially, the Netherlands claimed the gold because the Japanese during the occupation had continued to operate a former Dutch goldmine in East Sumatra, renowned for its fineness, and this gold was then shipped from the Netherlands East Indies to Singapore. However, the Netherlands later withdrew in favour of Indonesia. Gold from Indonesia comprised the bulk of the loot. HMS *Anson* took some of this treasure to Britain in 1946 and it was 1951 before Indonesia requested its return.

The British response was dismissive. Dr Nugroho of the Indonesian embassy in London pointed out that it remained the property of Indonesia, claiming that the gold was from the Bengkalis mine in East Sumatra because of its uniquely fine quality. He informed the British that 'no other gold mine in South-East Asia could have produced the quantity or fineness of gold' as was found in Singapore in 1946. Britain at first refuted the Indonesian claim by contending that the fineness of the gold indicated it already was refined, consequently obscuring its origin. Later, an offer by Britain to give Indonesia half merely antagonised the newly independent republic.

In 1952, a formal claim by the Indonesian Trade Commission in Singapore was again rejected, even though the claim was reduced to half the bullion.² The Custodian of Enemy Property was not satisfied with the evidence presented. 'The onus is on the claimant,' came the dilatory ruling, 'firstly to establish the claim ... and secondly (if established) to show that the Japanese were not entitled to take or retain the property.'

In an attached memorandum regarding the diamonds, British authorities privately noted that 'there was strong evidence of an Indonesian origin'. Indonesia was forced to wait until 1957, however, before receiving any compensation for the diamonds, which had been in Britain's possession for more than a decade – and then the agreement was that the loot of diamonds should be equally divided.

Indonesia's quest to regain the gold – even half the gold – was a story of 'diminishing returns'. In 1952, the custodian in Singapore claimed that the bullion was derived from 'gold collected from the public (in Singapore and Malaya) by force, as contributions to the Japanese Imperial Forces' between March and July 1942. Yet another memorandum clearly illustrated the ulterior motive: 'We hope to get some money out of the exercise for Her Majesty's Government.' Britain also refuted Indonesian ownership of any of the remaining gold by claiming that the Sumatran mine was still Dutch when the gold was mined, so that Indonesia must also be prepared to validate its proof of ownership. In 1958 – after Indonesia's \$5 billion expropriation of all Dutch investment that had remained in the country after independence – the Netherlands renewed its claim to the gold from Sumatra, but Britain refused to relinquish control.

The British embassy in Tokyo advised the Foreign Office:

It is true that we can offer no evidence that the gold in question had not previously been acquired by the Japanese in Sumatra.

In July 1958, the government of Singapore suggested the rest of the gold be shipped to Britain, smelted, then returned to Singapore for sale. 'If re-smelted in Singapore,' came the accompanying explanation, 'it would give rise to the publicity which this Government wishes to avoid.' In London, the Treasury intervened: 'Is the proposition not a very questionable one indeed?' On 6 April 1959, Brigadier Buck from Headquarters, Far East Land Forces in Singapore, urgently requested the War Office to attend to the matter and said that he wanted the bars 'smelted out of recognition':

When the Netherlands resumed its case in late 1959, the Indonesian claim was pushed aside altogether. The struggle to regain the gold was quintessentially a replay of the principle of sovereignty which was at stake in the struggle for Indonesian independence. The presiding maxim then, as now with the gold, was that possession was nine-tenths of the law. This time, however, internal political and economic conditions weighed against a favourable outcome for Indonesia.

Nationalist economics

During the Cold War of the early 1950s, Indonesia set its initial course between the power blocs. This was a reflection of continuing internal political diversity as much as Indonesian idealism, but its goal of attaining an independent foreign policy encountered immediate pitfalls. When the demand for strategic raw materials declined, during a stalemate in the Korean War, there were repercussions in the Indonesian economy.⁹ Within the context of the Cold War, Indonesia sought a more equitable trading policy after the Sukiman Cabinet resigned in February 1952, having compromised its independence in the 'Mutual Security Aid scandal'. Cochran, the American behind the scandal, was the same who had been operating during the revolution at the time of Madiun. His role in 1952 led Indonesia, in the opinion of Herbert Feith, into 'a formal ideological surrender':

The fact that Sukiman had a close working relationship with the US Ambassador, H. Merle Cochran, cannot have been without importance, particularly as Cochran had come to have a very active interest in Indonesian politics and was zealous, in this year of the Korean war and of McCarthyite power in the US, to woo Indonesia to a position of more active anti-communism.¹⁰

While relations with the Soviet Union had not yet been normalised, Indonesia recognised and traded with the Peoples' Republic of China. Nevertheless, the developing Indonesian economy still largely depended on continued good relations, first with the United States, for a market for its traditional plantation products and for a source of economic assistance, and second with Singapore, the focal point where its export trade converged before distribution. A re-emergence of the PKI in the early 1950s, and President Sukarno's anticolonial stance against Netherlands New Guinea did not, at this stage, ruffle the British colonial presence in Singapore, Malaya and Borneo. After 1951, official trade between Britain and Indonesia declined.¹¹ Unofficial trade – particularly the Singapore-bound smuggling that the British had condoned during the time of revolution – continued into the 1950s, much to the chagrin of Indonesia. The loss of revenue, compounded by the reluctance of British authorities to stem the illegal trade, caused an irritating friction which ensured that relations, while not unfriendly, fell short of being good. In addition, territorial violations of fishing zones and instances of over-enthusiastic redress caused relations to

rankle in both parties, so that the Colonial Office and Indonesia, in effect the region's adjoining ships of state, began to grate.

In claiming national sovereignty over the archipelago, Indonesia also acquired responsibility for many infractions of maritime law, which were endemic in the Malacca Straits. When pirates in the Malacca Straits robbed eight Malayan fishing boats in December 1953, an Indonesian patrol boat, the *Djuana*, was despatched in response. The following October, when 300 Malayan fishing craft escorted by a Royal Navy vessel and a British plane were travelling in the straits past Bengkalis, one of the fishing boats strayed too close to the Indonesian coastline. It was apprehended by the *Djuana*, possibly on suspicion of dealing in contraband. Before any inspection was carried out, however, a Royal Malayan Navy boat intervened in Indonesian territorial waters and secured the release of the boat. Both Indonesia and Malaya realised that such disputes were having 'an unfavourable influence' on their bilateral relations.¹⁷

Worse was to come. Sir Donald MacGillivray, the high commissioner of Malaya, reported an incident which occurred on 17 May 1955. So serious did MacGillivray consider the clash with Indonesia that he personally wrote an account to London. A government trading vessel from the Federation of Malaya, heading to Penang from Singapore, was stopped by an Indonesian patrol boat, the *Djakarta*. The crew were helmeted and wielded sten guns. When the same Indonesian vessel two days later stopped a Malayan fishing vessel, some of the crew were struck and their wristwatches stolen.¹⁸ An account of the incident for the Colonial Office by the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation described it as 'particularly flagrant', and part of 'a fairly long history of lawless incidents in Indonesia since the war'.¹⁹ Indonesians, in their efforts to reduce the level of smuggling, were resorting to extreme measures because their government regulations seemed to have no effect. British authorities regarded smuggling as a problem for the Indonesian government alone, despite the obvious benefits to Britain resulting from their inaction. The government in Jakarta perceived the British to be gloating over the Indonesian predicament. When this contentious subject was discussed by both parties in 1955, the British noted that smuggling:

is carried on between Malayan ports and Indonesia, in spite of all the efforts made by the Indonesians to tighten their controls. The attitude of the Malayan Government in this matter has been that it is for the

Indonesian authorities to make their controls effective: it would be incompatible with Singapore's position as a free port for restrictions to be imposed on the entry of goods into that port.¹⁶

From the early 1950s, Indonesia tried to stanch its export revenue loss, which was simply draining into Singapore because of Jakarta's inability to regulate the flow. Hostility towards the Chinese operators and British overseers increased, even in the trade that was within the Indonesian government guidelines, because dealing through Singapore resulted in a foreign-exchange loss for Indonesia which accrued to the sterling area.

Under the terms of a special trade agreement between Singapore, the Federation of Malaya, and Indonesia, made in 1948, Indonesia was:

enabled to share in the US dollars earned by the exports of these goods to the extent to which these exports are deemed to comprise Indonesian produce. In calculating the Indonesian share of US dollar earnings, account is taken of the US dollar value of goods of US dollar origin which are sold by Malayan merchants to Indonesia.¹⁷

In other words, Indonesia stood to lose on exports and imports.

The government of Indonesia announced in early 1953 that import licences would no longer be issued for imports from Singapore, Penang and Hong Kong, other than for goods of local manufacture or imported through the barter trade. Indonesia complained that goods were costing 10 per cent more than they should be. Because of the discriminatory trade laws, exports from Singapore to Indonesia fell from S\$401 million in 1952 to S\$215 million in 1953. Indonesia even placed a ban on Singapore-manufactured biscuits as an indication of the measure of despair. Malaya's share of the total Indonesian trade fell from 20 per cent in 1950 to 13 per cent in 1953, and this trend reflected:

the cumulative effect of restrictive and discriminatory practices by Indonesia upon trade with Malaya with a view to drastically reducing that trade.¹⁸

The economic downturn induced by Indonesian trade restrictions compounded problems that were already critical in Malaya because of the Emergency, with the result that Indonesian endeavours to establish some equity in trade reflected badly on Jakarta in the presiding Cold War climate.

In 1954, representatives of Malaya, Singapore and Indonesia discussed the crisis. The stated intention of Indonesia was to build up direct trade with other countries, and she naturally wanted to purchase her goods on the cheapest market, provided the quality was satisfactory. Indonesia saw no advantage in purchasing from Singapore goods which might be obtained more cheaply elsewhere, and wanted Singapore merchants to realise that Indonesia felt deeply about past malpractices. The Indonesians let it be known that their:

past experience of dealings with Singapore merchants had not always been very encouraging, as it sometimes appeared that inferior goods had been exported to Indonesia at exorbitant prices, regardless of the effect of this on future relations.²⁷

Indonesia imposed more trade restrictions. While the Indonesian economy was impaired by this move, even more damage was inflicted on Singapore and Malaya. By 1955, Singapore's rubber-mill factories and the salt-fish industry were paralysed by the trade difficulties with Indonesia. Hundreds of rubber-mill workers were made jobless, while rubber piled up in Indonesia instead of being shipped to the Singapore mills. The value added to the rubber by milling in Singapore left the US-dollar return to Indonesia seriously reduced. The restriction on the export of slab-rubber was designed to encourage the processing of it within Indonesia, while seven of Singapore's eleven milling factories were made idle. About 35 per cent of all trade into Singapore from Indonesia (excluding contraband) was rubber, according to 1954 official figures.²⁸ Affected as well was the coconut-oil industry because Indonesia was the main source of coconut oil for Singapore; and by 1955 the textile trade with Indonesia was reduced to one-fifth of its former volume. The British response was critical of Indonesia's actions, which were seen as seeking 'to induce Singapore to act as their agent in defeating smuggling'.²⁹ The geographical proximity of the Riau islands to Singapore made them rife with smuggling. For the Indonesian government, customs, import and export, and exchange controls were powerless to enforce the law – Malayan currency (the Straits dollar) was circulating 'to the almost complete exclusion of their own currency' (the Indonesian rupiah). British authorities were aware that the conditions in Riau were 'a source of great dissatisfaction to the Indonesian government', and that they regarded it as 'incompatible with the dignity of a sovereign state'.³⁰ Again, a flippant response – that it was up to the Indonesian government to induce the inhabitants

of Riau to use their currency – did nothing to alleviate the Indonesian distress at seeing Riau undergo virtual economic annexation. By November 1954, because commercial relations between Singapore-Malaya and Indonesia had continued to deteriorate over the previous year,²² Britain too was feeling the effects, and the Colonial Office was notified by the Board of Trade: 'Indonesian restrictions on trade with Singapore and Penang are having serious effect on UK exports.'²³

When the restrictions began, the political implications were not immediately apparent because the stringent effect took hold slowly. At first, the restrictions created a reluctant realisation in Singapore and Malaya that Jakarta, lacking the colonial sway of bygone days, had replaced its predecessor's commercial acumen with nationalist euphoria. Indeed, the government in 1952 was struggling to maintain unity throughout the diverse archipelago. Already there was internal dissension in the army and in the *Darul Islam* breakaway movement, and more regional unrest was brewing. The responsibility of Jakarta for political decisions that acted directly on the economy also influenced the Dutch companies that remained in Indonesia after independence – in agriculture, oil, banking, shipping, and aviation. Only after 1955 did Jakarta begin to assert its national identity with the aplomb of a member of the international community. That year, quite apart from Sukarno's overseas tour to the Eastern and Western blocs, Indonesia was on the international stage.

A major turning point in the acquisition of national self-confidence was the Afro-Asian conference at Bandung in April 1955. Organised by Indonesia, Burma, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, the Bandung Conference hosted twenty-nine countries representing the majority of the world's population. The most prominent of these was China, and the most prominent delegate Zhou Enlai.²⁴ In Sukarno's opening address on 18 April, he reminded the delegates:

For many generations our people have been the voiceless ones in the world. We have been the un-regarded, the people for whom decisions were made by others whose interests were paramount, the peoples who lived in poverty and humiliation. Then our nations demanded, nay fought for independence, and achieved independence, and with that independence came responsibility.²⁵

Sukarno observed that a common experience bound together the nations represented at Bandung, the 'experience of previous enforced subservience to the West'.²⁶ Colonialism, he stressed, was not yet dead.

Indonesia's nearest neighbour, Malaya, was still under British rule and so not invited to the conference. Dr Burhanuddin and Ibrahim Ya'acob attended, however, 'lobbying strenuously for official recognition as the true voice of Malayan nationalism'.²⁷ Ahmad Boestamam, who had been imprisoned by the British in Malaya seven years earlier, was released only in June 1955, and soon after formed the People's Party of Malaya, the *Partai Ra'ayat*.²⁸ The avoidance of war between the United States and China was given priority on the Bandung Conference agenda, and so the participation of Pakistan in the SEATO military alliance with the United States was a cause for concern. Nehru called for an 'unaligned area', to prevent the world being divided up between the two blocs, as the inevitable result of that would be war.²⁹ As well, an ideological difference arose over the concept of 'coexistence'. On the one hand, the struggle against colonialism required joint action, but the question arose as to whether or not that would be contrary to a primary aim of the conference, that of avoiding war. India was critical of China's advocating even regional armed struggle against Western imperialism.³⁰ These two issues, non-alignment and anticolonial armed struggle, became contentious issues in Indonesian affairs throughout the remainder of the Sukarno era.

As a result of the Bandung Conference, Sukarno and Indonesia achieved unprecedented international status, and in the wake of Bandung, Indonesia held its first elections. These conferred a collective self-respect on the people of Indonesia, not merely in legitimising their government by democratic procedure, but in having achieved the seemingly impossible task of polling. There were two dozen political parties, 43 million registered voters,³¹ and myriad polling booths scattered across sixteen electoral districts throughout the archipelago – and the elections took place without serious incident. Herb Feith has pointed out that West Irian was included (although still occupied by the Dutch as Netherlands New Guinea).³² The elections seemed to confirm the national integrity of the unitary state. The results showed four main parties had clearly delineated mass support – the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) gained fifty-seven seats out of a total of 257, two Muslim parties (Masjumi and Nahdatul Ulama – NU) gained fifty-seven and forty-five seats respectively, and the PKI gained thirty-nine seats.³³ It was a triumph of democracy, yet the ideal of consensual politics proved illusory.

Two months earlier, in July 1955, elections were also held in Malaya where the political scenario was an extraordinary contrast with Indo-

nesia. Only 1 250 000 persons were registered to vote; most Chinese did not enrol.⁴⁴ The conservative 'Alliance' coalition between the Malay Chinese Association and UMNO, under Tunku Abdul Rahman, whose platform sought independence from Britain, won fifty-one of the fifty-two elected seats.⁴⁵ The Tunku adopted the same slogan Indonesia had used during the struggle for independence — *merdeka* — freedom. Thus canvassing the widest support, the quest for independence not-yet-achieved generated remarkable unity of purpose. It was the loss of this natural political momentum that Sukarno found counterproductive once Indonesian independence was won. After the Indonesian and Malayan elections, the Tunku visited Jakarta:

... the Tunku was invited to pay an official visit to Indonesia by the Burhanuddin Harahap government, a Masjumi-led, strongly anti-Communist 'caretaker' government which welcomed the opportunity to make this gesture of solidarity with a fellow-Malay leader who was opposing colonial rule. Otherwise there were few notable landmarks in Indonesian-Malayan relations during the early 1950's, about which little has been written.⁴⁶

Singapore's first chief minister, David Marshall, having just won also in the first real election there, was another who visited Jakarta at the time of the Indonesian elections in 1955. The urgent purpose of Marshall's visit was to solve the trade war between the archipelago and the peninsula. British authorities looked askance at Marshall's 'goodwill visit', doubting its efficacy when Indonesia had adopted 'a hostile attitude'⁴⁷ — but Marshall improved on his colonial superiors' expectations. Yet, by his very success, he inadvertently helped to relieve the political pressure on the British colonial role in Malaya, which had increased during 1954-55 because of the deteriorating economic climate. Marshall arranged for the immediate release for export to Singapore and Malaya of 12 000 tons of wet-slab rubber, which had been banned from export for one year. As well, salt-fish imports into Indonesia were renewed. Even more significantly, he was prepared to extend the arrangements for converting into US dollars the proceeds of Indonesian produce re-exported from Singapore and Malaya to the 'American Account Area'. Not only did Marshall choose the right time to visit Jakarta (as soon as the new Burhanuddin cabinet had come into office),⁴⁸ but also he chose the right approach to break the trade deadlock. A working party the following month helped prepare for an economic mission at ministerial level to resume trading relations.

There was deep-seated enmity between the Indonesians and the British. The Secretary of State believed that Indonesia had a 'special animus against Singapore because its commanding position as entrepôt conflicts with their nationalistic policies'.¹⁰ In reply to this, a Singapore official summarised the effect of Indonesian anticolonialism on the populace of British Malaya so that London could put the trade-war into political perspective. The clamour for self-government and independence was not as pronounced in Malaya as it was in Singapore, but was rapidly becoming a matter of urgency:

This feeling that Malaya is being exploited cannot be dismissed as uninformed propaganda. It appears to be widely held by the mercantile and producing middle classes, although as far as we know it has not become a major issue for the people generally. The danger is that the question of Malaya severing itself from the sterling area might become a political issue.¹¹

Sir R. Black referred to the danger that the idea of the 'sterling area' might become coupled in the mind of the Malayan voter with colonialism. There was no doubting the attraction in Singapore of anti-colonial ideology: with a US-dollar-based economy, Singapore 'would enjoy the same freedom as its rival Hong Kong'.

The Indonesian role in this dilemma of decolonisation facing Britain was more than its past example of independence through revolutionary struggle or its present example of continuing anticolonial fervour. Far from being a nebulous anticolonial concept, the Indonesian trade war was expediting the very need for Britain to decolonise. That the economy was in recession was partly the doing of Indonesia, because the conditions created by the Emergency were seriously aggravated by the trade war. Indonesia, therefore, was in effect exporting its revolution by turning the mercantile class in Malaya against the colonial overlord.

Marshall was aware that the animosity between Britain and Indonesia was mutual. To avoid any loss of impetus after his 'goodwill' mission, he insisted that any British officials at the talks should attend as observers only. In his opinion, if there were any direct negotiations between the Indonesians and the British, the talks would falter. This objection to British participation in the talks drew a reminder from the Secretary of State of the power behind the facade:

The Malaya/Singapore delegation would not have status as representatives of [the] sovereign independent state and [the] agreement would be

ratified by [a] third party who was not present at negotiations, i.e. HMG in UK.⁴¹

Ratification was stalled by Britain's ultimate veto and in September 1956 the talks came to an inconclusive end. As a result of Marshall's friendly foray to lessen the severity of the trade war, the internal political pressure in British Malaya was reduced. With this urgency removed, but the resumption of trade still on terms unfavourable to Indonesia, hope for a negotiated settlement dissipated. In any case, Malaya was on the verge of *merdeka*, thus defusing the anxiety and anticolonialism which could otherwise be expected to resurface there in the event of another trade war. Preparations for a Malayan constitution were well-advanced.⁴² *Merdeka* talks started in January 1956 (involving a Malayan delegation, the Colonial Secretary, the high commissioner, and the UK Minister of State) and independence was granted on 31 August 1957.



The intensity of the trade war conducted by Indonesia against British Malaya and Singapore was reflected in British Borneo where political tension with Indonesia increased. British Borneo was comprised of a protectorate, Brunei, the territory of North Borneo, and Sarawak – the latter two fashioned into colonies only at the end of World War II. Brunei was an enclave of Sarawak with access to the South China Sea, but did not border Indonesia. The land border of Sarawak, however, was contiguous with Indonesian territory for 1000 kilometres adjoining East and West Kalimantan, and the other newly created British colony.

The territory of North Borneo, which also shared a border with Indonesia, was formerly under Chartered Company rule.⁴³ The British North Borneo Company had administered the country but did not engage in trade. It derived revenue from the leasing of land to individuals and companies, from customs and excise, and from taxation, and had recruited its own civil servants in Britain. In the 1950s, however, under the administration of the Colonial Office, interaction between North Borneo and Indonesia was mainly through the large number of plantation workers from East Kalimantan. These did not pose any political problem; on the contrary, they were essential to maintaining output, because the shortage in labour in North Borneo remained serious for more than a decade.

The protectorate of Brunei, having the highest-producing oilfields in the British Commonwealth,⁵¹ was a vital part of Britain's postwar economy. The Seria oilfield in Brunei first began producing oil in 1929 and was connected, by a pipeline running southwards, to the Lutong refinery near Miri in Sarawak, which was the site of an earlier discovery, on 10 October 1910. The British Malayan Petroleum Company (BMP), a Royal Dutch Shell subsidiary, made the Seria discovery. BMP's parent company, Anglo-Saxon Petroleum, derived its initial impetus from the Miri discovery, which was strategically important as the only access to oil in the Far East for the British navy. Raja Brooke originally offered the Miri concession without charge to Anglo-Saxon's general manager, Sir Marcus Samuel, the founder of Shell.⁵² The prewar oilfield region of Brunei and Sarawak lay in a long, narrow coastal belt, 'forty-six miles long and nowhere more than three miles wide'.⁵³ During the war, the Japanese constructed a pipeline northwards to utilise Brunei's excellent harbour, Muara, but Britain resumed oil exports from Miri after both the colonial boundary and the refinery were reconstructed. When the Colonial Office secured the termination of the Brooke dynasty at the end of the war, thereby creating a new colony, and the Sarawak high commissioner also assumed responsibility for administering the protectorate, the sultan of Brunei considered this colonial arrangement an affront. Before the Brooke interlude, Sarawak has been a vassal of the sultanate, yet now it dominated Brunei. Nevertheless, the arrangement effectively secured the outlet and the source of the oil under one British administration.

BMP resorted to expulsion of employees to ensure political stability. There was unrest at Seria in September 1946, when one-third of the 1798 workers went on strike. These were joined by another 417 employees at the refinery, the destination of all Seria oil. All who went on strike were Chinese technicians and operators, seeking extra food rations and better wages. An investigation into the unrest concluded that the strike was inspired by political events in Singapore, and organised by the Chinese Engineering Mechanics Association,⁵⁴ many of whom were returned to China. Some replacements were sought locally; many came from Burma.⁵⁵ Because the Malays on the town board in Miri were becoming 'more vociferous than the Chinese', the re-emergence of labour unrest was predicted by the officer who compiled a report, Assistant Commissioner O.W. Wolters. He tendered some further advice that it seemed an opportune time to approve the formation of trade unions.⁵⁶ Seria's high productivity, the area's excellent

prospects, and the vulnerability of the workforce to labour unrest made BMP acutely aware that the reoccupation of British colonial territories defied the ideals of the Indonesian revolution. Britain had forestalled the spread of Indonesian anticolonialism when it had previously been galvanised by 'Tan Malaka,' and were now determined to ensure that no Chinese or Indonesian revolutionary ideology seeded any anticolonialism in postwar Brunei or Sarawak.

Sarawak became a British colony only in 1946, having experienced a century of rule by the white rajas, the Brookes. In Sarawak in the late 1940s and early 1950s, anti-British (but not necessarily anti-Brooke) sentiment was evident in right-wing and left-wing groups.¹¹ A right-wing Malay anticeSSIONIST group assassinated the second postwar governor of Sarawak, Sir Duncan Stewart, on 3 December 1949; three years later, a Sarawak police officer was shot, purportedly by a left-wing group. These were extremist groups without significant domestic, popular support, but the British kept a wary eye on the possibility of Malay radical nationalism receiving support from either Malaya or Indonesia.

Colonial authorities in British Borneo were shocked by the intensity of nationalism in Sarawak when Sir Duncan Stewart was stabbed by a nineteen-year-old Malay opposed to the postwar cession of Sarawak. Persistent radical nationalism posed a continuing threat to the lives of prominent colonial officials, as evidenced by a Colonial Office stipulation that the new governor be unmarried. Sir Anthony Foster Abell was appointed. Travelling by ship to Sarawak, he was aware of the impending changes that decolonisation must inevitably bring, and yet also aware that, in his dual role as governor of Sarawak and high commissioner of Brunei, he was still the ultimate authority. Some 'unaccompanied baggage' travelled on the same ship, a stark symbol of his colonial power – the gallows to hang the assassin who had dispensed with his predecessor.¹²

Abell also brought with him the zeal of a democratic reformist. The most glaring legacy of the Brookes was the exalted position of the Malay minority. Once Abell took office, he noted that dissatisfaction with the British still:

was expressed in the anticeSSION movement, purporting to stand for the return of the Brooke regime, but a few of whose more violent members undoubtedly looked to union with Indonesia as a means of restoring the privileged [Malay] position.¹³

Only the Indonesian radical nationalist Yamin continued to express aspirations of acquiring British Borneo as part of a 'Greater Indonesia', reminiscent of Tan Malaka, but otherwise Indonesia remained unreceptive to such intimations. Territorial expansion – as long as the Indonesian claim to Netherlands New Guinea was seen as part of the former Indies empire – was not on the Indonesian agenda.

The assassination of Stewart in Sarawak acquired an unwelcome parallel in Malaya in October 1951, when guerrillas shot the high commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney. Both incidents awakened memories of the killing of Brigadier-General Mallaby in Surabaya by Indonesian nationalists. Then, in August 1952, another crisis broke in Sarawak, necessitating the declaration of a temporary state of emergency, similar to the Malayan Emergency. On the night of 5 August, shots were fired from a car at a police roadblock by members of the 'Sarawak-Indonesia People's Liberation Army'. They shot dead a policeman, Corporal Natu, and wounded other persons in the Kuching district of Sarawak. In Abell's initial reaction, he announced:

There is little doubt, from the evidence available, that this gang – which was dressed in some sort of uniform and which has distributed communist-inspired leaflets and used a five-star flag seal – was a unit of a subversive communist underground movement.⁷¹

Abell acted quickly to nip insurrection in the bud. North Borneo police were flown in to supplement the Sarawak constabulary. A summary of the crisis later stated that 'officials said the outrage was the beginning of communist terrorist activities in Sarawak'. 'The identity of these officials was never revealed; nor the real identity of the so-called Sarawak-Indonesia guerrilla group. A Reuters report on security during the emergency, encompassing the Brunei oilfields, noted that 'there were no further incidents after the early days of the emergency', and attributed the fact to the state of vigilance created by having declared the emergency. 'There was an air of unreality about the 'guerrillas' whose brief appearance prompted the emergency. In a subsequent and more subdued reference to this Sarawak-Indonesia group, made by Abell in 1955, he dismissed it simply as 'an armed gang' of criminals, not an underground political movement. 'There was some reason to believe that the gang came from Indonesia,' he added. 'An address of a Chinese who, according to Special Branch, was responsible for the murder of the Sarawak police officer in 1952, was given to Indonesian police in 1955. There was no reply, but in July

'it was heard' this person was in prison in Indonesia.' If the Sarawak-Indonesian People's Liberation Army was no more than an armed gang, perhaps no more than one murderous individual, who, then, was responsible for conjuring up the political fiction in the first place, and why?

Because the emergency resulted in a far tighter security net around the oilfields, there is no doubt the emergency benefited the British Malayan Petroleum Company (BMP). Before the emergency ended on 16 January 1953, the managing director of the oil company, R.E. 'Hector' Hales,⁷ had offered to meet the extra cost of increasing the police wages in Brunei to more than the Sarawak level to ensure adequate police protection for Seria:

Hales said the company was very willing to give any assistance they could, either financially or otherwise, regarding the question of increased police protection.⁸

The other assistance offered by BMP was also accepted by the high commissioner and his chief secretary: Chinese-speaking members of the BMP intelligence network were made available to Special Branch.⁹ Although the apparatus of colonial authority in Sarawak and Brunei was supposedly preparing for decolonisation, this goal was put in jeopardy by the acceptance of BMP intelligence staff, because increasingly, in response to intelligence input, the resources of the government would serve the interests of the oil company.

Abell started constitutional reform by addressing the bias against the Chinese,¹⁰ by which the Brooke regime had systematically sought to benefit the Malays. His initiative soon waned when links between Sarawak and the People's Republic of China were deemed subversive. With some Chinese in alliance with the colonial authorities and some not, the Malays a minority, and the indigenous Dyaks not yet conversant with the Westminster concept of government, Abell rued the patriarchal felicity of Brooke rule. Decolonisation in Sarawak could easily turn against the British interest if the political affiliation of right-wing and left-wing Chinese was not clearly delineated. By the end of the emergency on 16 January 1953, 'more than thirty Chinese were arrested ... [and] deported to Communist China'.¹¹

The BMP manager, Hales, was also anxious to deport Indonesian oil employees. These were known as *romusha*, Indonesian labourers who had been transported to Sarawak and Brunei by the Japanese during the war, and subsequently employed by BMP. Hales, in 1953,

explained that after some earlier incidents perpetrated by Brunei Malays in association with Indonesians, he 'took the opportunity of sending a number [several hundred] of them back to their own country'. But in 1953, Hales pointed out, 'an Indonesian element ... unfortunately still exists in our midst'. To counter the 'Indonesian clubs' that were 'attempting to draw together the remaining Indonesians with Brunei and some Sarawak Malays', BMP established its own security intelligence organisation:

It is only since we have set up our own security organization, which has resulted in closer liaison with Government on these matters, that our knowledge of underground activity in the area is being clarified insofar as existing channels of information permit.⁶⁷

Forty Indonesian employees remained. In Hales' opinion, they were linked to the unrest in the Brunei-Malay workforce and so posed a potential threat to oil production.

The implied hostility of BMP's intention to enforce the return to Indonesia of these last few *roussia* was one of the main topics during British-Indonesian negotiations in Kuching in October 1953. Eleven Indonesians, representing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, took part in this meeting. Several other matters were included in the discussions: the unmarked boundary, and the problems for those indigenes and Chinese who lived on the frontier and who wished to visit relatives on the other side. Both sides talked about 'the subject of communism and the means whereby its spread could be checked'.⁶⁸ The 'entertainment' that the British hosts offered their Indonesian guests seemed more indicative of a war mentality. The Indonesian visitors to Kuching on 16 October 1953 were shown a police training school, a demonstration of jungle fighting tactics by the Field Force, and a demonstration of riot drill. During the afternoon, the band played 'The Retreat', and then the group visited a Red Cross clinic.⁶⁹ No conclusive agreement was reached in October 1953. The Indonesian government in West Kalimantan and the Sarawak government did agree, however, that all matters of mutual concern in the future should be discussed by local arrangement with the resident co-ordinator in Pontianak, capital of West Kalimantan.⁷⁰

Symptomatic of the downturn in bilateral relations in the wake of the trade war between Indonesia and Singapore-Malaya, Indonesian vigilance along its sea boundaries increased in 1954. On 30 June, seven Sarawak fishing vessels were seized by Indonesian patrol boats in

Indonesian waters and taken to Pontianak.¹⁰ An official investigation into this incident brought Indonesian and British representatives to the negotiating table. In addition to the resident of West Kalimantan and representatives of various government departments, there were four extra officials from Jakarta, and some details on these were recorded by the British. Their status – from Foreign Affairs, the attorney-general's office and police headquarters – indicated the seriousness with which Jakarta viewed the matter. The fourth person, E.S. Pohari, was from Security Intelligence. Remarkably, he was described as having:

much experience of working in conjunction with Special Branch, Singapore ... (He) has undergone a course of training with M.I.5 in London.¹¹

British influence was exceedingly well placed among the Indonesian representatives.

To conduct these negotiations, officials from Sarawak visited Pontianak from 13 to 17 September 1954, and met with their Indonesian counterparts for talks which ranged over a variety of border transgressions – the twenty-two boats boarded by Indonesian patrols so far that year, the murder of a Sarawak Chinese trader (probably by Indonesian Dyaks) in July 1954, a possible extradition treaty between Sarawak and Indonesia, and the problem of Chinese entering Indonesian territory on British passes but without British nationality. The Indonesian chief of police complained that many cross-border visitors from Sarawak carried rifles and shotguns. For this the British apologised, saying it was against the law, but when Indonesia requested that an Indonesian consul be established in Kuching, the British refusal was adamant.¹²

The climate of suspicion continued with news stories of so-called 'liberation commands', and border transgressions by both land and sea. Coinciding with the conclusion to the talks in Pontianak, there was an Indonesian news report of anticolonial sentiment surfacing in British Borneo. The British press drew attention to the Indonesian claim under the headline 'Britain Accused by Indonesia':

The Indonesian News Agency which is Government-controlled claimed in a despatch yesterday that there were widespread disturbances in the British territory of North Borneo. These were being suppressed by force.¹³

A Colonial Office spokesman denied this. He pointed out that in Sarawak (not North Borneo), British authorities had closed a secondary school 'because it had been found to be a hot-bed of Communism', but otherwise there was no disturbance. The Indonesian newspaper

report apparently confused the name of the territory with the generic title 'North Borneo', which was sometimes used to describe all three states, Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo. The report continued:

It may be the herald of attempts by the Indonesian authorities to stir up trouble in North Borneo. The Indonesian Agency claimed that British military police units are opposing Nationalist elements composed of Malays, supported by Chinese Communists.

British authorities in Singapore notified the Foreign Office immediately: the governor of Sarawak, Anthony Abell, officially denied these reports. On 5 November 1954, Abell visited Jakarta for three days to discuss Indonesian relations with Sarawak. He came away with the impression that the Indonesian News Agency story was concocted. The story that 'Malay nationalists have been joined by pro-Communist Chinese and were being harassed by British Military Police units'²³ had been 'invented by Indonesian journalists when hard up for news.'²⁴

Abell was ready to dismiss the 'threat from Indonesia' as no more than a journalist's joke, but links between Sarawak and Indonesia captured the news on the very day of his return. On 8 December 1954, Sukarno was requested by the 'Liberation Command of the Population of Sarawak' to place the status of Sarawak before the United Nations. 'The next day, another report indicated a right-wing counterpart 'liberation movement' was still active, and had also requested Indonesian assistance. Prompted by this report, the surviving Brooke put out a press release, which read:

With reference to the reports ... that there is a 'liberation movement' advocating that the prime minister of Indonesia should sponsor the return of the Brookes as rulers of an independent state of Sarawak, Mr Anthony Brooke stated that his own attitude (as confirmed in an exchange of telegrams with Mr Attlee in February 1951) remained unaltered.

Abell concluded the Indonesian news story about Malay nationalists and Chinese communists was concocted, but did not consider the distinct possibility that British sources may have supplied this news to the Indonesian press. The 'liberation movement' request for Indonesian assistance may or may not have been similarly prompted.²⁵ The unfavourable propaganda against Indonesia – at this stage – was a means of strengthening on-site protection for the politically volatile Brunei oilfields.

Political instability in Borneo inevitably focused on the smallest territory, Brunei, disproportionately important because of the rich-

ness of its oilfields. In Brunei, by the mid-1950s, a charismatic political figure had appeared, Sheikh Ahmad Mahmud Azahari, capable of inspiring independence not only in Brunei, but also in the neighbouring territories of North Borneo and Sarawak. Unlike the Indonesians who had caused labour disruption on the oilfields earlier – those 'left behind by the Japanese' – Azahari, who was from Brunei, had been taken away by the Japanese during the war, to Indonesia. Upon his return to Brunei, after the Indonesian revolution, Azahari was treated by the British as though he were the nemesis of colonial rule. The British oil company and British intelligence became preoccupied with the political ascendancy of Azahari. He was closely monitored by British authorities in Brunei from the early 1950s. So important a figure was he – at the forefront of 'Indonesian confrontation' in 1963 – that the early British appraisal of Azahari should be more closely examined, particularly his links with Indonesia.

Notes

1. CO 1022 251 178/179/02.
2. CO 1022 252 178/179/03.
3. CO 1030 414 14/15/03, Part A.
4. *Ibid.* Letter from government of Singapore to Secretary of State for Colonies, appended from 'CO Ref. SEA 198/179/83'.
5. CO 1030 414 14/15/03, Part A.
6. The amount of \$5 billion was given by former Dutch Foreign Minister, J.M.A.H. Luns, when he was NATO secretary-general. Interviewed by G. Poulgrain, NATO Headquarters, Brussels, 15 July 1982.
7. British embassy, Tokyo, to FO, 14 April 1958, CO 1030 415 14/15/03, Part B.
8. CO 1030 415 14/15/03, Part B.
9. Rudolf Mrazek, *The United States and the Indonesian Military 1945-1965: A study of an Intervention*, Oriental Institute, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Prague, 1978, vol. 1, p. 105.
10. Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project Monograph Series, Ithaca, 1970, p. 192.
11. Saul Rose, *Britain and South East Asia*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, p. 163.
12. CO 1022 198 82/83/01, Part A.
13. Sir D. MacGillivray to Secretary of State, 21 May 1955, CO 1022 198 82/83/01, Part A, Item 38. MacGillivray's predecessor was Sir Gerald

- Templar, who left in late 1953 when the worst of the 'Emergency' was over.
14. Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation to Colonial Office, 19 June 1955, CO 1022 198 82/83/01, Part A, Item 45.
 15. CO 1030 198 82/83/01, Part A.
 16. *Ibid.*, Part A.
 17. Governor of Singapore to Secretary of State, 22 October 1954, CO 1030 198 82/83/01, Part A.
 18. CO 1030 198 82/83/01, Part A.
 19. CO 1030 199 82/83/01, Part B.
 20. Sir R. Black, Singapore, to Secretary of State, 12 October 1955, CO 1022 199 82/83/01, Part B.
 21. CO 1030 198 82/83/01, Part A, paragraph 6.
 22. The commissioner-general, Malcolm MacDonald, to Foreign Office, 6 November 1954, CO 1030 198 82/83/01, Part A.
 23. E. Lamb, Board of Trade, Commercial Relations and Exports Department, to Colonial Office, 18 November 1954, CO 1030 198 82/83/01, Part A.
 24. Zhou Enlai narrowly missed assassination on his way to Bandung. When another plane carrying Chinese delegates exploded *en route* to Indonesia, it was said to have been the work of Western intelligence. Remnants of the plane are still available for public viewing in Indonesia. Interview, Roeslan Abdulgani, secretary-general of Bandung Conference, Jakarta, 23 May 1991.
 25. George McTurnan Kahin, *Asian-African Conference, Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1956, p. 41.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
 27. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi - The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, p. 27.
 28. Gordon P. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, University of London Press, London, 1970, p. 239.
 29. Kahin, p. 66.
 30. This was the essence of the rift which later developed between the Soviet Union and China, particularly over the issue of Malaysian Confrontation: while both were vying for influence over the PKI, the issue of whether power should be sought by means of armed struggle proved divisive.
 31. Herbert Feith, *The Indonesian Elections of 1955*, Modern Indonesia Project Southeast Asia Program, Ithaca, New York, 1971, p. 39.
 32. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 58. Masjumi - Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims; NU - the Rise of the Religious Scholars.
34. J.M. Gullick, *Malaysia*, Ernest Benn Ltd, London, 1969, p. 133.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 133.
36. Mackie, p. 27.
37. Sir R. Black, Singapore, to Secretary of State, 12 October 1955, CO 199 82/83/01, Part B. Marshall was leader of the Labor Front, and a strong advocate of immediate self-government for Singapore. He was born in Singapore, of Persian-Jewish ancestry, 'not British, Chinese, Indian or Malay'. See Ronald McKie, *Malaysia in Focus*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1963, p. 91.
38. The '27th June 1955 Affair' brought about the downfall of the Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet, a coalition of PNI and NU. The Burhanuddin Harahap cabinet was Masjumi and PSI - a more right-wing coalition. See Feith.
39. Secretary of State to Sir R. Black, Singapore, 7 July 1956, CO 200 82/83/01, Part C.
40. Sir R. Black, Singapore, to Secretary of State, 12 October 1955, CO 1030 199 82/83/01, Part B.
41. Secretary of State to governor of Singapore, 7 July 1956, CO 200 82/83/01, Part C.
42. Means, p. 171.
43. See K.G. Tregonning, *Under Chartered Company Rule (North Borneo 1881-1946)*, University of Malaya Press, Singapore, 1958.
44. *Petroleum Press Service*, February 1951, pp. 51-2.
45. I. Swemble, 'Indonesia, British Borneo and Burma', in W. Pratt and D. Good, *World Geography of Petroleum*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1970, pp. 273-300. Also, the author is indebted to B.A. Hanuzali, PhD, for his expertise on oil history in this region when interviewed at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Kuala Lumpur, 30 July 1990.
46. Survey of British North Borneo, Bruner and Sarawak. Prepared under the direction of chief of staff, Military Intelligence Service, War Department General Staff, 15 June 1943. War Memorial Archives, Canberra, p. 36.
47. O.W. Wolters, October 1946, A Report of the recent visit of the Assistant Commissioner for Labour, Selangor, to Sarawak and Bruner in connection with Labour Unrest in the Oil Fields of Lutong and Seria, October 1946. CO 954/192344, p. 3.
48. E.L. Johnson, administration officer with BMI* at Miri (Sarawak) and

- Seria (Brunei) from 1952-61. Interview, Shaftesbury, Dorset, UK, 21 July 1991.
49. Wolters, p. 12.
50. See chapter 1.
51. A right-wing Malay anticolonialist group assassinated the second postwar governor of Sarawak, Sir Duncan Stewart, on 3 December 1949. See Sanib Said, *Malay Politics in Sarawak 1946-1966. The Search for Unity and Political Ascendancy*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1985, p. 56. A Sarawak police officer was shot in 1951, purportedly by a left-wing group. See below, note 54.
52. Interview with Sir Anthony Abell, conducted by written questions because of his failing health. The questions were put by an intermediary, Mrs Margaret Young, a personal friend of the governor since the 1950s. London and Andover, UK, June 1991.
53. Brief for Minister of State prepared by Abell, 1956. CO 1030 164 59/5/01, Item 54. Abell did not suggest that Indonesia reciprocated in any way.
54. Governor's address to Council Negri (Sarawak's ruling body), 5 May 1953. CO 106 40/321/01. An earlier robbery at the market (hence the roadblock) was attributed to the same group, which was easily identified as communist because of the literature they left at the scene of the crime.
55. CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 68.
56. 'Security, Seria Brunei, 5 March 1953', Reuter. CO 1022/396.
57. CO 718 212/154/01, Item 1.
58. *Ibid.*, Item 1.
59. Roland Edward Hales acquired the nickname 'Hector' from his school-days, according to a former senior BMP employee, E.L. Johnson, now retired in Dorset, UK. Pers. comm., 23 September 1992.
60. Dr W.L.F. Nuttall, BMP London Office, St Helen's Court, to W.B.L. Monson, Colonial Office, 5 March 1953, CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 72.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
62. In 1954, the Sarawak population (613 000) comprised 180 000 Chinese, 150 000 Malays, the remainder Dyak or other 'native peoples'. In North Borneo (377 000), the majority were 'native peoples', with 89 000 Chinese. In Brunei (56 000), half were Malays, 19 per cent Chinese and 17 per cent Kedayan, the remainder 'native peoples'. CO 1030 164 59/5/01.
63. CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 68.
64. 'Notes from extract of letter from the Managing Director of British

Malayan Petroleum Company Ltd', 11 February 1953, to BMI⁹ Director, Dr Nuttall, in London. Nuttall was in close liaison with the Colonial Office, CO 1022 396 328/8/01.

CO 1022 443 436/535/01.

Ibid.

CO 1030 202 82/269/01.

Because of the peculiar shape of the maritime boundary between Sarawak and West Kalimantan, including the Bunguran island group in the South China Sea as Indonesian territory, sea travel between Kuching and Singapore was not in a direct line. Circumventing Indonesian territory involved a 200-mile diversion to the north, around the Bunguran group.

CO 202 82/269/01 (CO 203 and 204, which might contain further information on Pohari, will not be released until 2007.) Although Pohari was working with Indonesian intelligence, his primary allegiance may have been to Britain, or to Japan. Pohari and Nishijima were arrested together by the Dutch in 1941. During the war, Pohari served with the Japanese equivalent of the Special Branch, the *Kempetai*. In 1957, he worked as a public prosecutor in the Indonesian consulate in Singapore. During the 1958 Outer Islands Rebellion in Indonesia, Pohari (critical of Sukarno's leadership) was based in Singapore as a link between the foreign supporters and the Sumatran rebels. See Masashi Nishihara, *The Japanese and Sukarno's Indonesia: Tokyo-Jakarta Relations, 1951-1966*, Monographs of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1976, pp. 49, 59. Pohari has refused, when contacted by the author, to answer questions on any subject.

CO 1030 202 82/269/01.

Daily Telegraph, 14 October 1954, cited in CO 202 82/269/01.

Ibid.

This description from a Foreign Office report (14 October 1954) of the news stories, CO 1030 202 82/269/01. Attention should be drawn to the significance of the formula, Malay nationalists with Communist Chinese. It was reminiscent of the 1946 period in Malaya, with the MNP *vis-à-vis* the MPAJA. Moreover, as shown in subsequent chapters, British intelligence utilised the same formula in 1962-63, involving Brunei Malay nationalists and Sarawak Chinese communists, at the start of *Konfrontasi*.

Whiteley, of the Colonial Office, met Abell in Singapore after his return from Jakarta, and summed up Abell's account of the news stories with the same air of flippant dismissal, 9 December 1954. CO 1030 202 82/

269/01.

75. This was reported by Radio Hilversum, in the Netherlands, 8 December 1954, cited in CO 202 82/269/01.
76. The second report came, not by radio, but from United Press. CO 202 82/269/01. The authenticity of these reports, which called on Indonesia to help effect political change in Sarawak, cannot be verified. Records which may indicate the true source of these reports have been withheld by the Public Record Office for a period of fifty years, so they will not be opened before 2007.

Regarding Anthony Brooke's role, see Anthony Brooke, *The Facts About Sarawak – A documented account of the Cession to Britain in 1946*, Summer Times Publishing, Singapore, 1983.

77. A prominent member of this 'liberation movement' was a Malay activist named Zulkith (or Zulkipli). In 1962-63, he played an important role disseminating information during the Brunei rebellion. Zulkipli, according to A.M. Azahari, who was the acknowledged leader of the rebellion, was then linked with British intelligence. Zulkipli's political affiliation in 1954 remains unknown. Source: A.M. Azahari. Interviewed by G. Poulgram, Bogor, Indonesia, 10 August 1990.

AZAHARI, THE SULTAN AND THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

A.M. Azahari bin Sheikh Mahmud was a Brunei Malay, born into a family that had friendly links with the sultan of Brunei, whose lineage preceded the first arrival of European colonialism. Having participated in the Indonesian revolution, Azahari returned to Brunei Town from Jakarta in 1951, under suspicion by British officials.¹

Azahari's return was at first refused by the British resident of Brunei, E.E.E. Pretty. No official reason was given for this refusal, but doubtless, the security of the Brunei oil industry was an important factor. The managing director of BMP, Hector Hales, claimed not merely that Azahari was 'indoctrinated' by revolutionary ideology, but that he was 'on leave' from Java, where he was alleged to be employed by the Indonesian government. 'Having taken part in the Indonesian revolution, Azahari was regarded as a Sukarno-phile, an exponent of revolutionary ideology, and politically undesirable.

Hales, who established a security intelligence network under the aegis of BMP, actively defused any sign of pro-Indonesian sentiment. At the time Azahari was contemplating his return to Brunei, the prevailing political climate was one of surveillance and suspicion, as described by Hales:

After the war and following Indonesian independence, a few societies, some legally registered, others not, began to make their appearance in this part of the world [Brunei and Sarawak] ... They were kept under surveillance by the Police and appeared to be relatively harmless, except for one or two incidents involving some of the Indonesians left behind by the Japs, following which we took the opportunity of sending a number of them back to their own country.²

This action created uneasiness among the remaining Indonesians who, it was observed, began to amalgamate more with Brunei Malays and Sarawak Malays.

Another reason why Azahari's return from Indonesia was at first refused was that his social position lent authority to his point of view, inevitably promoting his politics. Indeed, it was only through his family's

links with the ruling circle in Brunei that Azahari was able to return. When he rose to prominence in the mid-1950s, as founder and leader of a political party (*Partai Ra'ayat Brunei* – PRB), the British colonial authorities adopted the view that Azahari and the PRB were anticolonial and pro-Indonesian. It was soon apparent that Azahari had political aspirations to reunify the territories of British Borneo, but the preconception of the British authorities was maintained. As the significance of Azahari's plan cannot be dissociated from Brunei's own history of contact with colonialism, an introductory overview of this pre-20th-century period provides insight into Azahari's political perspectives.



Brunei inherited the structural hierarchy of the sultanate of Malacca after the historic conquest in 1511 by Albuquerque.¹ Malacca, during the previous century,² was made the focus of seaborne trade between the West and the East by Chinese and Muslim merchants. To avoid Portuguese rule,³ many Muslim merchants transferred their headquarters to Brunei, or to ports along the northern coast of Java, or Aceh, in Sumatra, which became a new centre of commerce. After the fall of Malacca, formerly 'the centre of Moslem learning in the Indonesian area', Brunei became a stronghold of Islam; so strong that Brunei sent naval forces to assist in Aceh and in Java, and in 1568–72 attempted to drive the Spanish out of the Philippines.⁴ In retaliation, the Spanish governor, Francisco de Sande, occupied Brunei in April 1578, but his attempted annexation ended in disaster. As explained by de Sande, informing King Philip II:

'It was God's pleasure that the Moros [Muslims] should be conquered and take to flight ... [and] it was God's will,' he continued, after cholera compelled a Spanish withdrawal, 'that all my soldiers should fall ill.'

The Brunei sultanate continued to exact tribute from lesser kingdoms along the vast coast of the island of Borneo, but with difficulty. In 1704, the sultan sought the assistance of Sulu mercenaries (from the Sulu archipelago between Borneo and the Philippines) to quash rebellion in the northern part of the island. As a reward, the sultan of Sulu assumed control of a tract of territory – approximately the territory of North Borneo – but whether this involved the cession of the territory was not clear. When Spain was the colonial power with jurisdiction over the Sulu archipelago, the stated territorial demesne of Sulu excluded the tributary area of Borneo.⁵

Spanish and Portuguese hegemony, and rivalry, was replaced by British and Dutch.¹¹ In Malacca, the Portuguese flag fell after 130 years, captured by the Dutch in 1641, and claimed by the British in 1795 to ensure Napoleon did not gain control of the Malacca Straits. Anglo-Dutch feuding over commerce and colonies was finally stamped out, or so it was declared officially, with the Treaty of London in 1824. Malacca and Dutch posts in India were turned over to the British, and Bencoolen in Sumatra handed to the Dutch.¹²

In 1865, the United States consul at Brunei, Charles Lee Moses, obtained a ten-year lease of the greater part of North Borneo from Sultan Mumin of Brunei. The American Trading Company of Borneo, under Joseph Torry, its president, tried unsuccessfully to found the American colony of Ellena in the territory. In 1877, Alfred Dent, a British businessman whose interests in Hong Kong were among the largest in the Far East, joined with Baron von Overbeck, the Austro-Hungarian consul in Hong Kong, to obtain a lease of the territory of North Borneo. Because doubt already existed as to the sovereignty of the territory, a second lease was obtained from the sultan of Sulu covering a large portion of the territory previously acquired. The British Foreign Office viewed the American presence in Borneo as a strategic threat to their interests.¹³

Intermittent regional uprisings in the Brunei sultanate, at times with foreign support, caused the territory to disintegrate piecemeal. The south and east of this once great sultanate, which controlled the large island of Borneo,¹⁴ was appropriated by the Dutch, but the north-west (most advantageous for the China trade) came under the influence of James Brooke and British interests in the mid-19th century.¹⁵ Thus, colonial conquest generated the new cartographic entities, Sarawak and North Borneo. Brunei was reduced to a thumbnail portion of the former sultanate.

Azahari and his forebears were close to the Brunei ruling circle. The powerbrokers in this ruling circle were the *Pengiran*s, a term indicative of membership of the royal family. The addition of *Duli* was equivalent to 'Your Highness'. The leading two were the *Duli Pengiran Bendahara* and the *Duli Pengiran Temenggung*. In 1885, one of the latter succeeded to the throne upon the death of Sultan Mumin and assumed the title of Sultan Hasim. Sultan Mumin had allotted in perpetuity the island of Kamgaran, in Brunei's Muara Bay, to Azahari's grandfather, Sheikh Abdul Hamid, of Arabian descent. The title *sheikh* indicated the bearer was a leader and holy man among the many pilgrims,

or *hajjis*, who ventured to Mecca. Sultan Hasim signed over Brunei to become a British protectorate in 1888. No longer did the sultan have full sovereignty, and the 'ruling circle' no longer managed any Brunei foreign affairs of any importance. As with the term 'colony', in which foreign control was only marginally greater than a 'protectorate', both implied a deficiency of status.¹⁰

Labuan, an island off Brunei Bay, became the centre of British colonial power, which was consolidated in 1906 with the establishment of a British resident for Brunei. The sultan was required to accept the advice of the resident on all questions other than those affecting Islam.¹¹ By the 20th century, all but the extant remnant of the sultanate was dissipated by territorial cession. Raja Brooke claimed large portions of Brunei for his state of Sarawak, while a British chartered company occupied the territory of North Borneo, formerly part of the sultanate. Relations between the Brunei people and their sultan continued under British auspices, with any indigenous misgivings muffled by the grandeur of the British empire. The wedding of Azahari's parents¹² was conducted in Labuan at state level, with the British resident directing an official naval-gun salute in honour of a close relative of the sultan. As a child in prewar Brunei, Azahari had known Omar Ali Saifuddin, the younger brother of the sultan, Ahmed Tajuddin, the twenty-seventh sultan of Brunei. In 1932, Omar Ali Saifuddin and the two young sons of the regent¹³ were sent to a college at Kuala Kangsar, in Malaya, the sultanate of Perak. This was the first time Brunei princes had received an English education. Azahari learnt English in Brunei because he was able to attend a special school for that purpose.

At fifteen years of age, Azahari was selected by the Japanese wartime administration in Brunei to attend school in Indonesia, to study veterinary science. Arriving alone in Jakarta with what appeared to be inadequate documentation to sustain his claim he was on a Japanese scholarship, Azahari was temporarily detained by the *Kempetai* (secret police). Only when a representative from the military administration in Jakarta intervened was he able to proceed south to Bogor. In the Dutch colonial days this town was called Buitenzorg, meaning 'place without worry', nestled in the foothills of the central range with a wetter, cooler climate. The veterinary institute provided full accommodation for ninety-three students, mostly Indonesians. As the sole representative of Brunei, Azahari soon met his counterpart from Sarawak, Achmad Zaidi, whose friendship later developed into a political union in the quest for independence. The students at the Bogor Insti-

stitute had been chosen by the Japanese because they had displayed scholastic aptitude and talent.²⁰ During the war, when food shortages were not uncommon in Bogor, the students remained in a privileged position, with good quality food and housing. Learning the Japanese language was obligatory. The Japanese commander is commemorated by a plaque at the present-day institute in Bogor, where he is buried, having committed suicide at the end of the war.²¹

Azahari began a four-year course but only half was completed by mid-1945. He then joined the *Badan Keamanan Rakyat* (the BKR, was the precursor of the TKR, the *Tentara Keamanan Rakyat*), which became the Indonesian army under General Sudirman.²² Zaidi, for a brief period, joined an Indonesian intelligence section before returning to Sarawak in 1947, the year after Sarawak was ceded from the Brooke dynasty to Britain. Upon his return, Zaidi recounted some of his experiences of the start of the independence struggle in the *Sarawak Gazette* (1 October 1947). Some Indonesians (he explained) thought the British Gurkhas, when they first arrived, were Dutch mercenaries from Amboin, and for that reason were attacked.²³ Azahari remained in Indonesia for the duration of the war of independence against the Netherlands.

In September and October 1945, Azahari was involved in protests and skirmishes near the port, Tanjung Priok, when British troops disembarked, accompanied by some Dutch. The BKR (which became the TKR on 5 October) was involved in more fighting at Tanah Tinggi, using Japanese weapons. Azahari's first appointed task was in Banten, where he trained a group of twenty-seven recruits before they joined the TKR. To enable him to do this, he quickly acquired fluency in the Sundanese language. He spent one year in Banten. According to Azahari, the most serious incident which occurred in that time was the death of the Indonesian commander and seven others killed in action against Dutch forces near Tangerang, west of Jakarta. At a midnight ceremony, Azahari buried them in front of a mosque, an ordeal made more gruesome because the dead had been located one week after the battle. Shortly after, when he was visiting Jakarta, he was apprehended by the Dutch; they transferred him into British custody. Before Azahari was released, the British authorities were fully informed of his background and how he had become involved in the struggle for Indonesian independence.

When he moved to Purwakarta, south-east of Jakarta, he came under the direct command of Raden Muliarwan,²⁴ and under the overall

regional command of another who would play a significant part in Azahari's political battles in the 1960s – Colonel, later General, Sambas Atmadinata.

From 1946 to 1950, Azahari was based in Purwakarta. His contribution to the Indonesian independence struggle involved setting up a network of contacts in the area south-east of Jakarta, to report on Dutch activities. He delivered these reports to Sambas for assessment. Azahari travelled throughout the area for a month and a half to collect information, his youthfulness a factor which helped him cover the long distances that he walked regularly. In Purwakarta, he rested for a week, then began again.

Azahari's devotion to Islam²⁷ in the context of his revolutionary rounds brought him to the special attention of Islamic guerrillas, who were at times separate from the mainstream nationalist struggle. The most notorious of these were the followers of Kartosuwirdjo, who, after independence, struggled a further thirteen years under the banner of Darul Islam.²⁸ In 1948, at the time of the Madiun rebellion, when there was a splintering of the forces opposing the Dutch, Azahari recalled that many cried when they heard Sukarno's voice on the radio calling for Indonesia to choose between him and Muso. They cried too in 1949, when independence came.

Merdeka brought the end of Dutch colonial rule over Indonesians, and for the special occasion a man was sent to Jakarta to steal a car so that Sambas could ride to the capital in style. Azahari took part in the Indonesian independence motorcade procession in the other car from Purwakarta.

District military commanders were responsible for ensuring a peaceful transition to Indonesian rule. Meetings were convened before the euphoria of victory dissipated into factional rivalry. The appointment of Azahari to be chairman of the administrative committee for West Java, where Islamic separatism was a formidable force, no doubt took into account his familiarity with the Darul Islam leaders. Sambas, who had urged him to accept the position, was taken aback by the young chairman's dire prediction that there would be no peace in the region unless negotiations with Darul Islam were started. 'General' Amir Fatah was Azahari's closest friend in the rebel Islamic group. When the young chairman spoke strongly on the need not to ignore the problem of Darul Islam, Sambas accused him of acting as a spokesman, a charge vehemently denied. Azahari resigned. Several prominent individuals asked him to reconsider: the secretary of the government in West Java.

the leader of the West Java Masjumi (the main Islamic political party), and the chief of police of West Java. But he would not. Moreover, he resigned from his position as captain in the Indonesian military forces as further protest. No sooner had he done this than Sukanto, the national police chief, and his vice-chief Sumarto, approached Azahari to work in the company of Captain Suprpto from Purwakarta. It was a top position, and one that would have utilised his expertise and contacts in relation to the impending problem with Islamic insurgency. His rejection of the offer to be a leading officer in the police force of West Java would suggest his thoughts were already turning to Brunei.

Azahari's father in Brunei had had no idea of his son's whereabouts during the five years after the war. So surprised was the family in Brunei that they sent the eldest son to Jakarta in early 1951. They talked in the English language they had acquired in prewar school days. When Azahari's identity was confirmed, however, British Resident Eric Pretty blocked the application to return. Pretty, who had known Azahari's family before the war, tried to dissuade Azahari's uncle, the *Pengiran Temenggung*, from helping to secure the return of Azahari. 'Sukarno has poisoned his mind,' Pretty said to Azahari's father. The resident cabled his superiors in London, but the Colonial Office left this decision to the sultan.

Azahari was issued a travel permit by the British embassy in Jakarta, and flew to Singapore. His instructions were to stay with a Brunei family in Singapore until money was cabled. During the ten days that Azahari remained in Singapore, another student from Brunei introduced himself and proceeded to ask a barrage of political questions. This was Ahmad Zaimi, who later became a close associate in the PRB. The Brunei homecoming was by ship to Labuan, where Azahari met his father, then by launch across the bay to where his uncle awaited them in his car. With the exception of Zaimi (in Singapore), nobody in Brunei but Azahari's family, the British resident and the new sultan knew of Azahari's return.

Although the stance of Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin on Azahari's return seemed diametrically opposed to Resident Pretty, the new sultan actually owed his sudden elevation in power to the British. In the ruling circle in Brunei at that time, there was surreptitious conjecture on the death of Sultan Ahmed Tajuddin, in June 1950, in Singapore. British authorities there described the cause of death of the sultan as cerebral haemorrhage.²⁸ He was thirty-six years of age, his brother three years

younger. What concerned the Brunei ruling circle was the manner in which the new sultan of Brunei had usurped power on the death of his predecessor. Known to have the backing of Resident Pretty, Omar Ali Saifuddin confronted the ruling circle in closed session. With his kris in hand, he claimed the throne, demanding of those present to state their opposition or remain silent.

In this context, the approval of the new sultan for Azahari's return from Indonesia acquires a further political dimension, insofar as it was imperative the sultan maintained the confidence of the ruling circle. Azahari readily acknowledged the debt he owed to Omar Ali Saifuddin for approving his return, stressing that the legitimacy of the newly installed sultan was beyond question. With the apparent inevitability of decolonisation in the postwar era, and the manifest inevitability of the sultanate becoming flush with oil revenue, the supporting role of the British – even the colonial presence of the British in Brunei – seemed increasingly unjustifiable.

Brunei oil and the sultan

Oil permeated the succession controversy because of a threat made by Sultan Tajuddin to invite American oil interests into Brunei to break the BMP monopoly. This he intended to use as a political lever in the negotiations in London for increased oil royalties, but in Singapore, on his way to London, on 4 June 1950, he died suddenly.

Non-interference from the state in oil-company operations²⁷ was an additional privilege for BMP because Brunei was a British protectorate. Threatening to bring in American competitors, therefore, was not merely a ruse to force the British to pay higher royalties; it was a gesture directly threatening the political structure of British colonial rule. Because of the importance of Brunei, such a threat had ramifications for British colonial rule throughout the entire Far East. The subject of royalties, therefore, would have been the key to a Pandora's box of political complexities, had negotiations commenced in London.

In accordance with a Mining Enactment Law already in place, the BMP concession on Seria was for fifty-five years. Royalties of 2 shillings a ton continued until the 1948 Oil Mining Enactment, which increased the concession period by ten years and increased the royalties to 3 shillings and 9 pence (equivalent in Malay dollars to M\$1.60 a ton.) The 1949 revenue for Brunei from royalties was M\$5.6 million,²⁸ and for 1950 the revenue from royalties increased to \$17 million.²⁹

Increased production of oil during the next two years swelled the total annual revenue to \$65 million¹⁵ and by 1953 it topped \$98 million.¹⁶

In 1950, the oil output was 5 million tons a year – already more than four times the prewar level. The postwar production started from nothing after the Japanese surrender had left forty wells aflame. Within three months all had been extinguished, the speed of recovery reflecting the urgency of the situation in postwar Britain. Offshore oil seemed even more prospective, so BMP was extending platforms from the coastline thousands of feet out to sea. It was at this juncture, when development was proceeding apace, that Sultan Ahmed Tajuddin wanted to contest the existing royalty agreement, which remained low by world standards. In August 1949, he declared his intention to adjust the royalty rates and resolved to travel to London to negotiate an agreement.

Both the sultan and the ruling circle in Brunei were concerned with the implications of British administrative changes in 1948. Formerly, the colonial superior of the Brunei resident was the high commissioner of Brunei, which was held as a dual post by the governor-general of Malaya. But this arrangement was changed when a new position, commissioner-general for the United Kingdom in South-East Asia, replaced that of governor-general of Malaya. As of 1 May 1948, the Brunei sultanate agreed to accept Sarawak officers in the Brunei administration, and the governor of Sarawak became also the high commissioner of Brunei.¹⁷ The first appointee was Sir Arden Clark. In seeking an increase in royalties, Brunei was at the same time attempting to redefine its colonial status. At a time when increased oil output was providing a large revenue surplus for Brunei, its status was reduced, beholden to Sarawak, once a vassal-state dominated by Brunei. The sultan's complaint that the raja had no right to cede Sarawak to the British Crown¹⁸ placed him dangerously, albeit unwittingly, in the same camp as the pro-Indonesian anticolonialists.

As well, some personal rancour had surfaced between the sultan and the Colonial Office only months before the intended trip to London. The sultan had officially complained about the loss of state regalia and crown jewellery when Allied forces recaptured Brunei in the closing stages of the war. The sultan asked for \$64 630 and was insulted with the offer of only \$10 000 compensation. The British finally agreed to \$40 000, and an increased stipend for him (from \$3500 to \$5000 a year) and his wife (to \$500) and his daughter (to \$150). 'It is to be hoped this additional income may cause him to be less critical of his

treatment in respect of war losses,' commented the Brunei high commissioner.²⁸

Before leaving Brunei for London to negotiate the oil royalties, Sultan Tajuddin appointed a private secretary, Gerard MacBryan.²⁹ Four letters (later sighted by the British attorney-general in Brunei)³⁰ were given to MacBryan. These authorised him to be first, a political adviser to the sultan during his absence from Brunei, and second, guardian of the sultan's daughter, Princess Tengku Ehsan. A third was a letter of complaint on the subject of Sarawak, stating that he, Sultan Tajuddin, had not been consulted during the change in Sarawak sovereignty from Raja Brooke to Britain. Furthermore, as agreed in 1941, a sum of money was to be paid to Brunei in respect of the annexation of the Limbang area (in 1890) and, during the transfer of sovereignty, there was no mention of this payment. Sultan Tajuddin stated also, having first sought confirmation that neither Brunei law nor the law of Mohammed was contravened, that his daughter was the heir apparent. Finally, he advocated the creation of a British Bornean Union, pointing to political, strategic and economic advantages in a union of Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo. The fourth letter was the *coup de main*. It authorised MacBryan to approach Standard Oil to obtain an agreement with that company to begin operations in Brunei if BMP did not agree to a suitable increase in royalties. In his letter to Gerard MacBryan, Sultan Tajuddin wrote:

My sole desire is that from a financial point of view a reasonable resource should be available to me to relieve the distress and suffering of my people in a particular way I think right, and not in the way that the British Residents and High Commissioners and Agents think right.³¹

From the contents of these four letters, it was clear that the power of oil was enlivening a vision of empire, in anticipation of British decolonisation. In the opinion of the acting commissioner-general, the letters were 'open to question as [they were] unconstitutional'.³² Because the pervasiveness of British colonial control was the essence of the sultan's complaint in the first place, the dismissal of his letters on this count would tend to support (but not defend) the argument of the sultan. The letters were regarded as unconstitutional because they were written without first consulting the resident. It is difficult to surmise (apart from the fact that his eleventh-hour appointment of an heir apparent was, in effect, the writing of his will) whether the sultan fully appreciated the political implications of his threat to invite

in Standard Oil. Because the British resident had exclusive power to grant oil leases without reference to the sultan, to invite in Standard Oil was far more than simply a threat to use in bargaining. (A favourable response to the sultan's oil offer could be expected from the United States because communism was not an inhibiting factor as it was in Malaya.) The sultan was obliged by the Supplementary Agreement of 1905-06 to follow the resident's advice, but the sultan indicated he was preparing to defy the British Crown. His noncompliance would be grist to the mill of US anticolonialism.

Pretty, two days before the funeral of the sultan on 8 June 1950, proclaimed Omar Ali Saifuddin the successor of Tajuddin. One day before the funeral, MacBryan sent a telegram to the King protesting against the proclamation, naming the Princess Ehsan as the rightful heir.⁶⁴ The British ignored the wish of the former sultan that his daughter should succeed him. The following week, the Foreign Office contacted the Colonial Office concerning the convention of the *Bendahara* becoming the official heir. (Omar Ali Saifuddin had been appointed *Bendahara* in July 1947.) 'No future action by us seems called for until MacBryan takes action,' was the reply on 15 June 1950.⁶⁵ Two days later, the acting commissioner-general of South-East Asia⁶⁶ sent a telegram to London to inform the Secretary of State that no interference in the Brunei succession was expected from MacBryan. A Brunei state medical officer had certified MacBryan as being of 'unsound mind' and, after an order was made by a magistrate, he was 'conveyed to a special mental hospital' in Singapore. Pretty, the resident of Brunei, 'adopted (the) best possible course in the public interest', commented the acting commissioner-general.⁶⁷ MacBryan's confinement greatly assisted the British colonial authorities in placing their choice of successor on the Brunei throne. As these dramatic events subsided, Whiteley observed that 'there have so far not been any Press reactions.'⁶⁸

On 26 October 1950, MacBryan wrote a letter to the editor of the *Times* in London, dealing with the 'sudden death of the Sultan'.⁶⁹ The Colonial Secretary summarised the contents of the letter for the benefit of the high commissioner of Brunei in four points: revision of treaties, the Limbang issue, the succession, and the proposed Union of Borneo territories. He then added that 'it was not intended to take cognizance of the letter' unless the matter was raised in parliament, and he concluded authoritatively: 'I assume that in fact none of the above questions were ever raised officially with you by the late Sultan.'⁷⁰ MacBryan's whereabouts at this time was given on the letter as '3 Reform

Avenue, Melrose, Johannesburg'. Perhaps because of MacBryan's reputation for eccentricity and drunkenness, and because, at the time of the letter, he was decidedly removed from Brunei, the matter was put to rest. When MacBryan visited London, he was 'stonewalled'. The coronation of the new sultan took place on 10 May 1951, without any message from the king of England, but implicit approval was given one month later by the appointment of the sultan to be an Honorary Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George. E.E.F. Pretty retired as resident in August 1951. His successor, J.C.H. Barcroft, began by arranging for the sultan to receive a new Austin automobile.

The steps taken by Britain to ensure BMP was ensconced in Brunei resulted in an American response critical of both the colonial administration and the monopoly it maintained on Brunei oil. This criticism, representing the position of Standard Oil, was delivered by a firm of economic consultants and investment advisers, Ashton Greene, based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The British territories in Borneo were described as 'a curious survival into the 20th century of the East India Company period'. Harking back to the original reason for British colonisation of this northern part of Borneo – the proximity to China – Ashton Greene issued an implicit warning: Communist China now might regard its proximity to Borneo as advantageous. In this global context, the critique issued several strong raps on the 'closed door' policy pursued in British Borneo:

Rehabilitation and development has proceeded at a rapid pace in the development of oil resources, but not so fast in the economic and social sphere of native relations ... The negligible royalties (were) going for the upkeep of the British forces and for gifts to the Sultan and his tribal leaders ... That Britain deliberately prevented any interference from 'enlightened' American companies shows that she was not enthusiastic over our policies in development of backward areas and/or she knew a good arrangement when she saw it."

Nonspecific reference was also made to the 'intense nationalism going on in Asia', and Ashton Greene asked whether this 'foothold for British Far East oil' was not a 'tenuous outpost'. Twin dilemmas seemed to be haunting postwar British colonial rule in the Far East – Chinese communism and Indonesian nationalism.



In 1953, when the BMP manager, Hales, was anxious to deport the final forty Indonesian employees," he deliberately depicted them and

Azahari, and the unrest in the Brunei Malay workforce, as a threat to continued oil production. When BMP in London described the perceived threat to production posed by Azahari's activities, the picture was distorted over and above the accusation that Azahari was a radical nationalist and an agent of the Indonesian government; now he was also described as a communist. 'The Managing Director of British Malayan Petroleum Company has been reporting Communistic activity in Brunei,' BMP in London informed the Colonial Office.⁵⁰

In Brunei in 1953, Azahari inspired a large public demonstration that was peaceful but extremely disconcerting for the colonial authorities because of its popular support. Hales described the demonstration as comprising Brunei Malays 'in association with an Indonesian element which unfortunately still exists in our midst'⁵¹ – referring to Azahari. Having resumed life in Brunei, visited all his family and friends, and paid his respects to the sultan, Azahari applied to the government to register a company to be known as the Brunei Film Production Company. He proposed to raise M\$250 000 through the issue of shares. 'Both Government and ourselves were immediately suspicious,' commented the BMP manager, '[and the] Government decided to refuse his application.'⁵²

Azahari's intention to form a film company had a simple political motive: to illustrate the injustice of British law.⁵³ There was no provision for a Brunei citizen to form or participate in such a company. The Societies Enactment was all that existed, so if prohibited from forming a company, Azahari would protest as a Brunei citizen, along with all the other citizens who were prevented from becoming shareholders. According to Abell:

[Azahari] returned recently to Brunei and started almost immediately to stir up trouble, preaching an anti-colonial and pro-Indonesian creed. His persuasive tongue and superior education gained him considerable support, particularly among the young rank and file of the Police and the junior grades of the Civil Service; even His Highness and some of his Ministers at one time showed some interest in the film project.⁵⁴

The sultan personally expressed a desire to become a shareholder, and withdrew only when the colonial authorities refused to register Azahari's business venture.

On 23 January 1953, several months after the initial government refusal, a deputation presented a petition to the British resident, J.C.H. Horcroft, to reconsider the application to form the Brunei Film Company.

The deputation, consisting of Azahari and two of his brothers, Sheikh Muhammad and Sheikh Osman, was accompanied by a large crowd, which soon turned into a demonstration involving more than a thousand people. Azahari sought permission for the crowd to gather; because the European police officer for Brunei was away, approval for the gathering was given by E. Q. Cousins, the State Treasurer, who was also a member of the State Council. In the opinion of the B.M.F. manager, the matter was 'rather unfortunately handled by one of the senior Europeans in Government who gave permission for the whole deputation to wait upon the Resident'.¹⁰ When told by the resident that the gathering was unlawful, the crowd remained calm, and Azahari and his brothers retired nearby to the house of their father, Sheikh Mahmud. Azahari's uncle, *Pengiran* Kerma Indera Muhammad, also lived near the resident. 'The majority of the crowd was quite good humoured and obviously did not realize they were taking part in a demonstration against the Government,' commented Hales.¹¹ Hoping the resident would reconsider, the large crowd waited patiently, seated between the resident's house and the house of Azahari's father. As the arrest of Azahari while still inside the house would have raised legal complications, several police officers coaxed him and his companions outside, on the pretext of the resident requesting their presence again. Proceeding to meet with him, they were arrested.¹²

On 29 January, Azahari and seven others (including a third brother, Nikman) were charged with being 'members of an unlawful assembly, the common object of which was to overawe by criminal force or show of criminal force, the Government of the State'.¹³ The magistrate, Mr G. A. T. Shaw, the assistant resident, sentenced Azahari to imprisonment for one year. Shaw said he would not have the peace of Brunei disrupted, 'particularly if there is any suspicion that such a move is originated outside the State', on which the *Straits Budget* aptly commented:

The suspicion presumably does exist. But there is no evidence of it in the court records, and had any witness introduced this not unimportant matter during the proceedings the records certainly would have mentioned it.¹⁴

Perhaps even more ominous was the similarity between Shaw's suspicions and Hales's advice to London. After admitting that he 'assisted as closely as possible' in the events after the Film Company demonstration, Hales reported:

What is becoming apparent is that there is a shadow organisation trying to amalgamate the various factions in Brunei towards 'nationalism' and

the possibility cannot be overlooked that support may be forthcoming directly from Indonesia.⁵⁷

The well-known Singaporean lawyer (later the chief minister) David Marshall, was requested by Sheikh Mahmud to conduct an appeal, which was heard on 4 March 1953. The prison sentences of all but Azahari were reduced to three months; his was six months and a fine of \$500.

Two days before the appeal, a false rumour began – creating a crisis – that the forces loyal to Azahari were on the verge of rebellion. This rumour began after six constables from the oilfield detachment deserted, thoughtfully leaving a note to say they were ‘joining the resistance forces in the jungle’; and another rumour was that *all* the police were about to ‘hand over their weapons to the Indonesian Labour Force on the oilfields and desert en masse’.⁵⁸ The six police who ‘deserted’ – resigned would be more accurate – deposited their weapons in the police station before leaving.⁵⁹ Hales mentioned this discursively in a report to London. ‘A few days ago,’ he explained, ‘a rather fantastic report reached our ears ...’

an armed uprising was being planned here in Seria. Knowing something of the very immature organization existing in this Indonesian-Malay movement, both Government and ourselves were reluctant to attach much credence to the story, but the threat itself was ominous enough, as it envisaged mobbing the Police Stations, taking over arms stored there, and subsequently rounding up the entire European community!⁶⁰

Fantastic though the rumour was, it created an atmosphere of panic prior to Azahari’s court appeal. Abell, high commissioner of Brunei, condoned the rationale and response of the resident in calling for additional support:

The British Resident then decided, quite rightly in my view, that the police in the oilfield were so demoralized that they could no longer be regarded as an effective force.⁶¹

from the governor of North Borneo, British Resident Barcroft obtained eighty non-Malay police, sixty of whom were ‘fully armed and very well trained’.⁶² The RAF assisted in bringing these to Brunei, so they were fully effective within six hours. The oil company arranged all the necessary transport and rations in Brunei. ‘If only the Brunei Fina Company had not been banned,’ quipped the *Straits Budget*, ‘an excellent news reel might have emerged from all this.’⁶³ Abell arrived

in Brunei on the day the appeal was heard. One incident – and, as it was the only incident, it must be considered the highlight of the ‘rebellion’ – was reported by Abell:

In Seria, during the night of 5th March, two men are said to have demanded the revolvers of security guards on an oil installation but, when challenged, they ran away ... My appreciation of the situation is that it is not immediately dangerous and certainly does not warrant the declaration of a State of Emergency in Brunei.⁶

There was no evidence of any plans for an armed rebellion. Notwithstanding the arrest of two persons on a charge of ‘spreading malicious rumours prejudicial to the internal security and welfare of the community’,⁶ the rumours at the time of the court appeal served the interests of Hales but not Azahari. As with the Sarawak-Indonesia People’s Liberation Army, Hales’ oil intelligence network could have started these rumours as easily as other rumour-mongers, and with greater effect. Undeniably, it was in Hales’ interest to tighten oilfield security, and he emphasised this:

I am doing all I can to convince Government of the need to improve oilfields Special Branch work and Police protection.⁷

Abell’s assessment of how Azahari influenced Brunei affairs was unduly derived from BMP intelligence and its director, Hales:

the Managing Director of the British Malayan Petroleum Company informs me that his Malay employees show signs of discontent and in his opinion the teachings of Azahari have penetrated very deeply into the urbanised Malay community of Seria ... [and] it is only to be expected that, in the near future, Indonesia will take a keen interest in Brunei with its people of similar origin, language, culture, religion, and especially its great potential wealth. If the Brunei people begin to consider that their individual enrichment is being balked by the controlling British authorities, it seems not unlikely that they will turn for help and liberation to the Indonesian Republic.⁸

After the North Borneo contingent returned, Abell informed London that he blamed the instability in the Brunei police to ‘penetration by (an) Indonesian Nationalist Movement.’ He differed from Hales, however, in stating that ‘there is no indication of communist influence’.⁹ Arrangements were made for a contingent of Sarawak constabulary to be posted to Brunei, and the paramilitary Sarawak Field

force began to serve on site at Seria. As well, Hales suggested that BMP establish a force of oil-company police.⁷²

Meanwhile, Azahari had done nothing to reassure the authorities of the reliability of the police. During the course of his imprisonment, his warden, Mesir Karuddin,⁷³ had decided after long talks with Azahari in his cell, to resign from the police and join Azahari's political circle.

Azahari was released in June 1953. In July, the Brunei chief secretary questioned the reliability of Special Branch reports, which resumed straightaway on Azahari. According to these reports, as soon as Azahari was out of prison he restarted his activities – 'recruiting youths for subversive organizations with a view to attacking vital points and important persons at an early date'.⁷⁴ A second platoon of Sarawak police was sent to Brunei. That these reports were questioned was a significant change. But the question was not asked whether the Special Branch and the oil company's intelligence organisation were merely fabricating the reports in order to heighten tension, and so be doubly assured of oilfield security. Rather, it was the accuracy of the reports, not their veracity, that was in question; or, employing the radio analogy, they were more concerned with finetuning than first ensuring they had the right station. The climate of suspicion, created by the news stories and 'liberation commands', facilitated the return of some Indonesians and Chinese to their respective countries.

At the same time, Chinese were, of their own volition, returning to China. These comprised three types: students and teachers (some leaving British Borneo temporarily, for extra tuition), families who returned to China for economic reasons after a downturn in the rubber price, and old people who were returning to China as their final resting place. From North Borneo, 271 Chinese left in 1953; from Sarawak, 829, and from Brunei, twenty-seven Chinese.⁷⁵ British authorities were keen to stem the tide of students and teachers returning to China for educational purposes, and attributed their wish for an education in China to teachers who were disseminating communist ideas. At the Chung Hua middle school in Kuching, seventeen students were expelled and a new board of management installed in 1952, to no avail: more than two years later, the newspapers still decried the 'Big Red Peril In Schools'.⁷⁶ The practice of imprisoning or deporting some students and teachers who were considered political agitators, to reduce the overall number of students and teachers who were returning to China, may have seemed logical from the British perspective, but

did not have the desired effect. In many instances, it was reported that 'suspected persons fled to China or Indonesia before the warrants could be executed'.⁷ The harder the British tried to eliminate communist influence, unable to distinguish between reasonable Chinese patriotism and communism, the more anti-British the Chinese became. Among this generation of schoolchildren were those who, later in 1962, when threatened with arrest, would flee to Indonesia – thus becoming the catalyst of anticolonial fervour which turned into *Konfrontasi*.

In Brunei, deportation was considered also for Azahari, but this would involve sending Azahari, a natural-born citizen of Brunei, to Indonesia. Instead, another way of dealing with Azahari was proposed by Abell's chief secretary. He suggested that Azahari should be 'rusticated', removed to a remote village in Brunei.⁸ Apparently oblivious to its implications of colonial authoritarian rule, the Defence Department conducted a comparative review of the practice and policies on deportation and rustication.⁹ Whiteley, in the Colonial Office, suggested that rustication was preferable because 'surveillance can still be exercised over "Mr. A" and he will be under control'. Moreover, rustication would attract less advertisement.¹⁰ When the Secretary of State was informed of this possible solution, he insisted that *his* authority be sought before this step was taken, pointing out that rustication did not differ in essence from deportation – the power of the government 'to deport from the territory persons belonging to the territory without judicial enquiry'.¹¹ Both, he stressed, involve interference with the liberty of the individual.

Increased surveillance and legislation designed to deter opposition to British rule led to three arrests in October 1953, with sentences of up to two years for conspiracy and sedition. Involved were three hot-headed Brunei Malays, Mohammed bin Haji Manggol (who had been involved in the Film Company demonstration), Jais bin Haji Karim, and Garip bin Haji Manggol. With Azahari in mind, rustication legislation was enacted in Brunei, 'without much difficulty', although it was 'very unpopular'.¹²

Azahari was neither deported nor rusticated. On the contrary, he formed a firm friendship with the new British resident, J. O. Gilbert. Gilbert reported that Azahari was fully occupied running his bus company (many of the workforce at the oilfields depended on it), and added that he was 'no longer the troublemaker he was expected to be'.¹³ The bus company employed seventy-two workers. Gilbert and

Azahari became close friends, but when the suggestion came from Gilbert that he utilise the expertise of the young Brunei politician in the public service, the Colonial Office disapproved. Several other businesses were developed by Azahari during Gilbert's residency – a quarry and stone-crushing business, a stationery outlet, and a twice-weekly newspaper *Suara Bakti* (Voice of Service). The Brunei government assisted in establishing the newspaper with two loans totalling \$135 000.¹ Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this apparent transformation was that Azahari had not changed at all. His friendship with the British resident effectively countered the BMP propaganda and Special Branch surveillance that had beleaguered his every activity since his return from Indonesia. Azahari still pursued his political aims, now with the assistance of his former prison warden.

When Mesir Karuddin (Azahari's former warden) left the police force, he returned to the Temburong area in Brunei from which he came. Using the authority he formerly had in the Police, which provided him permanent status in his area, Kampong Menengah, with its population of about 4000, he spread the ideas of Azahari – the right of self-determination, the need for education, and the germinal idea of a Bornean union with Sarawak and North Borneo. In promoting these ideas, he was paving the way for the foundation of the *Partai Ra'ayat Brunei*, which grew out of the branches and sub-branches first established in the Temburong area. The network blossomed. Social, economic and political matters were discussed at grassroots level, and contributions and membership fees brought the organisation to the point of seeking registration in early 1956. At first, PRB tried to be affiliated with the *Partai Ra'ayat* of Malaya, but this was curbed by colonial officialdom and ruled out by the Societies Enactment clause. Mention of any proposed union with Sarawak and North Borneo was similarly erased before registration of the PRB as a society went ahead. At the inaugural meeting, in a gesture typical of Azahari's efforts to show his intentions were purely democratic, the British resident, Gilbert, was invited to attend with two Special Branch officers. The PRB officially came into being on 15 August 1956.

Notes

1. Azahari interview, 1991.
2. Notes from extract of letter from the Managing Director of BMP, Hales to Nuttall, 11 February 1953, CO 396-328/8/01, p. 73.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
4. See Armando Cortesao (trans. and ed.), *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires*, Hakluyt Society, London, 1944, p. 278, cited in John Bastin and Robin W. Winks (eds), *Malaysia - Selected Historical Readings*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1966, p. 34. Pires claimed there were 100,000 men-at-arms defending Malacca against 700 Portuguese and 300 Malabars.
5. The trade route to the East was plied from a time before Mohammed and it strengthened when used also as a vessel of Islam. Hall has acknowledged G.P. Rouffaer's theory (1921) as the basis of our understanding why Malacca's unrivalled wealth of trade occurred in the second half of the 15th and early 16th centuries, creating the phenomenon of a relatively sudden rather than an historically cumulative growth in mercantilism. See D.G.E. Hall, *History of South-East Asia*, 2nd ed., Macmillan, London, 1964, p. 193.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 219. See also Fr Manuel Teixeira, 'Early Portuguese and Spanish Contacts with Borneo', *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, Julho-Dezembro de 1964, p. 302.
7. C.K. Nicholson, *The Introduction of Islam into Sumatra and Java: A Study in Cultural Change*, PhD thesis, Syracuse, 1965, p. 51.
8. Fray Juan de Medina, *Historia de la Orden de S. Augustin de Estas Islas Filipinas*, Manila, 1630, Blair & Robertson, *The Philippine Islands 1493-1803*, Cleveland, 1903-09, p. 225, cited in Robert Nicholl (ed.), *European Sources for the History of the Sultanate of Brunei in the Sixteenth Century*, Muzium Brunei, 1975, p. 34.
9. Nicholl, p. 53.
10. Australian Archives ACT. A981/1 Item: Borneo/1, Library Reference No. 9748.
11. The colonial rivalry between Spain and Portugal was ended by a union of crowns, necessitated by the latter's failed conquest in Morocco. After the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, English and Dutch sea-power was on the ascendant. The latter concentrated on Java and the former on the China-India trade. See Nicholas Tarling, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Malay World, 1780-1824*, Queensland University Press, Brisbane, 1962.
12. M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1981, p. 135.
13. Sarawak consul to Foreign Office, 30 July 1865, FO 12/32B, cited in B.A. Hanzah, *Oil Business in Brunei*, unpublished ms., 1989, p. 18, based on his PhD dissertation, *The Political Economy of Oil in Brunei*.

- Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Medford, Massachusetts, 1980.
14. According to Angel, it was this process of reduction which gave rise to the differentiation of terms, 'Brunei' and 'Borneo', although originally they were synonymous, 'Brunei' came to mean the residual area. See J.R. Angel, *The Proposed Federation of Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei – The Development and Decline of the British Borneo Concept*, MA thesis, Sydney, 1965, p. 1.
 15. See Nicholas Tarling, *Britain, the Brookes and Brunei*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1971; also, L.R. Wright, *The Origins of British Borneo*, Hong Kong University Press, 1970. A grand scheme involving the cession of a large tract of the northern tip of Borneo and a British settlement on the island of Balambangan, a scheme fashioned by Alexander Dalrymple, was abandoned in 1776.
 16. L. Oppenheim, *International Law – A Treatise*, 8th ed., Vol. 1, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1955, p. 173.
 17. Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies for the Commonwealth Affairs Committee on 'The Future of Brunei', 24 December 1947, CO 53712/44.
 18. There were some Javanese predecessors in the ancestry of Azahari's father, probably Kedayan. Azahari's mother combined Sumatran and British ancestry in that her mother was the elder sister of a colonial officer.
 19. Ahmad Tajuddin Akhazal Khairi Wadin was proclaimed the new sultan in 1924. Because he was only eleven years old (born 8 September 1913), however, a regency was proclaimed. The two princes who accompanied Omar Ali Saifuddin (born 23 September 1916) to Malaya were sons of the *wazir* (adviser, or advisers) during this period. Properly described, they should be sons of the *former* regent, because the regency ended in 1931 when Tajuddin attained his seniority. See D.S. Ranjit Singh, *Brunei 1839-1983: The Problems of Political Survival*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, pp. 114-15, 122.
 20. The calibre of students at the institute was made evident by the positions which some filled in later years: an Indonesian Minister of Defence, a governor of Palembang, an Indonesian ambassador to Burma. Another joined the Dutch side in the struggle for Indonesian independence and later became a doctor in the Netherlands. Zaidi later studied in Scotland (where his room-mate was Julius Nyerere) and, three decades later, became governor of Sarawak. Azahari interview, 1991.
 21. Interview with a director of the institute, Dr Peter Daniels, Bogor, May 1991.

22. George McTuan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1952, p. 141. From TKR, it was later changed to *Tentara Republik Indonesia* (TRI), and then *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI), the Indonesian National Army.
23. *Sarawak Gazette*, 1 October 1947, pp. 184-5.
24. In 1991, Raden Muliarwan was still representing this area in the Indonesian parliament, after a period of more than forty years.
25. Azahari and most adherents of Islam in Brunei and British Malaya were orthodox Sunni of the school of Shafi'i. There were, however, also Shia elements in Azahari's beliefs, which distinguished him, by and large, from the Sunni in Indonesia, where syncretism and reformism were more commonly adopted. Aceh was a more clearly defined exception than West Java. The quest for orthodoxy drew supporters into Darul Islam endeavouring to make their religious and state ruler one and the same – as Brunei was before colonial intervention.
26. See Cees van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1981; also, Nazarddin Sjam-suddin, *The Republican Revolt – A Study of the Acehese Rebellion*, ISEAS, Singapore, 1985.
27. Because Zami, in the late 1950s, communicated independently with the Colonial Office, and in 1963 defected to the British, possibly this first meeting with Azahari assisted a British assessment of Azahari's anticolonialism. Zami refuted any suggestion that this meeting was more than a coincidence. Interview, Tuan Haji Zami bin Haji Ahmad, Kuala Lumpur, August 1980.
28. The cerebral haemorrhage was said to have been caused by excessive alcohol. The sultan had been referred to as a 'drunkard' in previous colonial correspondence. See J. Griffiths to Colonial Office, 8 June 1949, CO 59706/1.
29. The agreement was in accordance with 'Mining Enactment 1920', later amended in 1923, No. 1, of 9 August 1923. *State of Brunei, Government Gazette*, 1920, p. 31.
30. CO 943 (2) 12/C/207. A royalty of 1 shilling a ton was paid for all Brunei oil, on output, to the Borneo Petroleum Syndicate, which was the original holder of the Seria concession rights in Brunei taken up by BMP. In 1954 there was a change in royalty rates when BMP increased the royalty, on production, from 10 per cent to 12.5 per cent on existing wells, with corresponding decrease in royalty (as low as 5 per cent) for offshore prospects.
31. *State of Brunei, Annual Report, 1950*, p. 1, cited in Singh, p. 126.

32. CO 363 287/5/01.
33. E.R. Bevington, Colonial Office Report, The Economy and Development of the State of Brunei, 30 June 1955, CO 300 168/8/01, Singh, p. 127.
34. Brunei high commissioner to Secretary of State, 19 June 1950, CO 943/2 59726.
35. High commissioner of Brunei to Colonial Office, 17 April 1950, CO 943 (2) 12/C/207, Allied forces landed in Brunei on 11 June 1945.
36. G.T. MacBryan had been the private secretary of Vyner Brooke in 1941. After the war, he had participated in negotiations involving the cession of Sarawak to Britain. In early 1946, as special representative of the raja, he obtained agreement from a sufficient number of non-British members of the Supreme Council of Sarawak for the cession to be approved. Sanib Said, *Malay Politics in Sarawak 1946-1966: The Search for Unity and Political Ascendancy*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, pp. 43, 59.
37. The Secretary of State for the Colonies informed the high commissioner of Brunei (in Sarawak) that the attorney-general in Brunei had seen these letters, 28 October 1950, CO 943/2 59726.
38. CO 943/2 59726.
39. Acting commissioner-general for South-East Asia to Secretary of State for Colonies, 10 June 1950, CO 943/2 59726.
40. *Straits Times*, Thursday, 8 June 1950.
41. Whiteley to Scott, 15 June 1950, CO 943/2 59726.
42. From 1948 to 1955, the post of commissioner-general was held by Malcolm MacDonald, and he was succeeded by Robert Scott, 1955-59. The deputy commissioner-general from 1950 to 1953 was John C. Sterndale Bennett. See A.N. Porter and A.J. Stockwell, *British Imperial Policy and Decolonization 1938-64*, vol. 1, Macmillan, London, p. 137.
43. Telegram from acting commissioner-general for British territories in South-East Asia to Secretary of State for Colonies, 24 June 1950, CO 943/2.
44. Whiteley to Scott, *ibid.*
45. Letter by Gerard MacBryan, to the editor of the *Times*, 26 October 1950, cited in Secretary of State for the Colonies to high commissioner of Brunei, 28 October 1950, CO 943/2 59726.
46. Secretary of State for the Colonies to high commissioner of Brunei, 28 October 1950, CO 943/2 59726.
47. A paper (untitled) by Ashton Greene, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Economic Consultants, Investment Advisers, 1952, cited in CO 363 287/5/01.

49. See chapter 2, footnote 64.
50. Nuttall to Monson, 5 March 1953, CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 72.
51. Extract of letter, CO 1022/396 328/8/01.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
53. Azahari interview, 1991.
54. High commissioner for Brunei to Secretary of State, 10 March 1953, CO 1022/396 1878/6 p. 64.
55. Extract of letter, *ibid.*, p. 74.
56. *Ibid.*
57. Azahari interview, 1991.
58. *Straits Budget*, 12 March 1953. This was a weekly paper produced by the *Straits Times* for overseas readers.
59. *Ibid.*
60. Extract of letter, CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 74.
61. High commissioner for Brunei to Secretary of State, 10 March 1953, CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 64.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
65. Nuttall (BMP London) to Monson (Colonial Office), CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 71.
66. *Straits Budget*, 12 March 1953.
67. High commissioner for Brunei to Secretary of State, 10 March 1953, CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 66.
68. Extract of letter, *ibid.*, p. 75.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
70. High commissioner of Brunei to Secretary of State, 13 May 1953, *ibid.*, p. 57.
71. High commissioner of Brunei to Secretary of State, 12 March 1953, CO 1022/396 1878/6, p. 67.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
73. M. Karuddin. Interviewed by G. Poulgram, Kuala Lumpur, 2 August 1990.
74. Brunei chief secretary to Secretary of State, 17 July 1953, CO 1022/396 1878/6.
75. CO 1030 267 121/367/01.
76. *Straits Times*, Tuesday, 28 September 1954. Most of the 240 Chinese schools (30 000 pupils) in Sarawak were self-financed and the only power of the government was in refusing registration of schools, managers or teachers. The Woodhead Report on Education in 1955 attempted to redress this.

77. CO 1030 267 121/367/01.
78. Brunei chief secretary to Secretary of State, Telegram, 17 July 1953, CO 1020 396 328/8/01.
79. CO 1022/396 1878/6.
80. Minutes of meeting held on 12 August 1952, Whiteley and Secretary of State. CO 1022 396 328/8/01.
81. *Ibid.*, 24 July 1953, Secretary of State to high commissioner of Brunei.
82. The new British resident, J.O. Gilbert, to Whiteley, Colonial Office, 10 September 1954, CO 1022/396 1878/6. Gilbert informed Azahari that had he been resident, and not Barcroft, the Brunei Film idea would have been approved. Moreover, he would have urged the government to offer Azahari financial support. Azahari interview, 1991.
83. J.O. Gilbert to Whiteley, 10 September 1953, CO 1022/396 1878/6.
84. Azahari interview, 1991.

CLOSER ASSOCIATION

The Secretary of State for the Colonies, Oliver Lyttelton, in a statement to the House of Commons on 14 November 1951, defined the policy regarding British colonial and protected territories in South-East Asia. Averring that his goal was above party politics, he declared:

We all aim at helping the colonial territories to attain self-government within the British Commonwealth. To that end we are seeking as rapidly as possible to build up in each territory the institutions which its circumstances require.¹

The postwar aspirations of the British government (HMG) in this region purported to be self-government for Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo, Sarawak and the Brunei protectorate. Although Malaya was the only state mentioned specifically with regard to self-government, further clarification of the term seemed superfluous. For each of the other states, with Sarawak the most pertinent, self-government was merely inferred. The 'Sarawak constitution', a belated inspiration of Raja Vyner Brooke in 1941, was reaffirmed by HMG in 1946 after the cession of the territory. By doing so, the British colonial authorities reinstated the Brooke ideals:

that the goal of self-government shall always be kept in mind, that the people of Sarawak shall be entrusted in due course with the governance of themselves and that continuous efforts shall be made to hasten the reaching of this goal.²

HMG, however, was engaging in deliberate deception: at no time did it envisage self-government by the people of Sarawak. The reason for prolonging the illusion of independence was to circumvent the anticolonialists – and by implication, Indonesia – as was revealed in a secret Colonial Office overview of political objectives in South-East Asia. With parenthesis in the original, it stated:

In 1946 it was the definite (though not overtly declared) hope that the two newly created Colonies of North Borneo and Sarawak and the State of Brunei would in due course be brought under some form of

unified administration. A public declaration to that effect at that time would have had a bad effect on public opinion in Sarawak, and would have played into the hands of the 'anti-cessionists'.

By avoiding any public announcement about plans *not* to grant Sarawak independence, HMG avoided the united wrath of Malay radicals and Indonesian nationalists, and also the postwar American lobby whose anticolonial and anti-British campaign was in full swing. The Secretary of State for the Colonies (and the Churchill government, which regained power in October 1951) had no intention of apportioning self-government to the territories individually, but in blocs. The Borneo territories were regarded as one bloc; and the Borneo bloc was to be merged with the proposed Malaya-Singapore bloc. As stated in the paper:

Although there has not been any authoritative statement to this effect, it has not hitherto been contemplated that any one of these territories should obtain complete self-government by itself. The conception has always been that, as minimum prior requirements, (a) the Federation of Malaya and Singapore, and (b) the three territories in Borneo should be brought into some form of constitutional association ... and [the conception has been] also of achieving some form of constitutional relationship between groups (a) and (b).

The idea of unifying the Borneo territories had a notable precedent in a federation proposal made by Sir Cecil Clementi, governor and high commissioner in prewar Malaya (1929-34), but such a federation was to have been separate from Malaya, where a Pan-Malayan Union was proposed.

The Colonial Office paper proposed there should ultimately be 'a wider association' between the Malayan and Borneo groups of territories, but by March 1953, when the paper was presented, it acknowledged that 'the prospect of closer association between Singapore and the Federation [has] definitely receded'. Malays, in the view of the Colonial Office, would prefer a wider association that included the 'non-Chinese dominated territories in Borneo', rather than only 'the solid Chinese mass of Singapore'.

Thus the notion of a wider association (in essence, the concept of Malaysia) was present in Colonial Office postwar planning. A qualification should be inserted here, however, for there was a difference in priorities between the early 1950s and a decade later, when Tunku Abdul Rahman launched the proposal to form Malaysia. This federation did not come into being as an expanded form of the failed pro-

posal for the merger of Singapore and Malaya. As part of postwar planning, the importance of the Borneo bloc seemed secondary to the union of Malaya and Singapore, but by 1961 the priorities were reversed. This is not to say that the importance of Singapore had diminished, but rather the capability of British authorities to reduce the internal-security problem there had increased. In the mid-1950s, made turbulent when British authorities clamped down on left-wing activity in Singapore, Tunku Abdul Rahman offered his opinion on the prospect of Singapore gaining independence: 'I feel the United States would object,' he said, 'if Britain offered Singapore full independence.' The 1961 federation proposal was motivated by the need to ensure – as part of the decolonisation program – that the Borneo territories, and Brunei in particular, would be politically and militarily secure. This became a crucial consideration because of the importance of Brunei oil, and also because of the Chinese in Sarawak.

Before the Sarawak census in 1960, Sir Anthony Abell 'felt sure that the forthcoming census will reveal that the Chinese are now the largest section of the community'.¹ In 1960, however, the Chinese did not dominate Sarawak numerically – which was the appeal of the Borneo territories given in the 1953 paper – but in the interim the political potential of the Chinese in Sarawak to form an independent state rose markedly. Although still an ethnic minority, the Chinese population was almost numerically equivalent to the largest of the indigenous groups, the Sea Dyaks (also known as the Iban); and statistics show the Chinese were reproducing at twice the rate of the Sea Dyaks,² with the result that, by the time Malaysia was formed in 1963, the Chinese were the largest ethnic group in Sarawak.³ Moreover, less than 1 per cent of the total number of Sea Dyaks was present in the three largest towns in Sarawak.⁴ Because the Chinese enjoyed superiority in commerce and political organisation, independence for them would have been a boon. At the height of the Cold War, however, neither Britain nor the United States was willing to risk self-government for Sarawak, as inevitably it would be dominated by Sarawak Chinese, among whom there was a strong Chinese-communist movement.

Thus when Sarawak Chinese (left-wing and right-wing) supported Azahari's goal of independence for the British Borneo territories, as a preliminary to joining or in preference to the Tunku's 1961 proposal of a federation of Malaysia, the strategic regional balance was under threat. If Sarawak came under left-wing influence, Brunei as an enclave would be politically besieged; and furthermore, because Sarawak was

adjacent to Indonesia, where there was a rapidly expanding communist party, Sarawak could become the beachhead for communism throughout the entire archipelago. The interests of both governments, of Indonesia and Britain, militated against the prospect of the Sarawak Chinese attaining self-government. This created a political paradox at the core of Indonesian involvement in *Konfrontasi*, which is examined later.¹²

Higham's alternative

The 1953 colonial report anticipated a continuing need for the British presence in the Singapore naval base after self-government in Malaya. The two potential threats cited as evidence of the need to maintain this naval presence were China and Indonesia. A Colonial Office briefing paper, apparently designed to influence the tone and direction of the 1953 report, throws some light onto the choice of Indonesia as a potential threat in the context of Singapore-Malayan differences. J.D. Higham, advising the Colonial Office, wrote:

I am certain that to attempt to force the pace before the Malays have come to feel that they have some chance of making good in the economic and professional fields, would only cause a revulsion of Malay feelings with all the security consequences that that would entail, and possibly throw the Malays into the arms of Indonesia.¹³

The Borneo territories were considered strategically vulnerable because they were thinly populated, underdeveloped and:

out on a limb, adjacent to a potentially acquisitive Indonesia. I can see little future for a self-governing Sarawak or North Borneo... (and) I think that all possible means should be used to forward the idea of a British South-East Asia Dominion.¹⁴

It is clear that the issue of defence was behind the concept of the dominion, and that Indonesia figured highly in matters of defence. The 1953 Colonial Office report adopted the dominion concept, which proposed the amalgamation of the two blocs, but Higham's briefing paper indicates this approach had already stalled in favour of a dominion comprised not of blocs but of individual states. Dissimilarities between Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo, would have to be overcome to enable the Borneo bloc to form. The cohesive spirit required to achieve this, ultimately, would be detrimental to the larger goal of

linking Borneo with the proposed Malaya-Singapore bloc. This argument was presented later in a crucial brief prepared by the Far Eastern Department for the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and it noted that closer association, or public discussion on the topic in response to an official proposal, might stimulate nationalist spirit 'with serious strategic consequences for the future control of the important oil fields in Brunei.'

On the one hand, in Borneo, the requisite infusion of nationalist spirit to achieve the first step might frustrate the successful implementation of the second step, the formation of the larger federation, Malaysia; while on the other, the Malaya-Singapore bloc had reached an impasse while still in the formative stage. To surmount these difficulties in forming the respective blocs, Higham referred to another course:

There have, in fact, been indications that a closer union may be more acceptable on the basis of the territories all coming together at the same time rather than forming into Malayan and Borneo blocs.

Higham stated that this was a new approach to the question of closer association; and more significantly, he admitted that it was already in operation:

The approach involving all the territories together, rather than the two separate blocs, seems to be going well enough.

By using this approach, the existing antipathy between parties in the respective blocs was avoided, or at least would be delayed and then defused in the larger union, the proposed Federation of Malaysia. In reality, this was the method whereby Malaysia came into being, not through the bloc approach. This startling admission by Higham notwithstanding, the formation of two blocs was still proposed in the 1953 paper (two months later) outlining the political objectives of the Colonial Office: a federation of the three Borneo territories, and a federation of Malaya and Singapore. The bloc approach and Higham's new approach necessarily overlapped in the early stages, and while the latter ultimately led to the formation of Malaysia, the former was pursued for several years. The Borneo proposal culminated in 1958, when the governors of Sarawak and North Borneo officially launched 'closer association', but the terms of the proposal ensured that Brunei would abscond. An eleventh-hour change was made to the proposed status of the sultan of Brunei in the closer-association proposal launched by the two governors: a proposed demotion of the sultan

assured Brunei would abstain from any merger with the other two Borneo territories. Intelligence intervention, possibly linked with the brief by the Far Eastern Department (mentioned above) prepared for the Secretary of State, may have undone the extensive preparation which others contributed towards closer association. Commenting on this apparently deliberate undermining of the plan (which is analysed later in this chapter for chronological consistency), K.J. Tregonning, a recognised regional specialist, described the proposed Borneo merger as 'a disguised MI5 exercise'.¹⁸ It should be stressed that Higham's briefing paper in 1953 showed that even though the 1958 proposal for closer association in Borneo had the facade of official approval, five years earlier there had already been an alternative plan afoot.

Singapore-Malaya

The proposed bloc of Singapore and Malaya experienced difficulties much earlier. The policy reversal (1946-48) entailed in the replacement of the Malayan Union by the Federation of Malaya, in conjunction with the Emergency and its consequent economic reversal for Malaya, tended to retard any attempt 'to impose a fusion of Singapore with the mainland'.¹⁹ The commissioner-general, Malcolm MacDonald, set up a Communities Liaison Committee to bring the leaders of various racial communities together as a means of overcoming mutual distrust. In 1948 the committee recommended a program of 'political concessions to the Chinese and economic aid to the Malays, but there was little support among those who would have to make the sacrifices'.²⁰ Because of the Emergency, racial enmity was not readily dispelled and the political crisis generated a Malay animus towards Chinese generally. Singaporeans were seen as 'fence-sitters', or even as urban accomplices of the guerrillas by dint of racial solidarity alone. Contributing to this was the fact that 'Singapore throughout the Emergency remained relatively free from guerilla violence'.²¹ But this was due as much to the British authorities as to the Chinese; in 1950, the entire Singapore City Committee of the Malayan Communist Party 'had been picked up in one fell swoop'.²² Similar draconian tactics were employed against the PKI in the Indonesian archipelago. Indonesian communism was suppressed by the government in 1951, and large-scale arrests of 'some 2000 Communists' left a membership of 8000.²³

In Malaya, anti-Chinese sentiment became enmeshed with anticommunism. Singaporean reluctance to join with Malaya was summed up

by the Secretary of State in a candid reply to Lieutenant General Sir Gerald Templer, the former director of military intelligence, who took charge of the Malayan Emergency. Templer was appointed by Lyttelton with the personal approval of Churchill.²⁴ The Secretary of State wrote:

How one persuades the Singaporean to mix himself up with a less prosperous neighbour, when that less prosperous neighbour has a disastrous Emergency on his hands, is of course the real difficulty.²⁵

Plans for merging the Federation of Malaya and Singapore became politically intractable.

In December 1951, Commissioner-General Malcolm MacDonald (who did not welcome Templer's appointment) decided to utilise the already established Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which periodically brought together the leading politicians of all South-East Asian territories, 'to foster the idea of a political Association of *all* the South East Asian territories in a single group'.²⁶ Dato Onn, the leading figure in UMNO until he handed over the reins to Tunku Abdul Rahman in August 1951,²⁷ arranged with the commissioner-general for a small number of non-officials, from the Federation and from Singapore, to meet at Bukit Serene on 1 December 1951. As the problem of assimilating Singapore's 761 000 Chinese remained the crux of the issue for the Federation of Malaya to merge with Singapore, it seemed appropriate that a Chinese member (Thio Chan Bee) suggested a Confederation of Malaya and the British Borneo territories in which Singapore and the Federation would participate as equals.²⁸ That the initiative appeared to come from a local leader of public opinion was in accord with instructions issued to the commissioner-general in November 1949.²⁹ The decision to widen the terms of reference to include the Borneo territories led to the formation of the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC), but its premise remained the bloc approach.

The investiture of Governor Nicoll, on 22 April 1952 in Singapore, was used as a venue for the first meeting of representatives from the four legislatures, Sarawak, North Borneo, Singapore and the Federation of Malaya. An earlier attempt at such a meeting, to discuss closer association, had been disbanded because of the absence of leading British officials, who had returned to London when Queen Elizabeth II succeeded to the crown on the death of her father, on 6 February 1952. At Singapore in April ('a warm affair for me in blue uniform'

Nicoll confided to the Colonial Office),³¹ official approval was given for the decision to use branches of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to maintain interterritorial contact through the JCC.³² A successful Parliamentary Association meeting took place at Jesselton from 30 January to 2 February 1953, to which a member of the Brunei State Council, Tuan Haji Ibrahim bin Ja'afar, OBE, was invited as an observer.³³ Matters for discussion in the JCC over a period of years included a diversity of topics, such as: geographical propinquity, historical ties, racial affinity, financial-economic bonds, interdependence in defence (both internal and external), and the need to act together in international relations. There were fifty-five listed subjects for policy coordination between Singapore and the Federation of Malaya, yet the very first listing dealt with Special Branch activities, attesting to the importance of ensuring political control as a precondition of merger.³⁴ The second-in-command of Britain's MI5 was seconded for one year's term of duty to reorganize and expand the Special Branch.³⁵

One of the first joint ventures between the Borneo territories and Malaya was the employment of Iban jungle-trackers in the Emergency security forces. By March 1952, the Iban trackers had killed thirty-one Chinese guerrillas for the loss of six of their own.³⁶ In total, 1168 Iban trackers were brought to Malaya during the Emergency, and one was awarded the George Cross.³⁷

In Kuching on 22 April 1953, the governors of Sarawak and North Borneo, and the sultan of Brunei, under the chairmanship of the commissioner-general, Malcolm MacDonald, agreed that the three territories should meet twice yearly to work towards closer cooperation.³⁸ This was the inception of the Borneo inter-territorial conferences. On his return to Singapore, the commissioner-general referred to the goal of closer association in Borneo, and alluded to links between this bloc Borneo and the proposed Federation of Malaya and Singapore. The *Straits Budget* (30 April 1953) commented:

Whether this can develop into a political federation of the Borneo territories, leading ultimately to the creation with Malaya, of a Southeast Asian Dominion Government, is another matter, but Bornean federation is both logical and achievable in the not distant future.³⁹

Anxious to promote the dominion concept, MacDonald informed the Colonial Office in June that, at a press conference he arranged with twenty British, Asian and American journalists, he:

said frankly that our long-term aim in British Southeast Asia is the creation of a self-governing Dominion of all these territories within the Commonwealth ... I shall keep judicious contact with them on this subject.²⁶

MacDonald and Dato Onn persisted with the JCC for several years, endeavouring to formulate an outlook for merger that would be self-promoting; and to this end, Indonesia was omnipresent in their discussions. During a meeting in July 1954, Onn spoke of 'Indonesian influences which are trying to draw young Malays and extremist Malay nationalists in the direction of Malaya's political association with Indonesia'.²⁷ They reiterated the need to form some sort of federal association between Malaya, Singapore and the three British Borneo territories as a self-governing unit in the Commonwealth, 'as a counterweight to Indonesian influence in South East Asia'.²⁸ The trade war had fanned international tension, yet the British preoccupation with Indonesia went further. The British perspective was dominated by the threat of Indonesian expansion, a lingering fear created by more than the Japanese-sponsored option of including British territory during the final days of the war, and by more than the Indonesian quest for Netherlands New Guinea, which some regarded as a preliminary for British Borneo. Rather, it was because Indonesian independence epitomised anticolonial revolution, not only for Indonesians, but also for many British and Malaysians, and was an implicit threat to British colonialism in postwar South-East Asia. The mere mention of the catchcry *merdeka* signified freedom and independence, redolent with revolution because of its use in Indonesia. From the Indonesian perspective, it would be a denial of its origins to deny moral support for *merdeka* elsewhere, particularly for kindred Malaysians. This sentiment was encapsulated in a press release by the Indonesian embassy in London, declaring:

the international world is already fully aware of the fact that opposition to colonialism and imperialism throughout the world is an aspect of Indonesian foreign policy.²⁹

When Onn resigned in 1954, MacDonald broached the question of a Singapore-Malaya merger with two others in the JCC, Colonel H.S. Lee and Tunku Abdul Rahman. Still the disparities seemed insurmountable. A JCC report noted:

If the Emergency had been as severe in Singapore as it has been in the federation there can be little doubt that both territories would have found it expedient to set up some kind of joint organisation.³⁰

Borneo territories

Malcolm MacDonald and Anthony Abell (who performed the dual roles of governor of Sarawak and Brunei high commissioner) concluded that the climate was suitable to pursue a union of the Borneo territories alone. According to the commissioner-general in 1953: 'The major political difficulties in the way of federation lie in Sarawak and Brunei rather than in North Borneo.'¹¹ The initial response of the governor of North Borneo was supportive, but he warned that if the plan was 'allowed to crystallize over too long a period, public opinion in North Borneo might well harden against the objective we have in mind', and he added: 'I am delighted to think that Abell feels that there is a chance of real progress.'¹² Yet the political and economic needs of North Borneo did not blend readily with Sarawak, and Governor Anthony Abell had difficulty in reaching accord with Governor Ralph Hone of North Borneo (1949-54).

General Hone previously was in charge of British military administration in Malaya, Singapore and the Borneo territories up to July 1946. Again confronting the need for administrative reform, the crisis he faced in North Borneo (after the radicalism of the MNP) was all due to political inactivity. The pressing need was for local participation in government. Executive and legislative councils were set up in 1950, the first local authority in 1952, and town boards established in Jesselton and Sandakan in 1954, the year Hone's successor, Roland Turnbull, took charge. The lack of educated leaders had been exacerbated by the Japanese, according to Governor Turnbull, who found:

what has perhaps been insufficiently emphasised, that men of education, potential leaders of the local peoples, had almost all been deliberately exterminated by the Japanese.¹³

The announcement of a revised constitution for Sarawak on 3 August 1956 had an inevitable reaction on the people in North Borneo, Turnbull informed his superiors:

That is not to say that there is any sign of the evolution of parties, nor even of real political consciousness, but there is an inchoate feeling, discernible in the local press and public utterances, that people ought to be more politically aware.¹⁴

In 1956, the North Borneo colonial authorities and the indigenous people had not yet adjusted to the idea of introducing parliamentary

democracy. For both, the concept of parliamentary supremacy still seemed to conflict with the precept of colonial supremacy. An arrangement was introduced whereby nominated members of the Legislative Council were selected from lists of candidates submitted by recognised public bodies and organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce or the Confederation of Native Chiefs. The Executive Council then duplicated this arrangement. When Donald Stephens, a friend of Azahari, was temporarily serving as a nominated member of the Executive Council in March 1957, in place of Dato Mustapha, who was studying English in Britain, he drew attention to the problem of representation. Stephens described the local members as 'mere government puppets'. He declared: 'This House cannot have the full confidence of the North Borneo public until we have an unofficial majority.'¹⁰ Stephens wanted six, not four, 'Natives' as members in the Legislative Council of twelve, to represent their communities, which comprised two-thirds of the population of North Borneo (377 000). Turnbull insisted that four was enough because 'not enough Natives had adequate knowledge of English'. In a literary flourish to his superiors in London, he added that 'Native members are rarely vocal and that it was not his intention 'to substitute a silent Native preponderance for a mute official majority'.¹¹

The commercial orientation of postwar North Borneo was increasingly towards Hong Kong rather than Singapore. The Chinese were commercially dominant but comprised only 89 000, or 23.6 per cent of the total population.¹² All but 15 per cent of these Chinese lived within a 20-mile radius of the main towns.¹³ Their political inclination lacked the chauvinism evident in segments of the Chinese population in Singapore and Sarawak. Governor Turnbull went so far as to describe the Chinese in North Borneo as non-political, even reluctant to enter politics. 'The Chinese would take political power only if it were forced on them by us,' he informed the Colonial Office.¹⁴

In 1956, the Sarawak constitution provided for a majority of unofficial members on the Council Negri. Thus, of the British territories in South-East Asia, Sarawak, which was the least developed in economic terms became the most advanced in political terms; subsequently, the reformist Governor Abell 'was criticised for encouraging the Chinese to believe they could assume power'.¹⁵ In the Council Negri of Sarawak, there were twenty-four elected members, fourteen ex-officio and four nominated members; there remained two standing members who continued as members. The elected members were elected by

divisionary advisory councils and three specified municipal or urban councils from among their own members. Reserve powers were retained by the governor, with the power to disallow legislation. Assisting in drawing up this constitution was the Sarawak attorney-general, George Strickland, QC, and it came into force on 1 April 1957. Strickland was also engaged to prepare a constitution for Brunei.

Brunei's supreme authority was vested in a twelve-member State Council, which included the British resident. The sultan was president of the council, which contained *ex-officio* members such as the BMP representative, and others nominated by the sultan. The prospect of the three Borneo territories being incorporated into one British-dominated bloc inspired a fear as to the possible outcome of such a merger, for it might entail dissolution of the Brunei sultanate. On 12 May 1953, only two months after the Brunei observer, Tuan Haji Ibrahim bin Ja'afar, returned from the first interterritorial conference in Jesselton, the sultan announced it was his intention and desire:

to grant my people a written Constitution ... It is my wish to set out in this Constitution, firstly, the laws by which the succession to the Sultanate shall be secured ... and secondly, the composition, powers and duties of the State Council.⁵¹

As foreseen by the commissioner-general and Abell, the plan for closer association of the Borneo territories ran the risk of foundering on dissimilarities, and none was more dissimilar than Brunei.

The principal exports of Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo gave no scope for interterritorial trade as a basis for closer association.⁵² For Brunei, 94 per cent of its economy was oil, all of which was pumped to Sarawak, where some was refined and the remainder exported as crude oil. For Sarawak, 68 per cent of its imports came from Brunei. Other than oil from Brunei to Sarawak, trade between the Borneo territories was negligible.

In political terms, Sarawak's volatility contrasted with a relative complacency in North Borneo. In Sarawak, the Cold War flourished in the Council Negri. 'We are not free from the insidious intrigues of the agents of the men of Moscow,' warned the officer administering the government.⁵³ In early December 1953, in a speech dealing with communism in schools, Sir Anthony said:

We know that not only are we surrounded by countries which are deeply infected by the disease of communism but also we ourselves show traces of infection in a vital and tender part of our anatomy.⁵⁴

At the time of the Bandung Conference in April 1955, MacDonald expressed his concern for South-East Asian regional security to the Secretary of State, Alan Lennox-Boyd, making ominous references to potential instability:

One of our political objectives in the Malay territories is self-government within the Commonwealth. Our efforts will be in vain if the result of self-government, when it is established, is that the Malays promptly lose their liberty through cold war or hot war conquest by a Communist or other foreign aggressor.¹⁰

Perceived threats to security, internal and external, since mid-1950 had been handled by a Joint Defence Committee for the Borneo territories.¹¹ It had not even been possible, despite the administrative advantages, to amalgamate the Brunei and Sarawak constabulary to ensure uniformity of police control in the oil fields. The higher pay in Brunei reflected similar difficulties between Singapore and Malaya. The trial of Azahari in the Brunei Film Company affair stirred the *Straits Times* editor into declaring (11 March 1953) that this region was on the verge of revolution.¹² Referring to the prompt arrival of police from North Borneo at the time of the trial, the high commissioner for Brunei called the operation a 'triumph of organization'.¹³ There were other attempts to coordinate policy in the three territories, such as combining the judiciary. Sir Ivor Brace, the first chief justice of North Borneo, Sarawak and Brunei, died in 1952, in his first year of office. Such a beginning did not augur well for any future pooling of resources.

The Colonial Office informed MacDonald in June 1954 that the chiefs of staff had reached an important conclusion regarding the defence aspects of British policy in South-East Asia. To parallel the military control over the Borneo territories, 'there should continue to be some form of political control, in matters of defence, centred in Singapore'.¹⁴ This was interpreted as promoting the dominion concept. Malcolm MacDonald (perhaps all too individually) continued his efforts to sow the seeds of unity in the minds of local leaders in Borneo. Pursuing this quest in Sarawak with a spirit of adventure, he travelled several times upriver to meet the Iban tribespeople.¹⁵

The dominion

MacDonald pursued the dominion concept as though dissent within the various parties was diminishing rapidly, but this picture of approaching

success did not accurately portray the situation. In April 1955 he claimed exuberantly that in Singapore and the Federation many politicians in every racial community favoured the idea of a confederation between the five territories. But only three months later, after the July elections in the Federation, the Tunku stated that he saw no prospect of merger in the near future.⁶⁹ According to Sophe, when the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lennox-Boyd, met the Tunku in August 1955, they did not even mention the subject of merger.⁷⁰ The elections, of course, confirmed the readiness of the Federation of Malaya for independence, with or without Singapore. 'We [the Federation of Malaya] are in a hurry for independence,' declared the Tunku.⁷¹

Nevertheless, the links that the Federation and Singapore had with the Colonial Office enabled the Secretary of State to fashion legislative and administrative parallels. This minimised the tendency of Singapore and Malaya to diverge, but neither state had any compelling obligation to take into account views prevailing outside their immediate jurisdiction. The regular meetings of government officials from North Borneo and Sarawak held under the auspices of the commissioner-general also served to coordinate policy. Overall, the value of these meetings lay in the fact that their participants were, with the exception of Brunei, presidents of the executive councils in each of the territories concerned.⁷² It can be said, with particular reference to Brunei as the pariah, that in these meetings the groundwork was laid for what later became the four-territory concept of Malaysia (in which Brunei did not participate). Staking a premature claim to engineering a five-territory dominion concept, MacDonald informed his superior:

I for one have been sedulously planting the idea ... in the minds of local journalists, over the last eight years, and urging them to give public expression every now and then to this ultimate aim, so that the people are gradually educated towards it ... (But) the Bornean leaders are perhaps less aware than those in Malaya of our grand design.⁷³

Still unannounced officially, the 'grand design' achieved some currency in social discussion but tended to bring only suspicion to the surface among the non-Malay population of Sarawak and North Borneo. Malay motives were equated with the Brunei Malay domination of the past, and in Sarawak the memory had not faded. The fear of Malay domination was not misplaced, as shown by a personal comment of the governor of Sarawak. He claimed that politicians in the Federation and in Singapore were showing considerable interest in the Borneo

Territories, 'its empty spaces, its potential wealth, and its oil', and Abell also added: 'I feel it is probably only a matter of time before Indonesia also gives us more attention.'⁶⁶ It is noteworthy that Abell could admit that Malaya had exhibited imperialistic design on the Borneo territories as though it were a step in the right direction, towards merger. Indonesia, on the other hand, had expressed no similar aspirations of expansion, and had endeavoured to correct impressions to the contrary for fear they might jeopardise the Indonesian claim to Netherlands New Guinea, yet Abell foresaw inevitable Indonesian involvement. Abell did not clarify what he had in mind, either Indonesian expansion or the well-versed Indonesian ideological opposition to colonialism and imperialism.

The sweeping electoral victory by Tunku Abdul Rahman in 1955 brought a distinct change of approach in MacDonald. His enthusiasm for a merger in Borneo became subservient to the political priorities of Singapore and the peninsula. His statements became more cautious. When a member of the JCC asked whether Britain was contemplating closer political association between the Federation and Singapore only, or between the two Malayan territories and the three territories of Borneo, he replied that in the three Borneo territories it was 'not at all a live political issue'. Nevertheless, in the one territory of Brunei, it was very much alive and driven into the public arena by Azahari, who proposed this merger of the Borneo territories as a central policy in the party he was forming, the PRB. Registration for the PRB was refused until *his* proposal (which simply mirrored the unofficial British plan) was removed from party policy.⁶⁷ A second example of MacDonald's new-found caution was when another JCC member suggested representatives from Borneo should actually be invited to observe discussions on the proposed Malaya-Singapore bloc, to which MacDonald replied that the proposal was premature.⁶⁸

To compare this approach with the previous year, MacDonald seems to have adopted an air of political demureness. With the governor of North Borneo in early 1954, he had unfurled a scenario for merger as though it were his own campaign:

I have always felt that it may be easier for the three Borneo territories to come closer together with Singapore and the Federation. My design, therefore, is that we should try to pull off something like this over, say, the next two or three years.⁶⁹

But the question must be asked: were the Malay elections really the

cause of this retraction of MacDonald, or was Borneo itself holding the answer? In October 1954, at the interterritorial conference at Kuching, the inclusion of Brunei in the proposed closer association of Borneo territories seemed problematic. This became evident through a difference of opinion between the new governor of North Borneo, Sir Roland Turnbull, and Sarawak's Sir Anthony Abell. Both viewed the prospect of a Borneo merger with pessimism, but for different reasons. In Turnbull's opinion, nothing less than a single government that eliminated the geographical identities of the three Borneo territories would be satisfactory before the next proposed step of merging with Singapore and the Federation. But Abell disagreed with this idea of amalgamation because:

Brunei would regard it as a device to get a share of its wealth. ... If they used the knife [to surgically remove the boundaries] they would have to use troops ... (and) unless they were careful, they would drive Brunei into somebody else's arms.⁷⁵

Referring to Indonesia, it was the same metaphor of 'lost love' used in J.D. Higham's report the previous year.⁷⁶ Abell, however, had created a different context and a new relevance. In his ebullient efforts to achieve reform in Brunei, he had attempted to circumvent the sultan. Relations between Brunei and its high commissioner plummeted because of his zealous intent to inject some democratic content into the preparation of Brunei's constitution.

Outline of the Brunei constitution

A Constitutional Advisory Committee of six members,⁷⁷ all *Pengiran*s appointed by the sultan, produced a report in March 1954. Its salient points revealed that Brunei once again aspired to become a power in the region.⁷⁸ The report reflected traditional subservience to the colonial power, but at the same time contained imperial designs, independent of Britain, that showed an unmistakable overlapping between the advisory committee and Azahari's anticolonial political credo. On the subject of closer cooperation between the Borneo territories, the preference of the committee was to remain separate, but in the event of unification:

the two neighbouring countries [Sarawak and North Borneo] should be restored to Brunei for historically they were the property of the State and the Sultan of Brunei.⁷⁹

The *Penguin*s suggested the formation of an army composed only of Malays, to be known as the Brunei Regiment. The British would not countenance such an armed force, for it would pose a threat to BMP; but this was never expressed directly to the committee by the high commissioner, Sir Anthony Abell. However, he informed London that 'there was a good deal of wild talk on the subject of the oil company's activities and the nationalisation of the industry'.²⁸ Dealing directly with oil, the report recommended the cessation of importing unskilled oilfield labour from outside Brunei; a renegotiation of the oil agreement to give the Brunei government equal shares with the sultan; and the construction of a refinery within Brunei so that Brunei oil need not be piped to the Lutong refinery in Sarawak, 'for this causes a loss to the Brunei State and her people'.²⁹

The sultan's Advisory Committee then prepared a draft constitution. The high commissioner (who had requested this) explained to the Secretary of State that one of the chief aims in the new constitution should be 'to eliminate the objectionable features of the present State Council'.³⁰ Flippant though this comment might be, it was evidence that Sir Anthony Abell initially was hoping to repeat the democratic advances made in Sarawak. The Advisory Committee spent a fortnight in Kuala Lumpur, studying the relevant articles of local government and the constitution of the Federation of Malaya. A British constitutional expert, R. H. Hickling, was directed by Abell in November 1954 to reside in Brunei to fashion the early draft document of the committee into an acceptable form. Assisting him at times was the Sarawak attorney-general, George Strickland, QC. Hickling stayed on until mid-January 1955 preparing the draft legislation. The high commissioner proposed a Brunei Privy Council as a means of utilising excess official members. To exclude them would have incurred significant loss of status in the ruling circle of the sultanate, thus jeopardising Abell's main aim. 'Their ranks, titles and privileges would remain, their prestige might even be increased,' explained Abell, 'but their political importance would be diminished.'³¹ Abell was intent on preparing the sultanate for a democratic constitution by clearing away the surfeit of aristocracy who blocked reform. As well, the high commissioner engaged in some selective deception.

Abell did not fully disclose to the sultan the extent of changes made in the reworking of the draft constitution. A copy was sent to the Secretary of State, and this was dutifully shown to the sultan; but then another more complete copy was sent to London with the explanation:

My despatch No. 46, a copy of which with its enclosures has been sent to the Sultan, deals, therefore, only with those points which I consider it advisable to disclose to His Highness at this stage of the negotiations.'

Somehow, the sultan discovered that Abell had prepared two drafts, one for the sultan and another for the Secretary of State. Abell explained this ruse to his superior:

My advisers and I considered that, having obtained the Sultan's agreement to the main provisions of the proposed new Constitution, no useful purpose would be served by discussing with His Highness and the wazirs [advisers] the details of the legal instruments designed to bring it into effect.⁸⁵

The finished work was shown to neither the sultan nor the British resident in Brunei, but the sultan, in a burst of inexplicable political prescience, requested the high commissioner to furnish a copy of the actual draft sent to the Secretary of State. 'Although this was an unusual request, I acceded to it,' Abell informed Lennox-Boyd. 'Whatever the motives in double-checking the constitutional drafts sent to London, the sultan uncovered the deception and the result disadvantaged Abell in future dealings with the sultan. An implicit distrust of the colonial authority aggravated the already uneasy relations between Brunei and Sarawak, and was a serious setback to Abell's plans for closer association of the three Borneo territories.

The Brunei sultanate, economically buoyant and with its disproportionate level of wealth from oil still rising, considered its international status impoverished by an outdated colonial agreement. The presence of the British resident in Brunei was a contentious issue. The State Council, sensing the importance of Brunei growing with its wealth, made repeated attempts 'to take out of the resident's hands many executive matters.'⁸⁶ To retain the authority of the Crown over the Council in its effort to usurp the power of the colonial representative, Governor Abell resolved not to merge the roles of resident and high commissioner. He had toyed with this idea as a prelude to merging the two states. Far from being drawn into closer association with its neighbours, Brunei was wary of merger becoming a means of enforced sharing of its wealth. The increasing tendency of the sultanate to lay claim to portions of colonial authority was symbolised by the dispute which arose over the Constitutional Committee's suggestion that the resident be replaced by 'a Mentri Besar (Chief Minister) who should

be a pure Malay and a Moslem'. According to the high commissioner, this was one of the strongest aspirations of the politically minded section of the Malay population in Brunei. The requirement of the 1906 agreement that the resident's advice *must* be taken came to be regarded increasingly as an affront to national dignity.

When Sir Donald MacGillivray, the high commissioner of Malaya, heard of this constitutional wrangling, he commented that 'the Malay rulers have never regarded this requirement [to take British advice] as an affront'. He added that if the Brunei request were granted the Malay rulers may want similar changes.⁷⁶ His words carried some weight because elections were looming in the Federation of Malaya in July 1955. The Secretary of State quashed all suggestions of a *Mentri Besar*, saying it would be 'impracticable for some time to come'.⁷⁷

In the sultan's draft constitution, the Executive Council was increased by two more *uziris* and a religious adviser. It therefore became important to strike some sort of balance by an increase in unofficial members. Strickland attempted to make this change:

because if this is not done it will be difficult to resist the impeachment that the Executive Council is preponderantly an Official Body. In the case of the Legislative Council, the balance can more readily be rectified by cutting down the number of official members.⁷⁸

The original proposal to which the sultan agreed was three *ex-officio* members, twelve official members and fourteen unofficial members and the resident was president. BMP intervened, however, with the concern that it might be 'unrepresented on the Legislative Council' if the president's casting vote produced a state of parity. Neither the sultan nor BMP was concerned about the absence of elected members. The constitution was not simply a contest between the sultanate and the presiding colonial power; BMP was also demanding to be heard. The sultan and the Colonial Office reached a compromise on replacing the State Council, which, subject to minor changes at a later date, split into three separate bodies. There was a Privy Council to advise on royal succession and ceremony; an Executive Council to advise on the formulation and execution of government policy and public-service matters; and a Legislative Council comprising twenty-eight members, with the resident as president. This reform fell far short of Abell's initial intention to introduce electoral representation.

Relations between the sultan and the colonial authorities in Sarawak deteriorated after the constitutional draft was changed without

consulting Brunei. The sultan reacted as one who had been deliberately deceived. By attempting to provide an overlay of democracy in a constitution that would otherwise have been an investiture of autocracy, the high commissioner had understandably bypassed the perusal of the second draft by the *uziris*. But the consequences risked were a breach in personal relations that were traditionally an important step on the way to reaching official agreement. Sir Anthony Abell, who had returned from holidays in London in September 1955, was informed by the sultan that, having studied the new proposals, he did not like them. He expressed his disappointment 'that he had not been fully consulted on the matter'; and now he was having 'second thoughts on the subject'. Abell commented that the sultan 'was in a stubborn and suspicious frame of mind.' By being seen as not able to safeguard the status and power of his immediate subordinates, the sultan risked loss of status within the Brunei ruling circle. Moreover, the incursion of colonial power into the affairs of the sultanate was regarded as a slight. In the past, a similar slight might have occurred without recourse, but oil and increasing wealth changed this. To this extent, the high commissioner misread the times.

The sultan's position

The reserve powers of the high commissioner became a contentious issue. They gave HMG, in effect, the power of veto, so the right of final decision in any disagreement was retained by the colonial authorities. The sultan wanted this changed and was unyielding until Abell offered to relinquish all powers except those connected with state finances, public security, defence, external affairs, and conditions of service of certain classes of public servants, such as the chief of police and the director of Special Branch. Because of this great reduction in the colonial presence, the sultan had no objection to the general reserve powers being retained. Reserve powers were conferred on both the high commissioner and the sultan (in Clause 34 and 39 of the constitution), with a proviso: in the event of these being applied as rival powers to the same bill, then the powers of the high commissioner 'should be powers which can be exercised in his unfettered discretion, without having his pitch queered by the Sultan.'

The tension which arose between the sultan and HMG during the formulation of the constitution, and the emergence of Azahari's PRB in 1955-56, gave rise to further speculation that Brunei might turn

towards Indonesia, which was seeking leadership of the Afro-Asian anticolonial movement. To avoid such an unfavourable reaction from Brunei, the commissioner-general proposed to appease the sultan. His status would be unreservedly promoted at the same time as the Colonial Office implemented closer association in Borneo. He suggested four changes: first, that the sultan come directly under the Secretary of State for the Colonies, thus raising his status directly; second, a revision of the Brunei treaty with Britain to give Brunei more freedom; third, the return to Brunei of both Labuan and the 5th Division of Sarawak (the final and most controversial cession which left Brunei as two enclaves); and, last, that the sultan be made the religious head of Muslims in a larger area than Brunei. Abell did not think the proposal was too ambitious. He pointed out 'the status of the sultan would be raised', perhaps the most significant change of all, for without this strategic concession it was feared the sultan would frustrate all attempts at closer association.⁵³

As a legacy of the once-great sultanate of Brunei and, conversely, of the expansion of British rule in Sarawak, mutual suspicion in both territories was a real political hurdle. The strongest group in Brunei favouring closer association was Azahari's PRB; while in Sarawak, according to the typically candid observation of the commissioner-general, 'the Chinese opinion in Kuching favoured the idea'.⁵⁴ This observation subsequently proved to be of great importance in Colonial Office executive planning. Its significance lay in the realisation that, as long as the notion of closer association was pursued, it would bring together these two groups (the Sarawak Chinese and the PRB), who otherwise would be unlikely to find common ground. The irony was that both groups supported an idea which was essentially a British proposal, when at the same time neither the PRB nor the Sarawak Chinese in general could be described as effusively pro-British.⁵⁵

Thus the plan for closer association in Borneo, as a step towards solving the Singapore-Federation dilemma, now included an internal contradiction. For the British to proceed as before with the concept of dominion, by first establishing a single administrative unit in Borneo, they now might inadvertently strengthen Azahari's platform in Brunei, and the Chinese in Sarawak. To do so, they would risk losing Borneo altogether. So MacDonald had good reason suddenly to be more cautious. In any case, he was soon after transferred to India. His successor was Sir Robert Scott.

Scott was unequivocal about Brunei's importance. He advocated a lenient approach to placate the sultan of Brunei; otherwise, he said:

we are going to lose control over the biggest single source of dollars in the sterling area, and the grave effects of this on the United Kingdom economy will be felt in the years to come."

In March 1956, only a month after the new commissioner-general's warning that the Colonial Office must show more complaisance in Brunei, the sultan issued a proclamation rejecting the notion of merging Brunei, as part of British Borneo, with Malaya. He issued this statement first in the *Borneo Bulletin*. It was then reprinted in the *Sarawak Tribune* (Kuching, Friday, 16 March 1956) under the heading 'Brunei Wants No Federation'. It reinforced the position of the sultan *vis-à-vis* the Colonial Office in the ongoing constitutional negotiations. In the edict, the sultan declared that he had not:

directly or by inference, approved in any way the activities of those who seek to form a new political party in Brunei ... the proposed People's Party of Brunei, an organization which has been refused registration by the Brunei government. One of the points in the Party's constitution was the declaration that the party would aim at *reuniting the British Borneo territories with Malaya*. ... It is further proclaimed that ... [the] Sultan takes no part in political controversy." [Emphasis added.]

Attention should be given to the sultan's declared disagreement with the PRB. His tactic had the benefit of strengthening his own bargaining position in the constitutional negotiations. Not to have dissociated himself from the PRB might inadvertently have led the British colonial authorities to conclude the sultan was surreptitiously promoting the anticolonial strain of Brunei nationalism; but to separate himself from PRB would be to concede his position entirely to the Colonial Office, at great disadvantage to himself.

In the same way that the PRB concept of Kalimantan Utara mirrored the British plans for closer association of the Borneo territories, the PRB willingness to join with Malaya mirrored the so-called British Dominion of South-East Asia. The Sultan's statement drew attention only to the PRB platform of merger with Malaya, which conformed with the still unannounced but widely known Colonial Office concept of bloc-style decolonisation. The first-level proposal for a Borneo merger was more generally known because territorial conferences were held at six-month intervals. The sultan did not refer to the corresponding PRB proposal for merger of the Borneo territories. The PRB had already seized the initiative on the Borneo-bloc merger, and in the sultan's stance there was implicit support despite the ostensible criticism

of PRB regarding the second-level merger. In the first-level Kalimantan Utara concept, the PRB proposed to place the sultan as the constitutional head of state. Therefore, the Sultan's apparent criticism of the PRB still included an undercurrent of support, and such a union of interests had the capacity to frustrate the long-term British interests in Borneo, if not South-East Asia.

The frustration of the Colonial Office was evident. Before being officially registered, the PRB was forced to withdraw its policy promoting merger of the Borneo territories.⁷ However, Azahari in the hustings did not relinquish the political issue of merger, so the impetus for closer association (which started years before PRB was formed) was still promoted throughout the Borneo territories as PRB policy-to-be. That it did not conflict with the British 'grand design' was doubtless an advantage for Azahari, whose influence spread south, into adjacent Sarawak, and north, into the neighbouring areas of North Borneo. The more the Colonial Office advanced the concept of 'closer association', the greater the popular support enjoyed by the PRB. As ideological replacement for British colonial rule, support for Kalimantan Utara was drawing together an incipient Borneo nationalism. On the one hand, this may have reflected no more than a willingness to share in the oil-wealth of Brunei; on the other, it was perhaps a modern-day variant of fealty once accorded the Brunei sultanate. As such, the political appeal of Kalimantan Utara would have depended only on the extant sway of the sultanate in neighbouring areas, but Azahari gathered the support of the first political leaders who emerged in Sarawak and North Borneo, Ong Kee Hui and Donald Stephens respectively. Azahari's plan conferred greater status on the sultan of Brunei than any equivalent position offered within a British Borneo federation. It should be stressed that Kalimantan Utara, participating as a partner in the proposed Federation of Malaysia, would have been a more formidable prospect than Borneo states participating in isolation, for the former had the potential to thwart domination by Kuala Lumpur or even jeopardise the 'grand design'. Higham's design of a Malaysia formed through the merger of individual states rather than blocs seemed to promise better dividends.

BMP perceived its interests in Brunei and Sarawak would not be well-served by the formation of a Borneo bloc, even less by the formation of 'Kalimantan Utara'.⁸ For the unhindered production of oil, it was far preferable to maintain the *status quo*, the rule of a single sultan over the small enclave of Brunei under British protection. With Azahari



Pramodya Ananta Toer, one of Indonesia's foremost writers, and author of the foreword of this book.



On the occasion of the announcement, made simultaneously throughout Indonesia, that the nationalists' anthem and the flying of their flag had received Japanese approval, Makassar, 30 April 1945 (the day after the emperor's birthday). From left: Dr G.S. Ratulangie (from Manado), Kenichi Hayashi (coordinated espionage in prewar Indies), Rear Admiral Maeda, Ichiki (Naval Civil Administration), Captain Masuzo Yanagihara (Chief of Political Bureau), Mitsubishi (Naval Area Governor), Shigetada Nishijima, Sukarno, Sumatono (Japanese Military Administration), Tedjuddin Noor, Tomogoro Yoshizumi, A. Subandjo. [Photo courtesy of Shigetada Nishijima]



Sukarno with President John F. Kennedy of the USA, during their 1961 meeting.

Sukarno, holding a pacol (hoe), posing as the '1st farmer' of the nation, Jakarta, 1964. [Photograph courtesy of Bob Hering]



*Students demonstrating
against Sukarno and the
PKI at the end of
February 1965, Jakarta.
[Photograph courtesy of
Bob Hering]*



*Sukarno and D.N. Aidit,
chairman of the PKI
Politburo, on the occasion
of the 45th anniversary of
the PKI, Jakarta, May
1965. [Photograph
courtesy of Bob Hering]*



Sukarno during one of his last press conferences, February, 1966. [Photograph courtesy of Bob Hering]

Final meeting of the Council of Ministers under Sukarno, at the palace, Jakarta, 2 March 1966. [Photograph courtesy of Bob Hering]





Anti-Sukarno student demonstration supported by the Indonesian army, at the end of February 1966, Jakarta. [Photograph courtesy of Bob Hering]



Changeover in 1967 of official portraits after Sukarno's resignation, Jakarta. [Photograph courtesy of Bob Hering]



Medical students at Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta, being addressed by Suharto in February 1966. [Photograph courtesy of Bob Hering]



A.M. bin Sheikh Mahmud Azahari at his home in Indonesia in the late 1960s.



A.M. Azahari (right) with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan, China, 1965.



Above: Zaim, A.M. Azahari and J. Effendy petitioning the UN in 1974.

Right: Dr Burhamuddin Al-Helmy was leader of the Malay Nationalist Party before British colonial authorities imprisoned him (1950-52). Born in 1911 in Malaya (Perak), he was schooled in Indonesia and studied Medicine in India. Before the war, he became a member of the Union of Malay Youth (KMM). He attended the New Delhi Conference in 1947 and the Bandung Conference in 1955. [Source: Yaacob, Malaya Merdeka, 1957]





Top: The author with General Soeharto, May 1991.

Above: D.N. Aidit receiving foreign guests in front of PKI headquarters at the beginning of 1955. [Photograph courtesy of Bob Hering]

and the Colonial Office promoting similar concepts of federation for the Borneo territories, there was a far greater likelihood of the sultan's singular power being replaced by a representative government headed by Azahari. Distrusted as he was by the BMP managing director, Hector Hales, Azahari was most likely to be head of government because he was the outstanding politician of the three territories. Thus BMP regarded its long-term future as unsure if the Borneo federation plan proceeded. The sultan's stated rejection of merger with Malaya, his apparent rebuttal of PRB and his renunciation of taking part in political controversy, were ideally suited to a symbiotic arrangement with the long-term interests of BMP.

The sultan and BMP were ensconced in an amicable, working relationship. Brunei government revenue for 1956 was S\$118 million, of which the sultan received S\$150 000 as a set allowance. "Vast amounts were squandered, however. For as long as the allocation of revenue depended ultimately on the discretion of the sultan, state finances remained hardly more than a system of largesse. Sir Anthony conveyed his concern to the Colonial Office, informing them that the sultan:

is at present rather hurt that the British Resident and myself are forever insisting that it is the State Council and the incompetence and corruption among the ministers which disturbs decent and responsible opinion and allows the dissident groups to assume a self-righteous attitude. He does not realize that there is in fact a great deal to grumble at in the administration in Brunei and that some at least of Azahari's followers are reasonable people.

At the same time, Sir Anthony noted that such gains were being made by the PRB that 'it now assumes the proportion of a national movement'.¹⁰⁰ Provided defence and internal security were arranged for the sultanate and the oil company, their mutual relationship would be even more amicable. While Abell and Turnbull unhesitatingly recognised the need for reform, support from the Colonial Office was predicated upon maintaining regional supremacy beyond decolonisation. Although PRB requests for administrative and democratic reform were adamant, the Colonial Office conceded only as much as was necessary to maintain a facade of democracy. If reform entailed opening the floodgate to a political party described as a 'national movement' and one which both Special Branch and oil-company intelligence had warned were susceptible to Indonesian influence, the preferred option undoubtedly would be to keep the gate closed.

Brunei posed a dilemma for the Colonial Office two-bloc policy. Without the oil sultanate there would be no Borneo federation, but with a federation it seemed likely the PRB would assume control. The governor of North Borneo scorned anything less than a real move towards federation, yet the governor of Sarawak doubted the efficacy of such a move, and the official stance of the sultan of Brunei opposed such a change. The Colonial Office explained the predicament to the governor of North Borneo in exaggerated terms, as though the opposition to merger from within Brunei emanated from the sultan and his mass support. 'Anything that looks like federation,' Turnbull was informed, 'will at the present time provoke violent opposition in Brunei.'¹⁰⁷

It was not the PRB but the sultan who had expressed dissatisfaction. From the constitutional negotiations then being conducted by the Colonial Office with the sultan, differences had arisen between the sultan and the PRB over the extent of proposed democratic reform to be incorporated in the constitution. In the light of this, the Colonial Office suggestion put to Turnbull that the PRB and the sultan were a united front capable of 'violent opposition', was deliberate distortion. The Colonial Office exploited any rift between the sultan and the PRB to isolate the radical, anticolonial faction in the party. In effect, the Colonial Office and the PRB were vying for the political affection of the sultan. Yet there always remained a fear within the Colonial Office that the sultan might opt for Azahari's formula for merger of the three territories. Kalimantan Utara would regain a territorial realm that was lost to the sultanate a century or more earlier. An air of distrust of the sultan permeated British colonial circles. At times, this was reciprocated by the sultan, who was prepared to utilise the support proffered by PRB to press his own point of view on the Colonial Office, although generally he was compliant. A startlingly revealing comment on the sultan, made by MacDonald (who visited as British high commissioner in New Delhi), exemplified the cultural and diplomatic void underlying British relations:

I observed that his face reveals a much more mature, self-confident character than before. Nor did I see in his eyes any hint of the madness which one should perhaps look for in a member of the Royal House of Brunei ... But these are comparatively early days, and heredity may yet catch up with His Highness.¹⁰⁸

When questions regarding a merger in Borneo were asked in the House of Lords on 15 November 1956, Brunei was not mentioned

Lord Listowel (former Labour Minister of State for Colonial Affairs) and Lord Lloyd (former Colonial Undersecretary) debated a proposed merger between North Borneo and Sarawak only.¹⁰⁷ Presumably, Brunei was not mentioned because it was under Sarawak administration (and the repercussions of explicitly including Brunei were thus avoided). The absence of Brunei in the debate, however, brought an immediate response from the Legislative Council in North Borneo.

'Has this government ever proposed a federation of North Borneo and Sarawak?' demanded Donald Stephens.

Turnbull took the opportunity before answering of seeking a statement from the Secretary of State, who (in November 1956) replied:

Closer association and co-operation between the three Borneo territories in various branches of administration is most desirable and is being pursued through medium of inter-territorial conferences and departmentally. The possibility of a federation of North Borneo and Sarawak, and indeed of all three Borneo territories ... is a matter for the people of the territories themselves to decide.¹⁰⁸

Turnbull's trenchant reply to London expressed his frustration with the Colonial Office, particularly the reluctance to introduce democratic reform, and conveyed criticism already expressed in the North Borneo Legislative Council:

I regret the statement by the Minister that the matter is one for the people of the territory to decide has already been criticized on the grounds (that) the people have not been given an opportunity to decide and it is difficult to see how, with our existing constitution, they could be asked to do so.¹⁰⁹

Turnbull's reply indicated he was aware of some variance between his gubernatorial approach to reform and that pursued 'departmentally'. Dutifully, Turnbull answered in the Legislative Council on 4 December 1956 that a federation of Sarawak and North Borneo alone was not proposed. The inferred meaning was that a three-way federation was still in the planning, but this was merely saving face. There was still no indication from the sultan that his stated opposition to closer association had mellowed. Meanwhile, on the evidence provided by an internal memorandum in the Colonial Office hierarchy, there seems to have been a willingness to exclude or bypass both governors of the respective Borneo territories. Sir Anthony Abell's suggestion, for instance, that a possible transfer of Labuan to Brunei should first have

'the unmistakable support of the people (a two-thirds majority)' was met with some derision, indicating that Colonial Office policy at times might be well satisfied with the mere facade of democracy. Abel's reminder about the popular majority brought the departmental comment:

Plebiscites for such purposes are becoming fashionable, but it is not a practice we should wish to encourage in our own territories.¹⁰⁶

The commissioner-general, Sir Robert Scott, outlined several important issues in his efforts to secure the Sultan's approval for a Borneo bloc. Scott suggested to the Colonial Office in early 1957 that Abel approach the sultan with a set of proposals: that Brunei and Sarawak be separated and a separate high commissioner appointed; that this new appointee then be made permanent chairman of a Borneo Territories Joint Council to promote closer association; that Labuan be made a free port and defence facilities increased; and that assurance be given to the sultan that no federation would be imposed against his will.¹⁰⁷

The separation of Brunei and Sarawak, the first of these proposals, was later utilised by the Sultan in a new agreement with Britain, replacing the 1905-06 agreement that began the residential system. This was signed in conjunction with the new constitution, in Brunei on 29 September 1959.¹⁰⁸ The status of the Sultan was an important aspect of the new agreement (according to a note from the Colonial Office a few months later, informing the Commonwealth Relations Office), although it provided in Britain's favour for 'complete control of external affairs and defence in terms including, in effect, internal security'. Despite his rapidly accumulating wealth, the concomitant increase in international status remained unacknowledged as long as British rule from Sarawak persisted. It was an affront to the new-found dignity derived from oil to have the colonial power residing in Kuching, an insouciant reminder of the territorial reduction undergone by the sultanate when previously impoverished. The rise in status was seemingly supported in the last of Scott's proposals by respecting the sultan's wish to abstain, if he so desired, from joining the federation. This provided an escape clause for the sultan. If the sultan abstained, the gap would widen between him and the PRB, who were still promoting a federation of the Borneo territories. Thus the escape clause was intended for the benefit not just of the sultan, but also of the Colonial Office.

The inclusion of the escape clause, moreover, was an indication that

the colonial and oil executive recognised the existence of the bonding between the PRB and the Brunei ruling executive. The hauteur of the ruling circle in Brunei was in many ways similar to, but still separate from, the nationalist pride that was the driving force in the PRB. Both the PRB and the ruling circle in Brunei were conscious of Brunei's former greatness and were aspiring to new stations in life as a consequence of the political and economic changes after the war. The PRB was aiming for a constitutional democracy in Brunei, which would maintain the position of the sultan but mostly eliminate the role of the ruling circle. As a reflection of this divisive potential within the politics of Brunei, internal and external security was still the dominant reason that Scott used to promote closer association. He exaggerated the political scenario to gain maximum effect:

In Brunei the danger lies in extreme Malay nationalism. This already exists and is being encouraged by left-wing elements both inside and outside the country. If unchecked it will develop into a rabid opposition to the Monarchy and to the British connexion, and it could bring about the overthrow of the Sultanate, with grave prejudice to the whole stability of the State including the security of the oilfield ... The threat to Sarawak arises from Communist subversion among the Chinese. This is at present contained, but no more than that ... Externally, all three territories are bound as time goes on to become the target of Indonesian irredentism ... (and) they will not be able separately to provide for their own defence or for the conduct of their foreign relations: even united they will be unable to do so without the help of the UK. ... The remedy is to encourage the territories to enter into some form of political association.¹⁰⁰

Scott's proposals as first stated were the epitome of reform designed to secure the participation of the sultan and of the PRB. The other two co-authors, Abell and Turnbull, also held hopes for a solution. Most significant was the statement that:

the political goal for the territories should be democratic local government; with the Queen as constitutional monarch in North Borneo and Sarawak and the Sultan in Brunei.

Brunei should be wholly separate from Sarawak, Scott stressed, and a new treaty prepared with the sultan, guaranteeing British support for his state and house.

In February 1958, however, when the closer-association proposals were publicised, the proviso that the sultan assume the role of consti-

tutional monarch in Brunei was altered. Under the 1958 proposals, the sultan was to be downgraded; he would be placed under a governor-general, sited on nearby Labuan. Both the locality and the loss in status were colonial impositions. The noncompliance of the sultan was assured. So predictable was the sultan's reaction that the reason for including such a change — inserted at the eleventh hour — could only have been deliberate. Brunei, rather than take part in any closer association, was more isolated than ever; and for those who ensured the sultan would reject closer association, there was political advantage in such a move, for it blocked the advance of Azahari and the PRB.

The February 1958 public announcement on closer association accentuated the political division between the sultan and Azahari, effectively driving a wedge between their respective policies. On the one hand was the sultan's renitent stance on a Borneo merger that brought only a demotion of his power, while on the other was Azahari's ardent conviction that constitutional government in either Brunei or Kalimantan Utara would impel him into leadership. He envisaged his role as prime minister (in accordance with the stated British intention of granting self-government), with the sultan as constitutional monarch. Through merger of the Borneo territories, simply 'riding the coattails' of British decolonisation, Azahari would ultimately attain government in the proposed state of Kalimantan Utara. This policy of Azahari was an editorial subject in the *Straits Budget* six months or so before the 1958 proposal:

The Party Ra'ayat is really asking for constitutional government in continued association with the Commonwealth, the first step, it says, towards a federation of Brunei, Sarawak and North Borneo which should become a Malaysian sultanate. The idea of a federation of the three Bornean territories is not new. It is sometimes supposed that it is Whitehall policy, although Whitehall has never said so ... [The PRB] dreams of reviving past glories, when the Brunei sultanate held the whole of Borneo and the Sulu archipelago in dominion. Brunei was still referred to as 'Borneo proper' as recently as a hundred years ago.¹⁷⁰

Because Azahari's policy in 1957 pre-empted the promotion of closer association of the Bornean territories, the Colonial Office was reluctant to pursue the policy openly at the risk of inadvertently aiding PRB. The memorandum on the 'Future of the Borneo Territories' prepared by Scott, Abell and Turnbull in early 1957 met with little enthusiasm in the Colonial Office, where the unofficial response took

the form of two options. First, it was suggested that the sultan would 'gain considerable kudos' if he proclaimed the virtues of closer association, and were he to combine this with some judicious political concessions 'he would take a large portion of the wind from Azahari's sails'. And second, it was debatable whether pandering to the sultan would achieve the desired end, or simply 'tell him in no uncertain terms that if he values his throne he must co-operate'.¹¹ Abell, similar to Scott in that both stressed the need for defence, responded to the apparent inaction in the Colonial Office. Sir Anthony stated his priority was protecting the Borneo territories from outside influence during the next decade. And in the future, he added, the three territories may wish to become members of a wider Malayan federation. On the effect of Azahari's policies nullifying the closer association proposal, Abell commented that he could not predict how the proposals would be publicly received, but Azahari's advocacy of a Borneo federation 'has for the time being queered our pitch'.¹² Three months later, he forewarned in a despatch to the Secretary of State that the sultan's disinclination to favour closer association seemed to be increasing the more the PRB advocated it.¹³

Sir Anthony Abell also informed his superiors that the sultan was susceptible to another influence, which he left unclarified other than that it was not the PRB. Abell noted pertinently that the sultan 'would certainly be still further ill-disposed to the project' if he were to learn from sources other than the high commissioner that HMG was contemplating closer association.¹⁴ This reference to other sources implied, first, an outlet in both Brunei and London, and, second, a familiarity with Colonial Office to the extent of knowing policy even before it was announced. Abell was probably referring to BMP, well-connected in London and well-represented in Brunei, in a situation not too dissimilar from March 1956, when the sultan repudiated closer association in a public announcement in the newspaper. Outside the sultan's personal coterie and immediate advisers (*uwazins*), BMP's access to the sultan was unsurpassed. Abell was concerned not simply that the unnamed source had access to Colonial Office policy and was capable of conducting policy briefings with the sultan on a one-to-one basis, but that the unauthorised briefings might convey a different perspective on closer association and thus undermine the desired co-operation between the sultan and the high commissioner.

When Sir Anthony visited Brunei on 14 August 1957 to discuss closer association, he observed that the sultan seemed more amenable

to persuasion. The change was perhaps prompted by an alarmist story in the *Times* three weeks earlier, entitled 'Forestalling Indonesian Ambitions in Borneo - British territories advised to form partnership'. The story declared that the:

first official hint of Indonesian interest in acquiring all of Borneo has been dropped in the Indonesian part of that island ... The statement in Indonesian Borneo (Kalimantan) came from the Minister of State for Veterans' Affairs in the Central Government, Chairul Saleh. Speaking at a youth rally organised to hear President Sukarno who has just ended a visit to Borneo, he said the young people must work hard and one day all Kalimantan would be freed from colonialism and imperialism.¹¹

The article in the *Times* said that Sukarno, during his visit to Borneo (that is, Kalimantan), 'did not touch directly on this point' (that is, Indonesian expansion into British Borneo). It suggested that Chairul Saleh was 'probably reflecting what was in the president's mind'. He probably was: indeed, in December 1957, in addition to the proclamation that Indonesia was an archipelagic state,¹² Sukarno took the drastic step of nationalisation of Dutch enterprises in Indonesia to smite the Dutch intransigence over the issue of New Guinea sovereignty. Chairul Saleh's words to his young audience may well have been intended as encouragement to acquire the expertise necessary for Indonesia to conduct its shipping and oil industry independent of the Dutch. The story was accompanied by some remarks made by Sir Anthony over the Sarawak radio, calling for 'a strong healthy partnership' of the three Borneo territories, and that he wished Brunei to retain her character and identity as a Malay Islamic sultanate. Where there was no direct statement by Indonesian officials intended as a threat, the article nevertheless implied there was, and this threat was then used to promote the need for the Borneo territories to consider merger for strategic reasons. For the *Times* correspondent to impute Indonesian expansion into the British territories of North Borneo, from the words of Chairul Saleh, was not altogether fanciful, because his statement was flavoured by his past association with Tan Malaka and Mohammed Yamin. All three were in the political leadership council of *Persatuan Perjuangan*, which ten years before had aspired to Indonesian control of British Borneo, Singapore and Malaya.

Whether the change in the sultan came from the influence of sources other than Sir Anthony, or from the story in the *Times*, or perhaps both, would be mere conjecture. Among the other factors, undoubtedly,

were the provincial elections in Java, which ended in August 1957. These did not go unnoticed in the British Borneo territories because of the large increase in support for the PKI in Java; as well, four months before the elections, Indonesia had been placed under martial law, making the PKI electoral victory all the more resounding.¹⁴ There was yet another reason for the sultan's apparent volte-face. In September 1957, the sultan was in London to discuss the proposed constitution. These negotiations, which the sultan wanted to be concluded to his satisfaction, were also a reason for subduing his own uneasiness towards closer association.

Two aspects of closer association were stressed for the benefit of the sultan during the talks in London. The first was that HMG would be better able to fulfil the requirements of internal security if closer association proceeded; and the second, that HMG would be better able to support the reigning house of the sultanate. In addition to the advantages of having external defence, police and Special Branch activities under a central council, it was pointed out that closer association would help Brunei in obtaining labour for the oilfields, and that the judiciary, the geological and survey departments, which were already combined with the other two territories, would be even more efficient. So too would a host of other functions – post and telecommunications, civil aviation, meteorological, merchant shipping, harbours, customs and currency. In September, shortly before the sultan returned to Brunei, the Secretary of State for the Colonies informed him that he wanted the governors of North Borneo and Sarawak to 'start consultations and public discussions so as to assemble all the facts' on closer association. The sultan stated only that he wanted no public discussion in Brunei. The Colonial Office told Sir Anthony that the sultan was 'afraid that it will in some way infringe the independence of Brunei and weaken his personal position ... [but] he did not say anything against the idea ...'. As well, the Colonial Office noted that Azahari, who also had an audience in London, was 'all in favour of closer association'.¹⁵

On 14 October 1957, Lord Perth (Minister of State for Colonial Affairs) issued a directive to Sir Anthony that he and Governor Turnbull prepare a plan of action for closer association. From this directive came the February 1958 broadcast:

His Highness [the Sultan] is not yet prepared to offer any comments or observations on this matter [of closer association] ... pending his return

to Brunei. I regard the matter, however, as one of importance and urgency and with a view to avoiding unnecessary delay in ascertaining the views of the people and governments of the two other territories concerned I have to request that you and the Governor of North Borneo will consider together the question of closer association taking such steps as you consider appropriate openly to consult public opinion in the territory under your administration.¹¹

In an attempt to force the hand of the sultan before the planned public discussion of closer association, a paper was prepared at the office of the commissioner-general in Singapore (under MacKintosh, acting in the absence of Scott) by a Colonial Office representative.¹² The paper was dated 25 October 1957. In a Colonial Office minute, the paper was described as 'very forthright and cannot be said to be the acme of diplomacy'.¹³ Sir John Martin asked that it be rewritten but Sir Anthony agreed to send it to the sultan unchanged.¹⁴ The paper noted that the growth of responsible government in Malaya led to the eclipse of personal power formerly wielded by the sultans, and that PRB was openly advocating closer association in Borneo, but suggested that the sultan should seize the initiative. It claimed one of the advantages of closer association would be the stabilising influence of North Borneo and Sarawak for in neither 'has there yet emerged the same political ferment and desire for change which the Partai Rakyat activities have produced in Brunei'. In a more threatening vein, the paper predicted that:

if His Highness persists in refusing to give his support to the concept he will find himself in the highly embarrassing position of isolated opposition to a general consensus of opinion ... [which] would be most unfortunate if closer association could in practice be pursued only at the cost of an open defeat for His Highness' policies.¹⁵

In economic terms too, it warned that the sultan faced a bleak future if Brunei shunned closer association because of its dependence on oil:

When the oil runs dry the economy of the country will at best remain static ... The indicators are that oil may be found in North Borneo, perhaps also in Sarawak ... [but] Brunei can look forward to no comparable advance.¹⁶

It was within the ken of the oil company to correct this notion of impending depletion. Brunei offshore oil was, in oil-industry terminology, 'very prospective' – despite the official announcements that oil

output was declining. In fact, it was so prospective that Brunei in September 1958 became one of the first countries in the world to extend its official maritime boundary when 'a British Order in Council defined continental shelf boundaries separating the offshore areas of Brunei from Sabah [North Borneo] and Sarawak'.¹²⁵ The delineation of new boundaries for Brunei was in patent contradiction to the purported intention of closer association. From the perspective of the sultan, however, this timely redefinition of boundaries could only have been interpreted as support for his wish that the sultanate (and with it, the oilfields) remain distinct from any merger, amalgamation or plan for closer association. Remarkably, the boundary line between Brunei and Sarawak deviated in favour of Brunei. Not until 1963 was it obvious that, as a result of this deviation, the discovery of the giant South West Ampa oilfield, 15 kilometres off the coast, was unquestionably in Brunei territory.¹²⁶ Prescott commented on the political geography behind this arrangement:

While the line between Brunei and Sabah follows a course which is almost equidistant, the western boundary between Brunei and Sarawak follows an alignment which favours Brunei to a marked extent because it lies west of a line of equidistance ... In fact the officer administering the government in Sarawak and the Ruler of Brunei decided to draw a true equidistant line for only a short distance, and then to continue the boundary more or less at right-angles to the general direction of the coast ...¹²⁷

Even though a solution for decolonisation of the Borneo territories had not yet been concluded, this arrangement prepared for an eventuality whereby Brunei and its rich offshore prospects would remain under a British monopoly and a British defence treaty. Defence considerations for the Borneo territories, which had provided the initial move towards closer association, were still predominant immediately prior to the 1958 broadcast.¹²⁸

It was not the threat of a diminishing oil supply which firmed the opinion of the sultan, but rather the threatened demotion of status. Because his status was to be reduced, the sultan's rejection of closer association was outright. Where the change was stated most clearly was not in the radio broadcasts made by Sir Roland Turnbull and Sir Anthony Abell, separately, on the evening of 7 February 1958, but rather in the secret memoranda sent to the district officers in Sarawak. The information these contained was intended as written accompani-

ment to the broadcast material. The sultan, of course, would have read this information as a blueprint for closer association. Glaringly evident was the intention to demote the sultan in status. This was tantamount to declaring the sultanate an anachronism. Presuming the consent of the sultan and both governors would be given – but in effect ensuring the sultan rejected the proposal – the memorandum outlined how authority was to be ceded to a central Colonial Office designate, whose seat of power was likely to be sited on Labuan, just off the coast of Brunei. At the same time, the memorandum included the defence argument favouring closer association, with Indonesia the threat:

Any one of the Borneo territories could as readily be the target of a campaign as Dutch New Guinea had been; a claim by Indonesia on Sarawak or Brunei would be a matter between Indonesia and the United Kingdom; a claim by Indonesia on North Borneo would evoke prompt opposition from the Philippines, a situation in which the ability of HMG to protect North Borneo would at once be strengthened. ... It will no doubt be advanced as an argument against the participation of North Borneo that communist subversion is appreciable in Sarawak and the Partai Ra'ayat a nuisance in Brunei. But it is not to the advantage of any one of the territories that there should be political disquiet or disturbance in the others; if the security forces were merged such trouble could more readily be dealt with.¹²⁴

The memorandum, in effect, provided enough tangible evidence of the plans for closer association to confirm the suspicions of the sultan that British domination would ensue. This intention was plainly stated, and the sultan rejected the plans accordingly.

The radio broadcasts by Sir Anthony and Sir Roland on the night of 7 February 1958 clearly left open to the sultan this avenue of rejection. Naturally, he took this option. The content of the talks was essentially different to the closer association concept as outlined in their January 1957 memorandum. Both governors emphasised that they were not conveying 'a firm plan' or 'specific proposal', but acknowledged that the broadcast was the first public reference to the subject by any government in the Borneo territories. Sir Roland declared:

The difference tonight is that I, as the responsible head of your government, am asking you to consider, in all gravity, the merits from the point of view of you, the people of North Borneo, of the proposal that North Borneo should enter into with Brunei and Sarawak some kind of constitutional pact.¹²⁵

The broadcasts by Sir Roland and Sir Anthony were equally vague. The former explained that the idea of a radio broadcast seemed preferable to announcing the subject in the Legislative Council because addressing his councillors directly would deny them 'the opportunity for consultation and deliberation provided by the course I have in fact adopted'.¹⁵¹ Without any details of the proposed 'constitutional pact', the indigenous people of North Borneo were going to be no wiser than before; nor would the councillors. His reluctance to appease the sultan one year earlier was now supplanted by his willingness to advise caution:

In the case of Brunei it would mean that His Highness the Sultan and his government, not just the government, were convinced that it would be to the advantage of His Highness' country and acceptable to a substantial body of people ... Clearly, recognizing the special position of Brunei, amalgamation of the three countries into one is impracticable.¹⁵²

Amalgamation introduced problems between Muslim and non-Muslim, but even closer association encompassed unresolved problems of sharing oil wealth, which would economically disadvantage Brunei. Defence and internal security for Brunei was really the only benefit for the sultan, and both these matters were being included in the separate agreement being prepared with the new constitution. Sir Anthony, commenting on Brunei, said:

His Highness the Sultan is aware of the discussions which have taken place and is aware also that we in Sarawak and North Borneo intend to consult public opinion. He quite understandably would like first to study the plans which emerge from our discussions and the public reaction to these plans before he commits either himself or his government to their support. Brunei is, I believe, a vital element in this process of alliance and I hope that public discussion will convince the people of Brunei of the solid advantages of a closer association and a better understanding of her neighbours.¹⁵³

Whatever the respective opinions of Azahari and the sultan, the greatest worry for Sir Anthony was the possibility that they might find common cause – as in the planned state of Kalimantan Utara, sharing Brunei's economic resources and popular support. In other words, the hope expressed by Sir Anthony concerning 'the people of Brunei' was feigned simplification. Sir Anthony was acutely aware of the disdain expressed by the sultan for democratic reform at the hands of the

Colonial Office if, by its implementation, the authority of the sultan (as in Malaya) was superseded by representative government. It was obvious that such a government, if it were created, would be dominated by PRB. Sir Anthony's rendering of the closer-association proposal was in vague terms for the people of Sarawak, but for the sultan it was stark enough – it threatened him with demotion of status. In the month following the broadcast, Azahari voiced his approval of closer association, subject to more details of the proposal being made available,¹⁵ and the sultan informed the Secretary of State that he was still disinclined to participate in closer association.¹⁶ In April, two months after the broadcast, Abell summarised its effects for the Colonial Office:

Azahari is trying to use the 'closer association proposals' to revive his position and his party and is now touring North Borneo. I doubt if he will have much success because the proposals appear not to be strongly supported in any circles in Brunei at present, and the quality are dead against it.¹⁷

The sultan made only passing reference to closer association during his traditional *Hari Raya* message (at the conclusion of Ramadan) that year in late April. His unwillingness to confirm or deny his support publicly caused the *Sarawak Tribune* (29 April 1958) to speculate on the British motive in making the proposal.

It is only logical to assume that, because Brunei is to form a vital link in the successful outcome of the proposal, the Sultan must have certainly given his support in principle to the idea, otherwise HMG would never in the first place have taken the initiative to start the ball rolling.¹⁸

In early June, Sir Anthony confirmed that the reaction of the sultan after the closer-association broadcasts, as it had been before the them, was negative. 'There is therefore, in my opinion,' he wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 'no likelihood of Brunei taking part in discussions on this subject.'¹⁹

In Sarawak and North Borneo, as recorded meticulously by Angel, the broadcasts prompted much debate on closer association in local councils, social clubs, newspapers, chambers of commerce and a variety of local groups, so 'the initiation of public discussion undoubtedly contributed to an increased political consciousness'.²⁰ Although Angel considered the 1958 proposal might have been 'a Machiavellian manoeuvre',²¹ he discounted the possibility. Yet if the attempt to include Brunei was intended to secure other political advantages, knowing

full well Brunei's inclusion was never a possibility. Machavellian would be a more apt conclusion. Angel claimed that the closer-association broadcasts in February 1958 served as a political stimulant for the populace of Sarawak and North Borneo, that the people would have been unprepared to consider the Malaysia proposal without the 1958 precedent. Public debate no doubt broadened the political horizon of some, but the crucial element that propelled Sarawak and North Borneo into the arms of Kuala Lumpur in 1963 was the security threat once *Konfrontasi* started.

Sir Anthony Abell drew attention to another aspect of the closer-association debate that he launched, when he said that in Sarawak:

support for closer association was so predominantly Chinese that there was the danger that indigenous members of the communities would be suspicious and even hostile to the proposal.¹⁰

The increased suspicion and hostility towards the Chinese was an important precursor of the 1961 proposal to form Malaysia, but there were two main political effects of the February proposal. The first was an attempt to exploit division between the PRB platform and the aspirations of the sultan; the second was that the PRB and the other main proponents of closer association, the Chinese in Sarawak, established common ground. The Sarawak Chinese became supportive of Azahari's continuing campaign to establish 'Kalimantan Utara'. By means of this bonding, the Sarawak Chinese – linked with kith and kin in neighbouring Indonesia – became embroiled in the Brunei rebellion.

Relations between Indonesia and the British colonial authorities centred in Singapore deteriorated, however, as a result of another rebellion, in the Indonesian Outer Islands. Because this rebellion had a significant impact in terms of creating a unified Indonesian army whose role was pivotal in *Konfrontasi*, and also because the rebellion highlighted the role of Chinese in Indonesian society and in the neighbouring British colonies, we shall now turn to the Outer Islands rebellion.

Notes

1. Cited in Colonial Office paper Political Objectives in British Territories of South East Asia, 10 March 1953, classified 'secret'. The paper was prepared in response to a request by the Secretary of the Joint Planning Staff, Ministry of Defence, memorandum JPS 52/653, of 17 August 1952, CO 1022 61 19/4/01, p. 157.

2. Ibid., p. 157.
3. Ibid., p. 159. Parenthesis in original.
4. Ibid., p. 158.
5. In 1930, Sir Cecil Clementi became governor of the Straits Settlements, including Labuan, high commissioner for the Malay States and for Brunei, and British agent for Sarawak and North Borneo. A Pan-Malayan Union was proposed after problems were encountered in attempting to merge the federated and unfederated states. See N. Tarling, 'Sir Cecil Clementi and the Federation of British Borneo', *Journal of the Straits Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 44, no. 2, 1971, pp. 1-34; and John Bastian and Robin W. Winks (eds), *Malaysia - Selected Historical Readings*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, p. 292.
6. Political Objectives in the British Territories of South East Asia, CO 1022/61 19/4/01, p. 160.
7. Tunku Abdul Rahman, 6 August 1955, cited in CO 1030 161 59/3/01.
8. Minutes of meeting on closer association held in Colonial Office, Tuesday morning, 12 January 1960. Present were Melville, Abell, Waddell, Wallace and Nield. See CO 1030 556 59/5/01. Minutes Item 195. Sir Alexander Waddell replaced Sir Anthony Abell as governor of Sarawak in 1959.
9. The Sea Dyak community in the 1960 census was 237 741, with a 24.9 per cent increase after the 1947 census; the Chinese community numbered 229 154, with a 57.9 per cent increase since 1947, or an annual rate of 3.5 per cent. The other indigenous communities were listed as: Malay (129 300), Melanau (44 661), Land Dyak (57 619), and others (37 931) - in total (with the Sea Dyaks included) 507 252. See L. W. Jones, *Sarawak: Report on the Census of Population taken on 15th June 1960*, Government Printing Office, Kuching, Sarawak, January 1962, chapter IV, pp. 47-59. Jones was superintendent of census for Sarawak and North Borneo.
10. In the 1962 Sarawak annual report, population estimates of the Chinese were 31.5 per cent, compared to 31 per cent for the Iban and 17.5 per cent for the Malay community, as cited in Michael B. Leigh, *The Chinese Community of Sarawak - a study of Communal Relations*, Department of History, University of Singapore, 1964, p. 2.
11. L. W. Jones, p. 52.
12. See chapter 8.
13. J. D. Higham to Paskin, Colonial Office, 20 January 1953. CO 1022/61 19/4/01, pp. 191-3. Higham, who retired from the Colonial Office soon after writing this report, began by noting it was his 'swan song'.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 193. Higham stressed the small population of the British territories in comparison with other Asian countries: Indonesia, 70 million; Siam, 18 million; Burma, 17 million; Indochina, 27 million; Philippines, 20 million.
15. Colonial policy committee paper on closer association of Borneo territories prepared by Far Eastern Department, 3 December 1957, CO 1030 556 59/5/01, Part A, Item 76.
16. J.D. Higham to Paskin, 20 January 1953, CO 1022 61 19/4/01, p. 192, paragraph 8.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 193, paragraph 9.
18. Telephone interview with K.J. Tregonning, 25 November 1992.
19. CO 1030 161 59/3/01, p. 27.
20. J.M. Gullick, *Malaysia*, Ernest Benn Ltd, London, 1969, p. 128. While the name was chosen in 1949, the committee first formed in 1948. See Gordon R. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, University of London Press, London, p. 123.
21. Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, *From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation – Political Unification in the Malaysia Region 1945-65*, Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 102.
22. James Minchin, *No Man Is An Island: A study of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1986, p. 60.
23. Howard Palfrey Jones, *Indonesia: The Possible Dream*, Gunung Agung, Jakarta, 4th ed. 1980, p. 158. According to Justus van der Kroef, those arrested included 'some 2000 Communists and party sympathizers', all of whom were subsequently released without being brought before a court. See J. van der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia – its history, program and tactics*, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1965, p. 49.
24. Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare – the Malayan Emergency 1948-1960*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1989, p. 140. Lyttelton travelled to Malaya in early December 1951 to assess the best course of action before making the appointment in January 1952.
25. Secretary of State to Templer, 13 February 1953, CO 1022 61 19/4/01 p. 184.
26. Political Objectives in British Territories of South East Asia, CO 1022 61 19/4/01, p. 160. Emphasis in original.
27. The Tunku was adamant that Malaya was for the Malays 'and should not be governed by a mixture of races', as he declared in the *Straits Times*, 1 July 1952. He continued this stance throughout the 1950s. See R.K. Vasil, *Ethnic Politics in Malaysia*, Radiant Publishers, India, 1980.

- p. 62. Vasil also deals with the fate of Dato Onn's new conciliatory, multiracial party, the IMP (Independence of Malaya Party).
28. CO 1022 61 19/4/01.
 29. Political Objectives in British Territories of South East Asia, *Ibid.*, p. 158.
 30. Nicoll to Lloyd, Colonial Office, 1 May 1952, CO 1022 61 19/4/01.
 31. One proposal went so far as to suggest the merger not be limited to British colonial territories in Borneo, when perhaps Hong Kong, Fiji and the Solomon Islands might participate. The *Evening Standard* (Singapore) on 27 June 1952, announced that Yap Pheng Geck, a Singapore city councillor, planned to launch a political party to form Singapore, Malaya, Sarawak and Borneo into a United States of South-East Asia within the British Commonwealth.
 32. The Secretary of State informed the commissioner-general, 13 February 1952, that inviting a representative from Brunei 'would be a matter of great delicacy and you may well feel that initially it would be unwise to suggest this', CO 1022 61 19/4/01.
 33. Interim Report of JCC, February 1955, CO 1030 161 59/3/01.
 34. Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare - the Malayan Emergency 1948-1960*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1989, p. 159.
 35. CO 1022 57 10/407/01. Singapore-based military-intelligence officer Derek Oakley informed the author that some Iban were permitted to claim the scalps of victims, and he witnessed one such 'payment' in a Singapore mortuary. Derek Oakley. Interview, UK, 1991.
 36. CO 1022 106 40/321/01.
 37. *Straits Budget* 30 April 1953, (a weekly compilation for overseas readers taken from *Straits Times*, 24 April 1953) cited in CO 1022 63 19/5/01.
 38. *Ibid.*
 39. Commissioner-general to Colonial Office, 10 June 1952, CO 1022 63 19/5/01.
 40. Commissioner-general South-East Asia to Secretary of State, 23 July 1954, CO 1030 161 59/3/01, Part A.
 41. *Ibid.*
 42. Statement issued by Indonesian embassy in London, 26 July 1957, CO 593 82/269/01.
 43. JCC Interim Report, February 1955, p. 27, CO 1030 161 59/3/01.
 44. Commissioner-general to governor of North Borneo, 10 February 1953, CO 1022 63 19/5/01.
 45. Governor of North Borneo to commissioner-general, 12 February 1953, *Ibid.*
 46. Turnbull to Assistant Secretary of State, 2 November 1956, CO 1030

104 36/6/03. Turnbull gave the example of the father (killed in 1943) of the first local leader in the Legislative Council, Donald Stephens. Stephen's father, the son of a European chief surveyor, had been the district chief clerk in the service of the Chartered Company before the Japanese invasion, and married to a woman whose father was a European.

47. Ibid.
48. D.A. Stephens in Legislative Council, 7 March 1957, quoted by acting governor of North Borneo to Secretary of State, 11 March 1957, CO 1030 455 36/6/03, Item 1.
49. CO 1030 455 36/6/03, Item 18.
50. Figures from Brief on the Borneo Territories, for Minister of State, 9 October 1956, CO 1030 164 59/5/01, Item 54. The Chinese population in North Borneo was 23.6 per cent of the total.
51. Han Sing Fong, *The Chinese in Sabah, East Malaysia*, The Orient Cultural Service, Taipei, 1975, p. 64.
52. Turnbull to Melville, 7 March 1959, CO 1030 456 36/6/04.
53. Michael Leigh, *The Chinese Community of Sarawak - a Study of Communal Relations*, No. 6, Singapore Studies on Malaysia, Department of History, University of Singapore, 1964, p. 38.
54. CO 1022 396 328/8/01, p. 60. The sultan wanted a law to state the heir shall be male, and he wanted the unwritten laws and traditions governing succession to be clearly stated. Such a law would ensure the direct succession of his reign and that it not be curtailed by the British as occurred to his predecessor, and at the same time provided his legitimisation in retrospect.
55. For example, principal exports in 1956 as a percentage of the total in each territory were:
- North Borneo: rubber 33.3, timber 21.7, copra 19.3, tobacco 2.8, catechu (or cutch) 1.7.
- Sarawak: crude petroleum 43.8, including re-export of crude from Brunei, petroleum products 27.3, rubber 14.1, pepper 4.1, timber 3.2.
- CO 1030 556 59/5/01, Part A.
56. Speech in Council Negri by 'Officer administering government', 20 May 1952. CO 1022 106 40/321/01.
57. Address (1 December 1953) by governor of Sarawak to Council Negri. Ibid.
58. Commissioner-general to Secretary of State, 2 April 1955. CO 1030 161 59/3/01, Part A, Despatch no. 3. Of all the countries then gathering

- at Bandung. China and Indonesia were most in the limelight. Prejudice against Indonesia has at times led to unbalanced appraisal, such as in Angel who stated: 'K.G. Tregonning referred to Indonesia's "yearnings for expansionism"'. J.R. Angel, *The Proposed Federation of Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei – the development and decline of the British Borneo concept*, MA thesis, Sydney, 1965, p. 341. The full quotation from Tregonning, however, was: 'Both Malaya and Indonesia have yearnings for expansionism.' K.G. Tregonning, *North Borneo*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1960, p. 121.
59. The Malay-Borneo Defence Council was an instrument for the co-ordination at the highest level of defence planning within the Federation, Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei. The commissioner-general, governors and high commissioner were joined in this council by the commander-in-chief of land and air force for the Far East.
 60. *Straits Times*, 11 March 1953. See chapter 3. Although Azahari's followers were devout nationalists, unrest in Brunei during the following decade (particularly the Brunei rebellion in December 1962) was often labelled as communist-inspired by Special Branch or by the oil intelligence group.
 61. Sir Anthony Abell addressing the Council Negri, 5 May 1953, CO 1022 106 40/321/01.
 62. Paskin to MacDonald, 16 June 1953, CO 1022 61 19/4/01. It was not explicitly mentioned that the commissioner-general was intended to assume this political control; indeed, coming from the chiefs of staff, such a request might as easily have intended military intelligence to assume such responsibility.
 63. Malcolm MacDonald's account of his travels was recorded in his *Borneo People*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1956. His preference for the Iban rather than mingling in polite society caused some resentment among the Chinese in Sibu. From his visits to the Iban and from his indiscretion during affairs in Singapore, MacDonald acquired a reputation as a paragon, and this may have detracted from his political tasks – according to A.J.N. Richards, Sarawak resident from 1938 to 1964, pers. comm., 19 March 1992.
 64. Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, *From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation – Political Unification in the Malaysia Region 1945-65*, Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 112.
 65. *ibid.*, p. 112. While neither Lennox-Boyd nor the Tunku made a public announcement on the subject of merger, it would be presumptuous to conclude that the subject of merger was not discussed. Indeed, it would

have been remiss if not discussed, but perhaps not as conclusively as Lennox-Boyd would have preferred – in which case no comment seemed the best option. In a comparable situation, the Tunku met Malcolm MacDonald in December 1958, and discussed the concept of 'a super federation' of one unit of Borneo territories, Malaya, and Singapore. But the subject of their discussion was 'duly reported in the newspapers the next morning' as talks about the new constitution of the University of Malaya. CO 1030 435 26/7/01.

66. 6 August 1955, CO 1030 161 59/3/01.
67. Interim Report of Joint Co-ordination Committee, February 1955, *Ibid.*
68. Commissioner-general to Secretary of State, 2 April 1955, *Ibid.* In Colonial Office circles in 1953, MacDonald's off-the-record talks to journalists 'let the cat out of the bag' insofar as the final federation might not be reached simply by joining the two blocs. Higham to Paskin, 20 January 1953, CO 1022 61 19/4/01.
69. Governor of Sarawak to John Martin, Colonial Office, 6 April 1956, CO 1030 164 59/5/01.
70. Azahari interview, 1991.
71. Commissioner-general to Secretary of State, 1 July 1955, CO 1030 161 59/3/01.
72. Commissioner-general to Turnbull, in Jesselton, 7 May 1954, CO 1030 164 59/5/01.
73. Note of meeting held at Kuching to discuss closer association of Borneo territories, on the afternoon of 28 October 1954. Present were the commissioner-general, Turnbull, Abell, Sir John Martin (Assistant Under-secretary of State, Colonial Office), R. W. Jakeman (assistant commissioner-general) and (Mr) A. Locke, of the commissioner-general's office, as secretary for the meeting. It was classified 'Top Secret'. *Ibid.*
74. See footnote 13.
75. They were: Maharaja Laila Muda Kahar, Haji Md. Salleh, Orangkay Shahbandar Haji Ahmad, Orangkay Di Gadong Haji Md. Yusof, Md. Yusof A.R., Abu Bakar bin Jambol. It was suggested there were seven in D.S. Ranjit Singh, *Brunei 1839-1983: The Problems of Political Survival*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1984, p. 129.
76. Report of Constitutional Advisory Committee, 23 March 1954, CO 1030 113 36/6/03, Part A.
77. *Ibid.*, Paragraph XXI.
78. Brunei high commissioner to Secretary of State, 5 August 1954, CO 1030 113 36/8/01.

79. *Ibid.*, Part H (Other Reports), Paragraph X.
80. Brunei high commissioner to Secretary of State, 23 March 1955, CO 1030 113 36/8/01.
81. *Ibid.*, Part A.
82. *Ibid.*
83. High-commissioner of Brunei to Secretary of State, 23 March 1955. *Ibid.* Abell's three advisers were his secretary, J.H. Ellis, Strickland and Hickling. Excluding these, who might have informed the sultan of changes to the draft constitution? Hickling explained that BMP requested changes; thus BMP may have informed the sultan and in the process discredited Abell, thereby strengthening the sultan's relationship with BMP. The BMP adviser was closer than Abell to the sultan. In the coterie of advisers known as the Sultan-in-Council, the oil representative – a position held by P.A. Coates, OBE, PSNB, SPMB, DSIJ, who was unwilling to answer any questions on this subject when contacted by the author in 1991 – was ideally placed to influence the sultan. Abell and BMP clashed earlier in 1951, when the oil company claimed exemption from M\$12.9 million direct taxation. 'This apparent breach of faith on the part of the Company has very serious consequences,' Abell told the Secretary of State. Hector Hales claimed exemption from 10 per cent UK taxation because BMP was a Sarawak company. The disagreement occurred in the last year of contract of a thirty-year agreement signed by Raja Brooke in 1921. See CO 1022 271 202/7/01.
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Ibid.*
86. MacGillivray to Colonial Office, 16 May 1955. *Ibid.*
87. Lennox-Boyd (Secretary of State) to Abell, 30 May 1955. *Ibid.*
88. George Strickland, Amendments to Constitutional Enactment. *Ibid.*
89. Report of Attorney-General Strickland, Enclosure C Despatch 47/1955, being a memorandum on clause 22 of draft constitution. *Ibid.*
90. Abell to Whiteley, Colonial Office, 7 October 1955. *Ibid.*
91. Memorandum by J.Saul, Colonial Office Legal Division, 16 January 1956. *Ibid.*
92. CO 1030 164 59/5/01.
93. This comment was made during the meeting in Kuching, on the afternoon of 28 October 1954, to discuss closer association of the Borneo territories. (See note 73.) *Ibid.*
94. The exception here was Azahari's admiration for Sir Winston Churchill (Azahari interview, 1991), an idiosyncrasy which he shared with Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin (known as Sir Omar after 1953, when he was

knighted by Queen Elizabeth.) See David Leake Jr, *Brunei – The Modern Southeast-Asian Islamic Sultanate*. Forum, Kuala Lumpur, 1990, p. 45. When *Konfrontasi* began in 1963, British colonial authorities bulldozed Azahari's house in Brunei town, and on the site erected a statue of Winston Churchill.

95. Sir R. Scott to Secretary of State, 18 February 1956, CO 1030 164 59/5/01.
96. *Sarawak Tribune*, Kuching, Friday 16 March 1956, Emphasis added.
97. Azahari interview, 1991.
98. Azahari interview, 1991. Azahari met with BMP officials to reassure them that PRB anticipated no change at all in Brunei's oil industry. It was the British colonial administration, not the British presence in Brunei's sole means of revenue, that PRB was intent on replacing, he explained. In the political climate of that time, however, the lack of colonial protection would have left the oil company extremely vulnerable.
99. CO 1030 658 111/8/01, Item 4. Equivalent amounts in English pounds sterling were (revenue) £13.8 million and (sultan) £17 500. As a proportion of the total oil profit, the Brunei revenue was about one-tenth.
100. Tony Abell to Jack Johnstone, Colonial Office, 8 February 1957. *Ibid.*, Item 1.
101. Johnstone to Turnbull, 9 October 1956, CO 1030 164 59/5/01. The reason for Johnstone's exaggerated response seems to have been no more than reciprocatory, by way of explaining a predicament. Turnbull had warned that taking Labuan from North Borneo to appease the sultan would provoke a violent reaction in North Borneo.
102. Notes on visit to Brunei, 13 to 14 December 1958, by Malcolm MacDonald. CO 1030 435 26/7/01, Item 6 (marked 'Secret'). This comment might imply that MacDonald believed the cause of death of the sultan's predecessor in Singapore could be explained by hereditary factors. While not totally inconsistent with the officially stated cause of death, MacDonald's statement implicitly casts doubt on the official version.
103. Lord Listowel was former Labour Minister of State for Colonial Affairs. Lord Lloyd was Colonial Undersecretary. *Ibid.*
104. Secretary of State to Turnbull 29 November 1956. *Ibid.*
105. Turnbull to Secretary of State, 30 November 1956. *Ibid.*
106. Internal Colonial Office memo, to MacKintosh, from JMM, 3 March 1955, CO 1030 164 59/5/01.
107. These points were labelled 'Annex A' after a meeting of Sir John Martin, Melville, Johnstone and Whately (all Colonial Office) with Scott and Abell, 25 January 1957. *Ibid.*

108. The agreement provided for 'complete control of external affairs and defence in terms including, in effect, internal security.' Note outlining constitutional changes from Nield, Colonial Office, to Ormerod, Commonwealth Relations Office, 23 February 1960, CO 1030 528 36/775/02, Part B.
109. Memorandum prepared by the commissioner-general and the governors of Sarawak and North Borneo, entitled *The Future of the Borneo Territories*, for Secretary of State, 25 January 1957, CO 1030 556 59/5/01, Part A.
110. *Straits Budget*, Thursday, 13 June 1957. Editorial, 'Brunei and Borneo', from the *Straits Times*, 11 June 1957, CO 1030 464 36/8/02, Part A, Item 15.
111. Minute to Item 31, by Pyke Howard, CO 1030 556 59/5/01, Part A.
112. Anthony Abell to Allan Lennox-Boyd, 23 April 1957, *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 15.
113. Despatch 483, Abell to Secretary of State, 18 July 1957, *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 22.
114. Abell to Secretary of State, 18 July 1957, despatch 483, *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 22.
115. *Times*, 24 July 1957. Authorship unattributed other than 'from our own correspondent'. Dateline was Singapore 23 July. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 22B. On 26 July 1957, the Indonesian embassy in London issued a statement: 'The Indonesian Government has no intention whatsoever of making another West Irian (West New Guinea) question out of British Borneo ... The statement of the Minister of Veterans' Affairs ... is an anticipation of the following of the path of independence by all Kalimantan ... The statement by no means conveys an ambition on the part of Indonesia to annex a future independent North Borneo to the Republic of Indonesia.' See CO 593 82/269/01.
116. Indonesia and The Philippines were leading advocates in the archipelagic declaration, which, in the hands of detractors, was easily depicted as showing expansionist tendencies. Moreover, the unresolved Filipino claim to North Borneo, which Britain refused to acknowledge (and which indirectly involved the sultan), seemed a contemporaneous reflection of the Indonesian claim to Netherlands New Guinea.
117. Bernhard Dahm, *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1971, p. 181; also, Rex Mortimer, *Indonesian Communism Under Sukarno - Ideology and Politics, 1959-1965*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1974, p. 66.
118. Melyville to Turnbull, Abell and Scott, CO 1030 556 59/5/01, Part A.

- Item 43.
119. Lord Perth to governor of Sarawak, 14 October 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 49.
120. MacKintosh was acting in the absence of Scott, commissioner-general for South-East Asia. The paper was dated 25 October 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 58.
121. Holloway, Minutes to Item 58, 31 October 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A.
122. Martin, Minutes to Item 58, 1 November 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A.
123. *Ibid.*, Item 58.
124. *Ibid.*, Item 58.
125. J.R.V. Prescott, *The Maritime Political Boundaries of the World*, Methuen, London, 1985, p. 82.
126. Professor Prescott (telephone interview, Melbourne University, 20 May 1992) pointed out this extreme coincidence relating to the 'giant' South West Ampa oilfield and another oil discovery, on the Sarawak side of the border.

Dato Gribble (interviewed in England, 21 July 1991) was a former member of Sarawak's Council Negeri and a marine superintendent of the offshore oil exploration in the late 1950s. Gribble explained that the actual discovery of South West Ampa occurred years before the official discovery in 1963. It was made by the *Orient Explorer*, the drilling rig which arrived in 1958 and was soon after damaged, years before the *Sidewinder* made the 1963 'discovery'. This was confirmed by Captain Albert Young (interviewed in England, 11 August 1991), the marine specialist who laid pipelines at the discovery site. The stabilising legs of the *Orient Explorer*, a 'jack-up' rig, sank because of soft mud, explained Young. This problem was overcome by a different design of rig in 1963 – when political conditions in Brunei were remoulded by *Koufontasi* in favour of BPM.

127. Prescott, pp. 214–17.
128. A proposed expansion of the Lutong refinery in 1953 exemplified defence considerations. Colonial oil-mining leases contained provisions requiring the lessees to refine at least half of their product (once above a minimum level). Despite the rapid increase in production from oilfields in Brunei, Lutong was considered 'extremely vulnerable to seaward attack' and the decision not to proceed with expansion was attributed to defence requirements. Lutong was covered by a defence arrangement between Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, known as ANZAM, inspired by 'the emergency' in Malaya. Australian Archives, Canberra, A5799/1 31/1953 Box ACT 1-25.A 337 6 – 338 2.

129. CO 1030 557 59/5/01, Part B, Details from 'Memoranda sent to District Officers'.
130. Angel, p. 317.
131. *Ibid.*, p. 324.
132. CO 1030 557 59/5/01, Part B. The memorandum to district officers stated: 'The fact that Brunei is an Islamic Sultanate precludes the possibility of forthright amalgamation of the three territories into one country. There are several possible forms of constitutional association short of amalgamation, but for any to be successful and efficient there must be a central authority ... headed by a single representative of the Queen.'
133. Cited in Angel, p. 321; also, CO 1030 557 59/5/01, Part B, which contains the words omitted by Angel: 'Brunei is, I believe, a vital element in this process of alliance ...'
134. *Borneo Bulletin*, 15 February 1958, and *North Borneo and Sabah Times*, 28 February 1958. In the *Sarawak Tribune* on 28 February 1958 it was reported that a councillor in Sarawak, Haji Su'ut, reminded the council that PRB had proposed closer association before but then there had been no reaction from government.
135. Letter from sultan to Lemox-Boyd, 30 January 1958. CO 1030 557 59/5/01, Part B, Item 85(b).
136. Abell to Wallace (Colonial Office), 15 April 1958. *Ibid.*, Part B, Item 135.
137. *Sarawak Tribune*, 29 April 1958. *Ibid.*, Part B, Item 158.
138. Abell to Secretary of State, 4 June 1958. *Ibid.*, Part B, Item 145.
139. Angel, p. 339.
140. *Ibid.*, p. 340.
141. Sir Anthony Abell, 12 January 1960, Minutes of Colonial Office meeting, CO 1030 557 59/5/01, Item 195.

REGIONAL UNREST: SUMATRA AND WEST NEW GUINEA

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, relations between Indonesia and the continuing British colonial presence in South-East Asia deteriorated, but not through any bilateral issue directly, as was the case with the United States and the Netherlands. The British Colonial Office took pains to separate its regional aspirations from these Western allies, the protagonists in the 1958 Indonesian Outer Islands rebellion, and the dispute over sovereignty of West New Guinea, respectively. The still uncertain political future of the British territories in South-East Asia provided the motive for attempting to maintain this distance.

The Jakarta government appraised the role of the CIA in the 1958 rebellion as inimical to Indonesian unitary integrity, as it did the Dutch refusal to relinquish West New Guinea. The rebellion and the sovereignty dispute were, in essence, regional disputes, in which Cold War animosity was brought to the fore. While British participation in both disputes was minimal, the British colonial presence subsequently cast a more adverse effect on Indonesian relations with Malaya, Singapore and Borneo.

In the context of the Cold War, Britain, the Netherlands and the United States were aligned in the Western bloc through the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), with any rivalries seemingly subsumed in anticommunism, whereas Indonesia in the early 1950s pursued a policy of non-alignment. This was in accord with the diversity of Indonesia's political sensibilities. President Sukarno preferred to tolerate or balance political differences of left and right wing, rather than seeking their exclusion from the body politic; self-exclusion, however, incurred his wrath, as with the Darul Islam extremists or the Masjumi party in the 1958 rebellion. A broad spectrum of political parties existed in Indonesia in the early 1950s, including a small but resurgent communist party; by the early 1960s, however, the various political strains had intensified, as had the Cold War. Anticolonialism became the Indonesian *idée fixe*, which delayed but did not overcome the domestic effects of the Cold War, the sociopolitical polarisation. Before 1963, however, Indonesian criticism of British colonialism was

relatively subdued alongside the invective against the Netherlands and covert American activity. When newly independent Malaya and Indonesia signed a special friendship treaty in 1959, the anticolonial implication was still secondary to Indonesia's abiding concern with the Dutch, which engendered a need to secure regional allies.

The South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) served the joint strategic interests of Britain and the United States in South-East Asia and even though its jurisdiction did not extend to the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, with Singapore the exception, its military profile was the dominant presence in the region, much to the chagrin of Jakarta. Netherlands New Guinea, however, was not included in SEATO, nor did the Netherlands secure any alternative defence agreements with the United States, Britain, or its main Commonwealth ally in the region, Australia. This omission left the Dutch territory isolated at a time when decolonisation was sweeping the globe. The colonial hiatus surrounding the dispute over sovereignty of West New Guinea made the Dutch claim more susceptible to UN criticism than the Indonesian claim. The final territorial transfer, which some CIA advisers compared to Hitler's *Anschluss* in 1938,¹ was the result of military tension in 1961-62. In addition to regional tension, the dispute invoked the Cold War contestants. The Dutch isolation was in stark contrast to the Indonesian exploitation of Cold War conditions, for the jostling of the main contestants to accumulate supportive clients was to the advantage of non-aligned Indonesia. Indonesia remained out of SEATO when it was established as an accoutrement of Cold War regional defence (after the French defeat in Vietnam and shortly before the Bandung Conference) to counter the hegemonic designs of the People's Republic of China. As a SEATO participant, the Australian view was that:

the military power of the United States deployed in the area is an effective deterrent as Communist China is not prepared to push its demands to the point of risking war with the US ... We believe that Communist China is in a dynamic and potentially expansionist phase of its revolution.²

The influence which the People's Republic of China wielded among the overseas Chinese was considered a continuing threat to the security of the British territories, even when the Malayan Emergency crisis had passed. Although Singapore was in the public eye after large-scale rioting in 1956, and was considered by many to be on the verge of 'going communist', Britain viewed the political transformation in

Sarawak as more insidious. In Malaya, in April 1959, the Bank of China was suspended, an act which the *People's Daily* described as 'beneficial to imperialism'.¹ This was an act that might as easily have taken place in Jakarta, with its pronounced anti-Chinese sentiment, at that time. Indonesia and the British territories in South-East Asia generally regarded the Chinese as a problem. Yet in the context of Malay-Indonesian racial solidarity, Indonesia in the late 1950s (as occurred in the postwar period) was still considered by Britain to be capable of stirring communal dissension, Malay against Chinese, or (as occurred in the mid-1950s) exerting indirect political influence by limiting or rechanneling its export trade. Singapore was the most susceptible. As Purcell has shown, when Singapore was first established as a British settlement, it attracted immigration from China direct because it was 'in a position so favourable for tapping the trade of the archipelago'.² Singapore's predominantly Chinese population had mastered the role of the middleman in bringing Indonesian primary exports to the world market; and once independence had reinvigorated its spirit of nationalism, this rankled Indonesia more than ever. Jakarta's response to the 1958 rebellion and to the sovereignty dispute may be viewed in terms of a continuation of the Indonesian nationalist revolution, and at its centre lay the demand for international recognition of Indonesian territorial sovereignty. An integral part of this struggle was the need in the workplace for Indonesians to replace foreigners: Chinese inhabitants of the Republic of Indonesia, even more readily than Westerners *per se*, were thus categorised. Under Dutch colonial rule, Chinese were classified as 'foreign Orientals' along with Indians and Arabs. Because the Chinese were present in greater numbers, with a greater variety of commercial skills, some with a substantial accumulation of capital, they were the most visible denizens of Indonesia. An incident which took place in October 1957 illustrates this point, but because it involves the oil industry, a brief summary of conditions in the industry at that time is first required.

By 1957, joint Indonesian and Western interests were nowhere more evident than in the oil industry, insofar as the foreign capital created by Indonesian oil exports was rapidly becoming a potential benchmark of economic prosperity.³ In this respect, foreign oil companies held a key to Indonesia's economic and political future: consequently, the Indonesian government was adamant that it obtain a greater stake in the Indonesian oil industry. There was a threefold rise in Indonesian oil production during the 1950s, reaching almost 20 million tons, yet

this was achieved on old concessions, all of which had been granted before 1949.⁷ Political instability and a growing left-wing influence weighed against the likelihood of new concessions being granted according to the political appraisal of the three main oil companies in Indonesia, Caltex, Stanvac and Royal Dutch-Shell. (BPM was a Royal Dutch-Shell subsidiary with an Indonesia-wide distribution network still larger than Stanvac's domestic marketing capability, which had expanded since the war.) In the words of the *Petroleum Press Service*, the uncertainty in the oil industry that prevailed throughout the 1950s derived 'in large part from notions of anti-capitalism and of the extension of economic activity by the state'.⁸ There were 53 000 oil workers in Indonesia in 1958,⁹ most of whom were members of the Union of Petroleum Workers (Perbum), affiliated with SOBSI (the All Indonesia Central Labour Organisation). Van der Kroef has pointed out that SOBSI, in turn, was affiliated with the communist-led World Federation of Trade Unions, the vice-president of which was SOBSI chairman and prominent PKI member, Njono.¹⁰

The three major oil companies in Indonesia expressed initial uncertainty over production-sharing when Indonesian nationalists and communists seemed so amenable to sharing the policy and leadership and the government of the Indonesian president, Sukarno. The *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (PNI) and the PKI found to their mutual political advantage that both *Masjumi* and *Partai Sosialis Indonesia* (PSI) supported the Outer Islands rebellion. Commenting on the post-rebellion political climate, Pluvier has stated:

Since the organized opposition of Masjumi, the PSI and the regional groups had virtually ceased to exist, the only opposition was the PKI which, by late 1958 was the only political party with substantial organized mass support at grass-roots level.¹¹

While far from being any new alliance, both the PNI and PKI recognised that a new political alignment was to their mutual advantage. This arrangement was not inconsistent with Sukarno's own *marhaenist* political philosophy, and bolstered his public image domestically and internationally. At home, he was assured of tumultuous receptions, the mass support seen as befitting the president of Indonesia. Abroad, as a voice of the Third World, he further enhanced his political stature. The international perspective, during the New Guinea crisis and Malaysian Confrontation, was inextricably linked with Sukarno's struggle to secure his domestic power base. The greater the recognition accorded

the Indonesian president internationally, the greater became his potential to unify the disparate political forces on the domestic front. For the PKI, on the other hand, alignment with the PNI brought advantages too for its social image, which had waned after Madiun and in the early 1950s. Seemingly in the shadow of Sukarno, the acceptability and popularity of the PKI increased. The PNI, Pluvier observed, 'considered the PKI, at least for the time being, a less dangerous rival than Masjumi'.¹¹ The oil companies remained wary of this liaison between the Indonesian government and the communists.

A new Oil Bill, based on a formula previously adopted in Persia, with new agreements on production-sharing, taxation and the transfer of profits, was drawn up in early 1958 but not finalised. With the protracted dispute over West New Guinea and brooding resentment in the outer islands over Jakarta's economic hegemony, governmental delay seemed endemic. Caltex produced half of the Indonesian oil production and its percentage was destined to increase by virtue of the giant Minas oilfield in central Sumatra. Unlike Stanvac, Caltex was a new American company in Indonesia and did not yet have its own refinery. Royal Dutch-Shell, a Dutch-British company, had not been able to reoccupy its prewar concessions in North Sumatra because of regional opposition – despite the motion approving their return that the Indonesian government passed in 1951. However, Royal Dutch-Shell still operated a refinery in the Riau islands, adjacent to Singapore. It was this refinery which was at the centre of the incident on 17 October 1957.

The Riau district military command created the incident by ordering thirty-five Chinese technicians, who were Shell employees, to surrender their Singapore identification cards (which they carried in lieu of passports). The purpose behind this order was to force the Chinese either to accept Indonesian citizenship or to face deportation. In the view of the Shell administration, these men included a key workshop manager whose skills were not able to be replaced by an Indonesian, and the loss of these men would cripple the refinery plant. British authorities were unsure whether this order was the result of:

... military bureaucracy or an attempt to get the Singapore Chinese out of the Shell plant and remind the Singapore government of its dependence on Indonesian goodwill.¹²

Whether the incident was an example of Indonesia asserting its new-found nationalism, or whether the army used it as a pretext to

supplement its own holdings in the oil industry, the Chinese were deported.

Similarly, at the international level in the United Nations, Indonesia was attempting to assert itself. As a non-aligned, nationalist member, it was pressing for recognition of its claim to Netherlands New Guinea. In 1954 and in 1956, Indonesia had failed to gain the required two-thirds majority at the UN. Buoyed by new international stature as a result of the Bandung Conference, President Sukarno forewarned of dire consequences if the Indonesian resolution at the 1957 UN session was rebuffed. Interpreting this as a threat, the Dutch foresaw that Sukarno might resort to retaliatory measures in Indonesia, where major shipping, airline, oil and plantation interests remained in Dutch hands. The prediction proved correct. According to Dutch Foreign Minister Luns, \$5 billion worth of Dutch assets were seized when Sukarno's UN approach failed to muster sufficient support, and the most immediate effect was that the main shipping line that had created arteries of transportation throughout the Indonesian archipelago, was paralysed.¹³ The Indonesian army and SOBSI benefited from the commercial displacement of the Dutch. Without anticipating the full fury of Sukarno's reaction, the Dutch had taken the precaution of expanding their consulate-general in Singapore to handle an expected exodus of Dutch nationals. British authorities approved this forethought to ease the administrative burden on themselves, but requested that the negotiations to enlarge Dutch representation in Singapore be kept 'strictly secret'.¹⁴

Colonial authorities in London stated bluntly that they would 'prefer not to be involved', and added that they had already been criticised by the newly installed Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio, over their 'colonialist press'. Furthermore, they explained that the leading newspaper among the Malayan community, *Utusan Melayu*:

echoes these criticisms and could stir up strong feeling amongst Indonesians in Singapore. The Indonesians include a number of garrulous and tough persons. Feeling amongst Indonesians in Singapore might develop against either colonialism or it might quickly become communal.¹⁵

Colonial authorities in Singapore complained that extra Dutch staff could not be concealed from the Indonesians, and such assistance may lead to Indonesian aggravation of 'present unsatisfactory relations between Indonesia and Singapore'.¹⁶ As well, the holding of local-government elections in Singapore complicated the situation and made the

British even more wary of undue Indonesian influence on the electoral outcome. The Foreign Office only reluctantly agreed on 27 November 1957 (after the Dutch lodged a specific request) to protect Dutch interests in the event of severed relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands after the UN vote.

At the end of November 1957, the UN vote did not favour Indonesia; but the effect – a political tidal wave upon the Dutch in Indonesia – was unpredictably amplified. An attempt to assassinate Sukarno with hand grenades in a schoolyard at Cikini, a district of Jakarta, added to the president's wrath.⁵⁷ The first reaction in Indonesia was a ban on publication or circulation of Dutch-language newspapers and periodicals, then on Dutch films or films with Dutch subtitles. Then permission for KLM to land or fly over Indonesian territory was withdrawn. All Dutch consulates outside Jakarta were closed by the Indonesian government. On 2 December, there was a twenty-four-hour strike in all Dutch enterprises, and many were taken over by the Indonesian army, which thereby donned the mantle of a major economic force and was soon to be a serious contender for political power. On 7 December Britain assumed responsibility for Dutch interests in Indonesia, and was supported in this move by Australia, which requested that its offer to assist the Dutch not be disclosed.⁵⁸ Shell was not nationalised, but (as shown above) the army had already made moves in that direction. Dutch-owned port utilities were nationalised, and Indonesia ordered the Dutch shipping company KPM (*Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij*) to halt operations in Indonesian waters.⁵⁹ KPM controlled 80 per cent of Indonesian shipping, which was temporarily immobilised when the KPM management was taken over by the workers' union. The Minister for Agriculture in the Djuanda cabinet, Dr Sudjarwo, informed the National Congress that 540 Dutch estates had been taken over. Combined with the notice given by the Indonesian Ministry of Justice that Dutch nationals must leave Indonesia as soon as possible, this paroxysm of nationalist fervour soon led to Singapore becoming entangled in the political crisis.

The Dutch exodus embroiled Singapore in problems of international relations. At Dutch expense, the Singapore government offered transit facilities for up to 5000 Dutch nationals. There were about ten times that number facing expulsion.⁶⁰ The British passenger ship *Captain Cook* was chartered by the Dutch government to proceed to Jakarta and take evacuees to the Netherlands. By early December, there were twenty KPM ships in Singapore, and another twenty, which had been

on the high seas when KPM was nationalised, were due to arrive – all with Indonesian crews. Problems were compounded by the arrival of the *Banggü*, which was carrying Indonesian troops; and the *Baud*, with 250 passengers and twelve criminals under escort. Singapore authorities became concerned about the violation of Singapore waters by Indonesian armed vessels. Orders were given for any future vessels that 'if the order to leave [Singapore] waters is not heeded, the possibility of having to use force must not be discounted'.²

In addition, the presence of Dutch warships (such as the destroyer *Groningen*, which was operating from the Singapore naval base in support of Dutch shipping in waters around Indonesia) was brought to the attention of the British. Dr Subandrio warned the British that the presence of Dutch warships in Singapore harbour might have a 'possible unfavourable effect on good relations between Indonesia and Singapore'.³ Singapore's chief minister feared that the Dutch operations

may result in a clash with Indonesian naval forces, thus exposing Singapore to the charge that they have been taking sides with the Dutch against Indonesia.⁴

The *Groningen* left Singapore in the third week of December 1957, bound for Netherlands New Guinea. As a parting shot suggestive of Dutch misgivings (intended for the British as well as the Indonesians), it was announced that if she encountered any Dutch vessels confiscated by Indonesians or under voyage to an enforced destination, she would 'take them under control'.⁵ Another Dutch warship, the *Driente*, intercepted a cargo and passenger ship, the *Kasimbar*, in Indonesian waters and directed her to Netherlands New Guinea.⁶ In an attempt to ameliorate the strained relations with the Netherlands, an Indonesian spokesman in The Hague said on 17 December 1957:

The Indonesian government had never wished to confiscate KPM vessels and they regretted the hasty steps of the KPM head office to direct vessels to Singapore or elsewhere.⁷

As if to prove the point, the other shipping lines in Indonesia were proceeding normally – Royal Inter-Ocean Lines, Rotterdamsch Lloyd, and Nederland Steamship Company. These lines were relatively small, however, and in total comprised less than one-fifth of the tonnage of KPM. In all, the Indonesian government took thirty-six KPM ships under their control, while a total of thirty KPM ships sought refuge in Singapore.⁸

Tension increased during December. No clash occurred between Dutch and Indonesian vessels, but Indonesia publicly accused Singapore of unfriendly behaviour. London (after informing the British ambassador in Jakarta) opted to make the issue one between Britain and Indonesia, rather than Singapore and Indonesia, thus reversing London's previously expressed preference 'not to be involved'. This had the effect of minimising the domestic repercussions in Singapore, which assisted the rise of the political leader whom the British preferred, Lee Kuan Yew. Lee was in the process of taking over the reins of power in the People's Action Party (PAP) from Lim Yew Hock. In March 1958, Secretary of State Lennox-Boyd advised Lim Yew Hock that he was 'not the man of the future'. According to Minchin:

Lee took advantage of his emerging status with the British ... Lee was too smart [for Lim Yew Hock] and had the *de facto* backing of the British who kept their preferred protege informed.²⁴

In Indonesia, too, it was a time of choosing the preferred political leader: Sukarno's presidency was threatened by secessionists. The deficiency in inter-island shipping that occurred after the debacle of the KPM nationalisation inadvertently contributed to the initial strength of the secessionist movement, the so-called Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI). On 15 February 1958, the PRRI based in Padang, in conjunction with dissidents in Sulawesi, announced their opposition to the central government in Jakarta on the grounds that Sukarno showed insufficient support for their economic welfare in preference to the left-wing influence in Java. A recently approved \$100 million Soviet loan for the central government added to the political tone and the perceived inequity of development in Java being financed by Sumatran oil. Because the secession prospect was made the stronger by the lack of available shipping, Jakarta redressed the shortage by purchasing four new and five second-hand ships from Japan,²⁵ and accepting ten more ships offered by the Soviet Union.²⁶ A program of requisitioning, which was, at times, indiscriminate, also caused further tension with the British.

An Indonesian proposal to requisition Singapore-owned vessels raised a significant issue, quite apart from the problems which ensued once the requisitioning began. How did the Foreign Office first become aware of this proposal before it was announced? The Foreign Office replied to the British embassy in Jakarta (who apparently had asked the same question, although no record was kept) that the origin of

the rumour be sought 'by enquiry of the oil companies with installations in Riau archipelago'. The Foreign Office advised the ambassador that it would be inappropriate to make a formal protest, 'and especially so in the absence of 'hard evidence', but indicated a preferred response:

You should call attention to these rumours and say that you are doing so in the interests of forestalling friction between Singapore and Indonesia. You could say that the involvement of British interests in warlike operations would be a matter of serious concern to Her Majesty's Government.³⁷

Moreover, the Foreign Office advised that because a state of emergency throughout Indonesia was declared when the PRRI rebellion started, it would be difficult to prepare a legal challenge against the Indonesian government if it requisitioned Singapore-owned vessels that were flying the Indonesian flag.

At the start of the rebellion, the Indonesian news agency Antara published a statement by a rebel spokesman, Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, a former Minister of Finance in the Sukarno government who established a PRRI public-relations base in Singapore. Foreign Minister Subandrio expressed the disapproval of the Jakarta government. According to the British ambassador in Jakarta, MacDermott:

[The Indonesian Foreign Minister] believed it would disturb relations between Singapore and Indonesia and lead to misunderstanding if people like Sumitro were permitted to make provocative political statements ... I think Dr. Subandrio's complaint is fully justified.³⁸

As well, the Indonesian ambassador in London, Dr Sunario,³⁹ asked that Sumitro and another PRRI rebel, Makitita, the former commercial counsellor at the Indonesian embassy in London, be denied any opportunity to stay in the United Kingdom. Regarding the presence of Sumitro and other PRRI rebels in Singapore, Governor William Goode suggested that HMG should 'counter Indonesian requests to deny facilities to dissidents by stressing the unfriendly attitude of Indonesians to Singaporean shipping'. Among the Singapore-owned vessels that were registered in Indonesia and detained by Indonesian authorities in the build-up for a military expedition against the PRRI in Sumatra, some Singapore-registered craft were also involved. Also, three British-registered ships, the *Bee Tung*, the *Sundai* and the *Selat Siberut*, were detained by Indonesian authorities, but these were released by mid-March. The method of requisition employed by the Indonesians became increasingly hostile. When the British-registered ship *Segamat*

was taken, a serious incident was narrowly avoided when it was probably fired on and certainly intercepted by an Indonesian gun-boat in the Durian Straits ... within the Indonesian three-mile limit but in a recognized international channel.

Less than twenty-four hours later it was released with an explanation that a junior naval commander apprehended the craft in error.

Singapore's governor, Sir William Goode, dealt with the Indonesian central government in an uncompromisingly hostile manner. On 12 February 1958, the Indonesian government declared central Sumatra a prohibited flying area for all except Indonesian military aircraft. Goode's response aggravated the situation when he sought the services of the British embassy in Jakarta to lodge an objection:

I should be grateful if immediate protest could be made to Indonesian authorities at this interruption of [a] well-established international air route.²⁵

The Colonial Office was subsequently critical of Goode's action in pressing Ambassador MacDermott to make a formal complaint:

We doubted and still doubt whether there were any grounds for asserting that the Indonesian government had not acted within their rights in closing certain [parts] of their air space.²⁶

British and other aircraft flying westwards from Singapore were forced to fly a few degrees north first, to avoid flying over central Sumatra. Goode's complaint provided anticolonialist critics in Indonesia with a direct link between the continuing British presence in Singapore and the British embassy in Jakarta, a link which highlighted residual British colonial power within the facade of Singaporean 'self-government'. The Colonial Office described Goode's action euphemistically as 'stretching the limits of constitutional propriety'.²⁷

Significantly, Goode's reply to this criticism did not conform with colonial policy, yet mirrored the political stance taken by the US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, and his brother Allen Dulles, director of Central Intelligence, in support of the PRRI.²⁸ While this different stance by Goode reflected an innate fractiousness, his connection with British intelligence also may have caused him to pursue a more aggressive tack on the PRRI issue, as was evident in his reply:

It is the view of Ministers that Singapore's interest lies in the removal of Communist influence from the Indonesian Government, and therefore in

the success of the dissident Colonels in achieving their aims, whether this is done peacefully or whether it can only be achieved through fighting.³⁶

The Colonial Office conformed to Goode's priorities, rather than the other way round, regarding the policy reversal as facilitating the outcome of the Singapore elections (mentioned above). For Goode to have provided London sufficient incentive to reverse its preference for 'non-involvement', it would seem unlikely that such a reversal occurred without the request of intelligence sources in London backing Goode's operation in the Far East, because Goode was closely connected with intelligence and security, and with Lee Kuan Yew's path to power. As Minchin stated, Lee countered such accusations in the Legislative Assembly on 8 October 1958 by stating he was 'created by ambitions, not by special agents'; and Minchin concludes semantically that Lee was not 'an involuntary puppet of any of the British, including Goode'.³⁷

Goode's interference provoked a further complication soon after, when a four-engined CIA plane dropped a large supply of weapons for the rebels³⁸ and Indonesia (because of Goode's stance on the prohibited flying area) suspected British involvement. On 11 March 1958, a few days before the arms were parachuted onto the airfield of the Caltex oilfield in central Sumatra, a Singapore-based RAF Gloster Meteor at 17 000 feet had circled three times over Tanjungpinang (Indonesian territory just south of Singapore). An Indonesian air-force interceptor (F305) forced the British plane out of Indonesian territory and it headed west – towards Sumatra. Tanjungpinang was a sensitive area at this time because the vessels that had been requisitioned were ready to transport an invasion force up the Siak River on East Sumatra, against the PRRI rebel base in the Caltex area. The two oil-centres in the area were in close proximity: Rumbai, a residential centre and work-site for the foreign oil workers,³⁹ and Pekanbaru, a nearby oil-town with an airstrip. Indonesian Deputy Foreign Minister, Dr Suwito, informed the British embassy of the high-altitude interception, stressing two aspects: that he presumed the Gloster Meteor was on a photographic mission, and that Indonesia requested nonintervention in its internal affairs. That same day, central-government forces took Bengkalis at the mouth of the Siak River. The British embassy in Jakarta informed the Foreign Office:

There is a growing campaign in Communist and crypto-Communist press alleging that certain foreign Powers are interfering directly in Indonesia's internal affairs by giving military assistance to the Padang Govern-

ment. Reports in today's press allege that American-manufactured arms were dropped in Central Sumatra by RAI planes and that British equipment is being used by Colonel Hussein's forces in West Sumatra.¹⁷

An article published two weeks later in *Sovietsky Flot*, the Soviet navy newspaper, expounded the line already taken by the press in Jakarta. It alleged that Singapore was assisting the PRRI rebels. 'Singapore: SEATO base for subversion' was the headline; not only was Singapore a base for anticolonialist forces in Malaya, but also for the delivery of arms to the counter-revolutionary rebels in Sumatra. The article linked Singapore precisely in the way London had been trying to avoid, by suggesting it had become:

the centre of Western colonialist subversive activities in Southeast Asia and a base of supply for the gangs operating in Indonesia on the orders of the Dutch and American colonialists.¹⁸

The article ended with the observation that the rebels were being defeated 'despite the help and support of the colonial power'.¹⁹ An official statement on Indonesia from the Soviet government was not forthcoming until 15 May, preceding a statement from Peking by less than a day. Moscow pointed to Singapore, the Philippines and Formosa as the location of SEATO bases supplying the Indonesian rebels. It was alleged that American instructors were also employed, and that the rebels were 'financing themselves through export of contraband raw materials'.²⁰

In charge of equipping the CIA covert operation was Colonel Fletcher Prouty. He wrote:

The Indonesian campaign was the largest Special Operation the CIA endeavoured, except for Vietnam ... To emphasize what the CIA did plan to do, I was asked to obtain the services of two U.S. Navy submarines to be based in the Christmas Islands (Australia). In my nine years providing support for the CIA that was a rare request.²¹

An article from *Pravda* on 19 May also alleged that North Borneo was being used against Indonesia;²² it was later revealed that rebel pilots used refuelling facilities at Labuan. The Chinese statement in the *People's Daily* was more vehemently anti-American. It referred to the violation of international law, the threat to world peace, and in particular the threat to peace in Asia, created by Western interference in Indonesian affairs.²³ Even more significantly, the Chinese article, which was one of a series, exposed the activities of the Kuomintang in Indonesia.²⁴

The Central War Administration in Jakarta, on 17 April 1958, responded to the anti-central-government propaganda that some newspapers linked with the Kuomintang were flouting, such as the *T'ien Sheng Jih Pao* in Jakarta, and the *Ch'ing Kuang Jih Pao* in Surabaya. All newspapers that did not use 'Latin, Arab or Indonesian regional language' were banned; that is, all Chinese newspapers – some of which were pro-Kuomintang and others pro-Peking. This strong Indonesian reaction duplicated the first anti-Dutch move the previous November, and so implied a threat of worse to come. This suited the Indonesian army hierarchy in that it utilised strong anti-Chinese sentiment generally to also undermine support for the PKI, even though the ostensible target was the Kuomintang.

At first, the Indonesian government reacted cautiously to the accusation that Singapore was supporting anti-Jakarta rebels. According to an on-site observer, British journalist James Mossman, foreign involvement in the Sumatran rebellion included some support from Britain and Australia, although this was withdrawn when American assistance stopped. Mossman acknowledged that the British kept in contact with the rebels 'through agencies in Singapore';⁵² but was not aware or did not reveal that one of the PRRI representatives in Singapore, Pohon, was linked with MI5, a connection which would have provided British intelligence with additional insight into the rebellion.⁵³ More revealing was Mossman's interview with the perennial sultan of Deli, although the significance of the sultan's opinion has perhaps more relevance for 1946⁵⁴ than 1958 (as shown in Chapter 1). According to the sultan:

We Sumatrans would do better to leave the Republic altogether and join Malaya. Most of the Sultans there are relatives of mine, and one really has so much more in common [than with the Javanese].⁵⁵

British assistance to the PRRI rebellion against Sukarno also included the provision of airport facilities at Singapore and Labuan in Borneo.⁵⁶ There was a clear motive for Britain to assist the CIA initiative in this revolt, because the secession of Sumatra from Java, which the CIA claimed as the motive for their involvement, would undoubtedly have resulted in closer cooperation between Sumatra and Malaya. Tunku Abdul Rahman, according to Kahin, 'gave serious consideration to the idea that this island [Sumatra] might join a Greater Malaya'. From this indiscretion of the Tunku – indeed, from the indiscretion of the British in supporting such dubious CIA strategy – the rebellion left a legacy of distrust between Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur. At this stage, however, the extent of the damage to bilateral relations was not obvi-

ous, still 'below the waterline': the recriminations and bitterness surfaced later during *Konfrontasi*.

Britain expressed reluctance to become further involved when the Netherlands requested a British warship to accompany a Dutch destroyer off the coast of Padang, West Sumatra, as part of evacuation procedures. The response of the British embassy in Jakarta was to 'strongly deprecate any British warship being associated with this plan'.⁵⁷ Earlier, twelve British subjects from Manado, in Sulawesi, where the PRRI was continuing in the eastern part of the archipelago, were taken aboard a KPM vessel to Netherlands New Guinea, implicating the British in the protracted colonial dispute over that territory. As well, because there was undeniable evidence of American support for the rebels in Sumatra and Sulawesi, the British embassy in Jakarta expressed disapproval that 'Voice of America', based in Manila, should broadcast to Americans in North Sulawesi that a British ship would assist in their evacuation. Ambassador MacDermott thought the 'consequences of making such a broadcast in these circumstances are likely to be extremely serious'.⁵⁸ The newly appointed American ambassador, Howard Jones – he presented his credentials in Jakarta on 10 March 1958 – was informed by Subandrio a few days later that American arms had been seized and that there was evidence of the involvement of Taiwan in support of the rebels.⁵⁹ In response to a large student demonstration in Jakarta on 14 March, during which a detachment of Indonesian police guarded the American, Dutch and British embassies, the American and British ambassadors considered it prudent to issue a statement denying any British responsibility for dropping arms to dissidents. But Britain was already implicated and the denial did little to reduce the political damage. During the demonstration, the commander of the Jakarta military garrison, Colonel Dachjar, described the dissident leaders as 'staunch henchmen of foreign capital monopoly', and said that two foreign powers, through SEATO, conducted 'direct intervention in the domestic affairs of Indonesia and her people'.⁶⁰

Ambassador MacDermott notified the Foreign Office:

Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, the General Chairman of the *Partai Nasional Indonesia* and the Secretary General of *Partai Komunis Indonesia*, supported Colonel Dachjar's resolution, handed to the president, condemning the revolution, foreign intervention and SEATO.⁶¹

On the same day as the Jakarta demonstration, the US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, invited to Washington the Australian Foreign

Minister, Richard Casey, and his British counterpart, Selwyn Lloyd, to discuss recognition of the rebel government.

British Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, argued it would be dangerous to antagonise the central government by being nice to the rebels when there was little the West could do, short of military intervention, to save them from defeat. Dulles was said to be impressed by Lloyd's arguments.¹²

Britain, it seemed, was in an unwinnable situation. Yet Indonesian anger was vented mostly on Chinese, externally (residents in neighbouring British territories) and internally, whether native to Indonesia or not (an ethnic differentiation encapsulated in the terms *peranakan* and *totok*). Vituperative anticolonialism regarded SEATO and the British presence in South-East Asia as a threat, but the Taiwanese involvement stirred an anti-Chinese animus with added implications for Singapore. For generations, many overseas Chinese in Indonesia had been known generally as *Tjina Mindring*, a pejorative term referring to their money-lending practices. During the Indonesian war of independence, the formation of an antirevolutionary contingent of Chinese troops, the *Pao An Tui*, which was armed by the Dutch, had left a legacy of distrust.¹³ Siding with the colonialists against Indonesian independence stung as deeply again in 1958.

Indonesia accused the government of Singapore of condoning smuggling by which Singaporean Chinese profited from Indonesia's misfortune during the PRRI. Because of the reluctance of British colonial authorities in Singapore to prohibit such trade, this accusation also targeted the British, but without the racial invective that so readily focused on the Chinese. Dr Sunario asserted that the attitude of the Chinese in Singapore contributed to Indonesia's difficulties in that they supported the dissidents – not for political reasons, but for unadulterated profit.¹⁴ The British response, issued on 15 March 1958, was that the trading in which Singaporean Chinese were engaged was not illegal by Singapore laws, but there was:

little doubt that many of the Singapore Chinese are engaged directly or indirectly in this trade with the dissident areas and in so doing are contravening Indonesian law ... [But] it is up to Indonesian authorities to enforce their own regulations in their territory and not expect other people to do this for them.¹⁵

The Indonesian response was swift and predictable. The following day, near Tanjungpinang, Indonesian naval authorities detained the *Hong*

Tai, a vessel owned by Hua Siang Shipping Company of Singapore and flying the British flag. Its cargo, 350 tons of rubber, was removed in the following months when similar seizures took place, threatening to disrupt the now fragile relationship between Singapore and Indonesia. British authorities avoided confrontation even when territorial waters were violated. On 18 May 1958, an Indonesian proa was stopped by an Indonesian gunboat well within Singaporean waters – less than half a mile from the Raffles Lighthouse. It contained sixty *piculs* of copra, valued in Singapore currency at \$590. The Indonesian crew jumped overboard and swam ashore. Colonial authorities noted that similar interceptions of small trading vessels from neighbouring Indonesian islands, bound for Singapore, had occurred 'since the war'.²² The British authorities apparently weighed the profit derived from such trading against the ensuing enmity it caused with Indonesia. The British embassy in Jakarta summarised the views on this matter expressed during an 'off-record talk' with the Indonesian head of the Consular Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who said:

the Indonesian government had no mercy or consideration for the Chinese who smuggled Indonesian goods into Singapore. The Chinese well knew how to look after themselves, and he saw no reason why the Chinese or their Indonesian dupes should escape because of some technicality (such as the boundary).

In Borneo, too, the British were experiencing border problems, and where there were no Indonesians involved they were blamed nevertheless. At Kalabakan, Cowie Harbour, in North Borneo, near the border with Indonesian East Kalimantan, a raid occurred in July 1958 on a timber camp belonging to a British company, the Bombay Borneo Trading Corporation. Twelve Filipino pirates raided a company office, rifled a safe, and later, when a police launch gave chase, an officer was wounded. The governor of North Borneo, Sir Roland Turnbull, made available his own launch, the *Elopua*, and pledged that the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force would defend the territory against pirates. A previous and more serious raid by Filipino pirates had been made on 29 March 1954, on the nearby township of Semporna, but since then all had been quiet; yet the *Daily Telegraph* embellished this report with an anti-Indonesian bias: 'British Borneo has for years been subject to attacks from pirates from the Philippines and Indonesia,' it claimed. Colonial officer Holloway, reporting on this to his superior, refuted the claim. He wrote:

At the height of the rebellion in Indonesia, there were occasions when Indonesian gamboats [but not pirates] intruded into North Borneo waters ... mention would surely have been made of other raids in Intelligence reports and to the best of my recollection none has been made."

Reflecting the American change in political perspective soon after Howard Jones became ambassador, British authorities started to restrict PRRI rebel activities in Singapore. On 22 March (a week after the central-government paratroops captured the bulk of the weapons with which the PRRI intended to carry out their rebellion), the *Straits Budget* announced that Special Branch in Singapore intended to take action against the resident Indonesian rebels. According to the news report, the Indonesians 'were using the Colony as a propaganda and secret-service base'.⁷⁰ The Aliens Registration section of Special Branch had been reinforced by twelve men, all experts on Indonesian affairs, the paper declared, as though previous inaction was due to lack of staff. Three anti-Sukarno Indonesians were deported. This political palliative accompanied other news on the formation of Shell Indonesia, which took over the management, assets, rights and liabilities in Indonesia of BPM, the Royal Dutch-Shell subsidiary.⁷¹

When bilateral relations between Singapore and Indonesia should have improved as a result of the PRRI rebels being denied further refuge, the Secretary of State again sought explanation from Goode. Singapore immigration officials had been unnecessarily brusque with four Indonesian government officials in late June 1958. The secretary-general of the Agrarian Affairs Ministry, Dr R. Suwahjo, had taken the place of the minister for whom VIP treatment had been prepared, but Goode explained that Singapore officials did not immediately recognise that Suwahjo was travelling in an official capacity.⁷² Instead, the four were questioned about the purpose of their stay in Singapore. When it was established that Suwahjo was standing in for his minister, he was dutifully accorded the VIP treatment intended for his superior – but the diplomatic slight was already done. Goode claimed that because all of the visitors held service passports, none was entitled to diplomatic privilege; but the official record showed the four Indonesians carried 'diplomatic or service passports'.⁷³ It was pointed out that, on another occasion, a person carrying a diplomatic passport was 'detained temporarily', suggesting that there was a deliberate policy of harassment at Singapore. On 15 August 1958, a Colonel Ibnu Sutowo⁷⁴ and Captain Muliono were subjected to 'interrogation'. Official protest

ensued. The Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mr Jalja said that the Indonesian army and the Indonesian press now considered there was 'a calculated campaign against Indonesian officers or officials when they entered Singapore'. This prompted the Foreign Office to ask the Colonial Office:

Are Indonesians subjected to the same treatment at Singapore as nationals of other foreign countries, or is there some truth in the implication that there is discrimination against them?

The Foreign Office made further enquiries into why Goode opposed Indonesian consular jurisdiction in Borneo. In reply to Goode,⁵ the Foreign Office expressed surprise over his statement that 'the Borneo territories had always strongly resisted any Indonesian having any official position in regard to their affairs'.⁶ The most logical choice of locality for an Indonesian consulate was Kuching, but when the first application was denied another site, the postwar capital of North Borneo, Jesselton, was finally granted. But there were several years before final approval, by which time Goode had become governor of North Borneo.

The Foreign Office reminded Goode of the normal rule of consular relations, that:

exception cannot legitimately be taken to a proposal by one country to establish a consular post in any other country where consular posts of third countries already exist, or where their own consular officers already exercise jurisdiction.

France, Germany and Burma (many Burmese oil workers were employed in Brunei) already exercised jurisdiction in Borneo. The inclusion of Borneo within the jurisdiction of the Indonesian consulate general 'cannot therefore be very well resisted - the more so in view of the fact that the present appointee's predecessor had jurisdiction there'.⁷

Natanagara was the Indonesian consul in Singapore. More than a month before he left on 6 November 1958, his replacement arrived, Brigadier General Gusti Pangeran Hario Djatikusomo. Goode even questioned Indonesia's right to have two consuls in Singapore at the same time. London reminded him it was not unusual 'for the Americans to appoint more than one Consul at a Consulate'.⁸ In a brief profile on Djatikusomo by the British embassy in Jakarta, he was described as *not* from the left-wing faction in the Indonesian army, and

as anti-Chinese with an antipathy that was 'racial rather than political for he has shown his dislike of both the Kuomintang and pro-Communist elements'.⁷⁷

This was the first time the Indonesian army had been able to send an officer from the active list as head of any Indonesian embassy abroad. His appointment demonstrated the new power of the army after the PRRI rebellion – even though pockets of resistance were continuing. The army had become a centralised, cohesive force, wielding significant domestic political influence, now with an economic foundation to fund itself. The PRRI and the role of the army in quashing it, paved the way for the political transformation which (when implemented in 1959) was known as 'Guided Democracy'. The PKI supported this change while recognising the inherent risk of it leading to 'a military dictatorship or one-man dictatorship'.⁷⁸ Faced with the possible dissolution of all political parties, the PKI supported Guided Democracy because it included a proposal for a *gotong royong* cabinet, based on balanced representation. First proposed in 1957, but inadequately implemented after the PRRI, one of the basic proposals in the 'President Sukarno Concept' was the formation of a Cabinet which would include parties in proportion to the votes won at the elections – and in electoral popularity, the PKI were rising faster than all others. Aidit said that President Sukarno should retain 'prerogative rights to fill some of the seats in parliament with patriots who have the confidence of the people'.⁷⁹ Although this was framed as a proviso before the PKI would agree to Guided Democracy, there was no doubt that the political power of the Indonesian army had increased immensely. Aidit spoke bluntly:

In our country at the present moment, there is taking place a crisis of liberal democracy as a result of the growth of the progressive forces and the revolutionary nationalist forces with President Sukarno at their head on the one hand, side by side with the activities of the promoters of a junta military and other fascist elements, on the other.⁸⁰

Some mutual antagonism between the Indonesian Foreign Ministry and the army surfaced with the appointment of Djatikusomo. The former 'have not taken it well, nor have the army done anything to soften the blow', according to British observers in Jakarta.⁸¹ Not only did Djatikusomo neglect to pay a courtesy call to the British embassy before he left Jakarta, he did not even consult his own Foreign Minister.⁸² It was Indonesian custom to spend ten days in the Foreign

Ministry in Jakarta before taking up an appointment, but because he ignored this convention, the hierarchy of political responsibility within the Indonesian government was in jeopardy. The British observers stressed that the consuls-general in Singapore were normally responsible to the Foreign Affairs department, but 'what would happen in this case only time would tell'.⁶⁶

In stark contrast to the British support for the Singaporean Chinese smugglers and traders, the colonial authorities seemed to be perennially ready to dismiss the Sarawak Chinese. In October 1958, the same month that Indonesia lodged its application for consular rights in Borneo, Indonesian authorities made several arrests as a result of fishing-boat incursions near the border of Sarawak and West Kalimantan. These came before the court in Pontianak. British embassy officials surmised 'that the Chinese, probably smugglers ... were up to no good'.⁶⁷ While this reflected the strategic importance that the British assigned to Singapore, it also reflected the two different political assessments of the Chinese in these two regions. Even at a time when Singapore was vibrant with political activity, when the anticolonial and left-wing elements in opposition to British rule were at their peak, the Colonial Office Far Eastern Department was able to provide the Secretary of State with a remarkably optimistic brief regarding the future security of British tenure in Singapore.⁶⁸ This was not the case with Sarawak – and the difference was crucial, for it influenced the formulation of the proposed Federation of Malaysia. Finding a political solution for the Borneo territories was paramount – mainly because the drift towards a left-wing, Chinese-dominated government for an independent Sarawak posed a threat to Brunei oil production and the future prospects of a giant oilfield offshore.

The closer association of the Borneo territories then being discussed brought into prominence two disparate groups with a common goal: Azahari's PRB and the Chinese in Sarawak fully supported closer association. With the departure of British colonial rule, the dominant commercial role enjoyed by the Sarawak Chinese would be accentuated. Of the three Borneo territories, only Sarawak's constitution permitted self-rule to be attained as a consequence of democratic reform. If independence were to follow, and the Chinese were to maintain their comparative superiority in political organisation – the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) received most support from Chinese – then Sarawak had the potential to become an independent state in which Chinese influence was the dominant feature. The prospect of

an independent Sarawak raised the spectre of control falling into the hands of left-wing infiltrators of SUPP, inevitably jeopardising British plans for decolonisation in South-East Asia, not to mention British interests in Brunei oil.

While this political scenario was anathema to the British, the prospect of its eventuating brought as much discomfort to Indonesia – a similarity that was crucial in the genesis of *Konfrontasi*. In the event of Chinese dominance of Sarawak, where their population comprised one-third of the whole, their political role could only have endorsed that of the neighbouring Chinese in West Kalimantan, who comprised a similar percentage of the total population.⁵⁷ (The comparatively high proportion of Chinese in the total population, in both Sarawak and West Kalimantan, was a legacy of Chinese goldmining and subsequent settlements.⁵⁸ Even the Dutch traders in the early 17th century had to compete with the Chinese along the south-west coast of Borneo.)⁵⁹ Thus the anti-Chinese policy implemented by the Indonesian government in 1958–59 met with two distinctly different responses from the British. In Singapore, the Indonesian anti-Chinese stance was condemned, and attempts made to have it muted; but in Kalimantan, the Indonesian policy was in essence quite similar to that of the British, who responded with alarm at the prospect of a Chinese-dominated, independent Sarawak – and it was this (rather than Indonesia) the British were keen to have muted. As Mackie commented, Sarawak's absorption into Malaysia 'was made considerably easier' by the external threat posed by Indonesia once *Konfrontasi* was under way.⁶⁰ Or, in the words of the former governor of Sarawak, Sir Alexander Waddell: 'The Brunei Rebellion was a kickstart for Malaysia.'⁶¹



On 19 November 1958, less than a fortnight after Djatikusumo took over from his predecessor, Foreign Minister Subandrio visited London. Changes were afoot. Djatikusumo was summoned for consultation in Jakarta after Subandrio returned, and a statement was issued denouncing 'subversive elements'. This included Indonesian rebels, smugglers and counterfeiters, but the sharpest criticism Djatikusumo kept for Singapore:

How can anyone expect us to continue normal relations with our neighbours when they allow subversive elements to use their countries as bases against us?⁶²

Singapore's response was that it could not stop the entry of Indonesians carrying valid travel papers. Subsequently, Indonesia forbade its citizens to visit Singapore.²⁷ This move by Subandrio reasserted his dominance over the fledgling foreign-policy experts in the army; and was obviously a move designed to reduce smuggling, and aimed also at the PRRI representatives in Singapore. Less obviously, the advantage was in Singapore's favour because it also provided a timely hiatus to ensure that domestic politics in Singapore and Malaya over the next few months would not be embroiled in matters concerning Indonesia. The elections in Singapore, which brought Lee Kuan Yew to the fore, were only months away. In Malaya, too, minimising the Indonesian influence was of benefit to the Alliance Government coalition of three parties – UMNO, MCA (the Malay Chinese Association), and MIC (the Malay Indian Congress). In a brief prepared for the Eden Hall conference in Singapore, 16 to 19 January 1958, which brought together all leading figures in the diplomatic corps and the cream of the colonial officers from South-East Asia, as well as the British prime minister, Harold Macmillan, the British high commissioner for Malaya wrote:

it is now obvious that there is an influential group in UMNO who are Indonesian both in origin and outlook and favour a policy of neutralism on the Afro-Asian model ... For domestic political reasons, they [the Alliance government] have been compelled rather against their better judgment to vote for the Indonesian resolution on West New Guinea in the United Nations.²⁸

The potential for Indonesia to influence the future of Singaporean domestic politics was never as great after Lee Kuan Yew rose to the position of first minister. Although by-elections made his initial hold tenuous, he successfully directed the left-wing opposition in Singapore into a political cul-de-sac on the issue of merger with Malaya. Apart from the advantage this gave Lee Kuan Yew to utilise Malayan police to quell his own internal security problems, merging with the Malayan hinterland was initially regarded as a means of reducing the susceptibility of Singaporean trade to Indonesian influence.

On 15 January 1959, Djatikusomo accused Chinese traders in Singapore of furnishing the rebels with supplies. He broadened his criticism to include 'the problem generally of the Chinese in Southeast Asia', and mentioned what actions had already been taken against the *Kuomintang* in Indonesia.²⁹ He was referring to the ban on all organisations

connected with the Chinese Kuomintang movement, which the Jakarta Military Command had announced on 25 August 1958. Seventy leading personalities were arrested, including Huang Chia-ju, who died shortly after being imprisoned.¹⁰⁷ The only consolation for the Chinese Nationalists was that Jakarta-Peking relations also sank to a low ebb.

In part, this had been a Sino-phobic reaction to incontrovertible evidence that linked the continuing rebellion in East Indonesia with Taiwan and the CIA. Allen Pope, a CIA pilot, was captured in Ambon¹⁰⁸ and the documents which emerged from Pope's pocket implicated Taiwan as the source of the B26 bombers and most of the crew – enough evidence to warrant the death sentence.¹⁰⁹ Pope's arrest prompted more anti-Chinese sentiment, far exceeding the mere banning of newspapers. Since 1956–57, Sino-phobia was intertwined with 'economic-nationalism' in a movement of indigenous businessmen who demanded that the government implement a policy of discrimination against the Chinese.¹¹⁰ The elimination of the Dutch commercial hierarchy politically accentuated the remaining Chinese. Their traditional role as middlemen in the 'colonial caste structure'¹¹¹ left them in a superior position, but vulnerable.

In May 1959, two Indonesian government decrees (to become effective in January 1960) revoked Chinese trading licences in rural areas. Regional military commanders were empowered to move rural Chinese into the larger towns.¹¹² The decrees, the operative clause being in Presidential Regulation No. 10, described Chinese retailers as 'tools of a capitalist economic structure ... exploiting the rural population'.¹¹³ Of the 11 332 foreigners in West Java who were forcibly moved as retail traders, 9 927, or 87 per cent, were Chinese.¹¹⁴ Subandrio, touring West Java in January 1960, addressed a Chinese gathering in Purwakarta on the 15th, and told them bluntly that the Indonesian government 'would not help them to find a livelihood'.¹¹⁵ On 23 February, four ships from the People's Republic of China arrived at Tanjung Priok and assisted in repatriating in one week more than 3000 Chinese. In all, there was an exodus of more than 100,000 Indonesian Chinese to China.¹¹⁶ When Subandrio visited Peking in October 1960, these problems impinged on the intended ratification of the Dual Nationality Treaty. Although agreement in principle had been reached at the Bandung Conference, and Indonesian legislation was introduced in 1957 to allow this treaty to be signed, it was subject to ratification. When Subandrio visited Peking to conclude it in October 1959, however, he was treated harshly, 'like a delinquent',¹¹⁷ according to the London

Observer. The Indonesian government's campaign against Chinese retail traders in the villages, combined with Peking's criticism, frustrated an exchange of instruments of ratification until the following year.

Peking's hostility was roused because, also in May 1959, the Indonesian army began to harass various PKI organisational activities. Mozingo described this as:

a search for pretexts to prevent or disrupt the party's forthcoming Sixth National Congress. It was apparent to Peking that certain elements in the army – encouraged by the Americans – hoped to pick a quarrel with China over the Chinese minority in Indonesia which could be turned to the army's advantage in the domestic political struggle with the Indonesian communists.¹⁰⁰

When the PKI congress began on 7 September, having been postponed in August, army stenographers had access to all proceedings.¹⁰¹ Harassment which started against nationalist Chinese thus spread to communist Chinese. In adopting these anti-Chinese measures, the army and the Indonesian government were utilising a domestic issue to shore up their differences.

Singapore became a geopolitical focus for Indonesian anti-Chinese sentiment and nationalist-economic polemics. Singapore's trading dependency on Indonesia merely accentuated that the operators were Chinese; added to this was its strategic proximity – the American Pacific Fleet found anchorage there at the height of the Sumatran rebellion. Singapore ineluctably posed a challenge to Indonesian anticolonialism. The anti-Chinese stance, however, as an issue uniting the various factions within the Indonesian ruling hierarchy, was defused after ratification of the Dual Nationality Treaty on 20 January 1960. The Soviet premier, Khrushchev, visited Indonesia the following month, a visit less indicative of monolithic communism than of Sino-Soviet rivalry. Chen Yi, China's vice-premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs, visited Jakarta the following year, and concluded a treaty of friendship and cultural cooperation. Indonesia and China proposed mutual support – for the People's Republic of China to recover Taiwan, and for Indonesia to recover West New Guinea. Thus the anti-Chinese sentiment was soon outflanked by the sovereignty dispute with Netherlands New Guinea.

* * *

The Indonesian struggle to attain sovereignty of Netherlands New Guinea (West Irian) began when the territory was not relinquished as part of the Netherlands East Indies in 1949. The protracted dispute

neared an end when the Dutch flag was lowered on the last day in 1962, under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Dutch departed ignominiously before Indonesia assumed full control in May 1963. So prominent and charismatic was Sukarno in ousting the Dutch that the Indonesian populace attributed him, in the main, with the anticolonial victory. He confirmed their belief in him as the *Ratu Adil* of the era, a 'just ruler' who seemed brushed with supernatural power, yet one who spoke the 'true voice of the common people'.¹¹ The PKI significantly increased in membership during the final stage of the campaign, their anticolonial support indistinguishable from Sukarno's nationalist quest. The first deputy-secretary of the PKI, Lukman, had spent his childhood in New Guinea after the Dutch exiled his father to Boven Digul in 1929.¹² The political figure whose power-stake increased most during the Irian campaign, however, was the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio. In the opinion of General Nasution, who was then the Indonesian army chief of staff, 'Subandrio became the hero of West Irian.'¹³

In President Sukarno's independence-day address to the nation on 17 August 1961, he augured an impending resolution to the sovereignty dispute by drawing on Javanese mythology. He did this simply by highlighting the date. Sixteen years had elapsed since he first proclaimed Indonesian independence in 1945, which, in Javanese mythology, was two *windu* – that is, two periods of eight years. By invoking the significance of the third *windu*, Sukarno was not merely attesting to the imminence of political change in the protracted West Irian dispute, but he was also acknowledging his inspiration and responsibility as their leader. Addressing students of Padjadjaran University, Bandung, on 2 May 1958, in a speech entitled 'Capitalism Creates Poverty', Sukarno exhorted his countrymen to join him in:

... Confrontation. Confrontation in all fields. In the political field, in the economic field and yes, if necessary, even clashes in the military field.¹⁴

Sukarno earlier advised Indonesians not to expect assistance from the US, as occurred during the 1945-49 struggle for independence:

At that time we could very clearly see the anticolonial attitude of the USA but after recognition of our sovereignty, after 1950, America's attitude changed.¹⁵

Confronted militarily, the Netherlands was a formidable adversary because of its air and naval power; but its capacity to oppose Indonesia

would increase immeasurably if the NATO alliance between it and the USA proved binding. Throughout the 1950s, and until the advent of President Kennedy, the American, Dutch and Indonesian governments maintained the *status quo* – Dutch control of West Irian – because the Dutch Foreign Minister, Joseph Luns, claimed he had a written agreement with his US counterpart, John Foster Dulles. While Dulles did not disagree with the suggestion, the guarantee of US assistance was, at best, a 'gentlemen's agreement'.¹¹⁶ Luns misled Dutch parliament by intimating the agreement was more than this. As early as 1956, during a visit to Jakarta by Dulles (according to the Indonesian Foreign Minister at that time, Ruslan Abdulgani), the US Secretary of State indicated unwillingness to defend the Dutch stance, and even implicitly approved an initial purchase of armaments by Indonesia from the Eastern bloc.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, to the end of the Eisenhower era in late 1960, there was no change in the Dutch intransigence over West Irian, and the American government seemed unchanged on the Indonesian claim to West Irian. Yet Sukarno's ability to produce a successful result, his credibility as *Ratu Adil*, ultimately depended on Subandrio's triumph in negotiating a settlement of the dispute.

Subandrio, meanwhile, ensured that the political benefits of his success would not be diminished by interlopers, such as Tunku Abdul Rahman, who attempted to mediate between the Indonesians and the Dutch. The Tunku's strongest effort, according to Mackie:

occurred towards the end of 1960, evidently with the encouragement of Nasution and Djuanda, as well as the Indonesian press. But in the middle of his 'sacred' mission to bring the two sides together, he was bitterly attacked by Subandrio for exceeding his mandate.¹¹⁸

Mackie has pointed out two further ways in which the Federation of Malaya proffered support for Indonesia. One was in the United Nations voting on the New Guinea dispute, and the other was in Indonesia's recruitment of volunteers from Singapore and Malaya. In what seemed an extraordinary volte-face, the colonial authorities did not stop this recruitment campaign, which was started by Ahmad Boestamam upon his return from Indonesia. Boestamam had attended a Partindo conference (*Partai Indonesia*) in December 1961, shortly after President Sukarno's historic Tri-command (*Tri-kora*) speech, in which he urged his countrymen to be prepared to volunteer in the New Guinea campaign. Fifty volunteers from Singapore, and seventy-three from Malaya, were recruited in early 1962, but the New Guinea

campaign ended before their training was completed. They returned to Singapore on 17 November, and when *Konfrontasi* began in 1963 twenty-eight of these volunteers joined 'a clandestine organization for the revolutionary overthrow of the Malayan government'.¹⁰ Subversive it may have been, clandestine it was not. Until *Konfrontasi* was well under way, these volunteers were unaccountably left to their own devices by Special Branch, despite the fact that – in Singapore – they flagrantly displayed weapons they had acquired, openly flouting Singaporean law.¹¹ In the opinion of Lim Chin Siong (who was still considered by the Colonial Office as the most likely contender for the seat of power already occupied by Lee Kuan Yew), these volunteers unquestionably had the approval of Special Branch to defy the law. The subsequent role of these volunteers, when hostilities began in Malaysian Confrontation, was evidence used *against Indonesia* as though the return of the volunteers to Singapore pre-empted *Konfrontasi*.

However much grandiloquence was included in Sukarno's anticolonial stratagem in New Guinea confrontation, it was not ill-directed: on the contrary, the more insuperable the task seemed, the greater the victory. Sukarno, however, knew that the New Guinea quest was not insuperable. In a personal visit to Washington early in the Kennedy presidency, Sukarno established that America would not assist the Netherlands to retain the territory as a bastion of colonialism. Within Indonesia, the dispute rekindled the nationalist spirit of independence. The Indonesian claim tended to consolidate communist, nationalist and army support. Thus the duration of the dispute became a factor necessitating speedy resolution. When Sukarno visited President Kennedy in May 1961, both leaders agreed that conflict between the Netherlands and Indonesia should be avoided because the ultimate beneficiary would be the Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI. The prospect of support from Kennedy for Sukarno was the direct result of an intense tête-à-tête, 'a severe dialogue, only the two of them, until late at night'.¹² Sweeping aside the political bravado accompanying the call for confrontation, it is clear that Sukarno's ultimate reliance on diplomacy was an indispensable part of *Konfrontasi*.

Konfrontasi seemed peculiarly suited to the extraordinary talents of Sukarno. The ultimate design of *Konfrontasi* was to achieve a political end through diplomatic lobbying accompanied by economic and military threats. Understandably perceived as a politically aggressive policy, the essential component of *Konfrontasi* nevertheless was the charisma of the leader. His power of rhetoric shaped the term from its traditional

usage into one more contemporary. Despite accusations of expansionism, Sukarno's preoccupation with the remaining portion of the Indies still in Dutch hands was centred on the domestic political implications, and this rationale was expounded in the 1962 independence-day speech entitled 'A Year of Triumph':

The struggle to liberate West Irian is a fundamental basis of our Nation-building, nay, it is even a fundamental basis of the character-building of Indonesia. Right from the very start, we have been nurturing the genuine character of the Indonesian people, steering clear from opportunism, steering clear from the spirit of imitation, steering clear from *sklavengist* or the mentality of a slave who knows no self-respect ... we have assisted the struggle of other nations opposing colonialism regardless of their colour or religion. For instance, we have given strong assistance to the struggle of the Algerian people.¹²

Sukarno anticipated reciprocal diplomatic support in the quest to attain sovereignty of Netherlands New Guinea, from Algeria and many other countries struggling for self-determination in Africa during the 1950s - in Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Somaliland, Kenya, Tanganyika, Mozambique, North and South Rhodesia, Bechuanaland, Angola, the Belgian Congo, French Equatorial Africa, the Gold Coast, and French West Africa.

Indonesia harnessed the anticolonial momentum in Africa as an asset in the quest for New Guinea. Thus the prospect of the Afro-Asian conference in Bandung in 1955 was not welcomed by the Netherlands, and (in a Colonial Office brief for that historic meeting in 1955) Britain anticipated:

that the future of Malaya may be on the agenda. This could easily be expanded to include the future of British Borneo, on which the Indonesians cast covetous eyes.¹³

Tarling has shown how British policy attempted to minimise the benefits accruing to Communist China through its participation in the conference. Britain also tried to discourage African participation by suggesting that the Asian initiative had nothing to do with Africa.¹⁴ African participation had a special role in the New Guinea campaign because African support in the United Nations for the Indonesian case had the effect of countermanding the obvious racial difference between Indonesians and the indigenous inhabitants of Netherlands New Guinea, who were black-skinned like Africans. The transfer of

the Dutch territory to Indonesia (according to the British high commissioner in Colombo) 'would merely be a change from one form of colonialism to another and said that it would be like the United Kingdom in 1948 handing over Ceylon to India'.²⁵ Self-determination formed one of the five guiding principles in the final communiqué of the conference. Indonesia did not, however, separate this aspect of the New Guinea campaign from the anticolonial; thus self-determination was tantamount to inclusion in the Republic of Indonesia. Self-determination otherwise may have led to an independent state, which would undoubtedly have remained under the influence of the Netherlands. This was an underlying intention of the so-called Luns Plan, put to the United Nations in 1961.

Self-determination for the inhabitants of West New Guinea was discarded when the dispute became embroiled in the Cold War. Because of a timely Indonesian purchase of heavy armaments from the Soviet Union – timely in that it occurred after the defeat of President Eisenhower but before the inauguration of President Kennedy – a regional arms-race plunged the New Guinea dispute into the sphere of Cold War rivalry as of 1961.²⁶ Kennedy's support for the Indonesian claim to sovereignty of West Irian was not based on whether Indonesia had legal justification for its claim²⁷ – the American view on the Indonesian claim as colonialism mirrored the British – but on his appraisal of Sukarno as a nationalist and as a bulwark against communism. The intelligence memorandum which presented the available policy options for Kennedy was prepared by a group under the immediate influence of Allen Dulles, the director of the CIA. The memorandum concluded there were no options but to concede to Indonesian demands. This conclusion was partially based on deliberate misrepresentation of the effect of communist influence (after the Soviet arms purchase) on the Indonesian army chief of staff, General Nasution. The intimation that Nasution's loyalties might be wavering was presented to Kennedy to expedite his approval. Kennedy and the CIA agreed that the sooner the dispute ended, the less likely was communist influence to gain ascendancy. Yet Guy Pauker (CIA adviser on Indonesia from 1958)²⁸ suggested that the arms deal with Moscow would include a Soviet presence in Indonesia. Nasution denied this:

It was always Western countries where people were thinking about this. I was in charge of the military and never was this mentioned; there was no contact about this. It is not true.²⁹

Moreover, on his way to Moscow, Nasution visited Singapore to consult with the British commander-in-chief, General Howe, who together with Nasution spoke with the British commissioner-general for South-East Asia, Lord Selkirk. While Nasution stressed that his anti-colonialism was directed against the Dutch presence in New Guinea, and that Indonesian non-alignment prevailed, Lord Selkirk:

asked me about the troubles between Moscow and Peking. I did not know exactly. He gave me some briefings. He thought I did know, but I did not.¹³⁰

While this discussion showed some British awareness of the impending Sino-Soviet split, Kennedy displayed no similar insight regarding communist support for Indonesia in the New Guinea dispute. Moscow's intention behind the large arms-deal was not only to offset the Dutch military advantage, but also to offset Peking's influence on the PKI. Kennedy pursued a quick solution to the New Guinea crisis, as the CIA recommended, although there was one important difference between Kennedy and Dulles, centred on the continuation of Sukarno's presidency. Both supported Sukarno's quest for sovereignty of the Netherlands New Guinea, but Dulles' strategy diverged from Kennedy's plan to continue supporting Sukarno. Dulles wanted Sukarno removed. As long as President Sukarno remained at the helm, the CIA memorandum predicted, communism in Indonesia would thrive.¹³¹ More than this, it went so far as to *predict* the direction of further hostilities, showing remarkable political prescience in relation to Malaysian Confrontation:

We consider it likely that Indonesia's success in this particular instance [the New Guinea dispute] will set in train the launching of further irredentist ventures already foreshadowed in lectures given by Professor Yamin, an avowed extremist who, however, is a member of the Indonesian cabinet close to President Sukarno.¹³²

The CIA helped this prediction to become reality. In direct contravention of the policy of President Kennedy – that is, a policy of economic aid for Indonesia after the New Guinea dispute – the CIA, operating covertly in Sarawak in 1962, assisted in 'gun-running' to Chinese who wanted independence rather than an enforced participation in the British plan to form Malaysia.¹³³

New Guinea *Konfrontasi* as played by Sukarno was a blend of diplomacy and threat that, with Kennedy's assistance, forced a solution upon the New Guinea crisis. Sukarno did not venture blindly into *Konfrontasi*.

With Kennedy on side, he knew that the sovereignty dispute had entered a stage in which the position of the Dutch was indefensible. Sukarno's 1961 independence-day speech:

This policy of Confrontation is not just a policy of bluff ... Our tongues have become fists, our fists have become tremendous sledge-hammers ... A policy of Confrontation accompanied by an extended hand. The sledge-hammer accompanied by a call for friendship.¹⁵

The style of diplomacy was made to out-match colonial hauteur. Although the threat of future conflict remained, actual armed conflict (with one exception) did not exceed the level of skirmishes arising from territorial incursion by paratroopers or small-scale coastal landings. The exception was the naval clash in early 1962 between three Indonesian motor torpedo-boats (carrying landing troops but no torpedoes)¹⁶ and two Dutch frigates. This clash prompted the UN to intervene in the dispute and approve an American mediator, Ellsworth Bunker. Well before the final phase of the dispute, which seemed to turn rapidly in Indonesia's favour after the unequal military clash, Indonesia had applied economic pressure against the Dutch influence within Indonesia: the seizure of Dutch business interests in Indonesia (see above) had brought added Dutch corporate pressure against the continued colonial presence in Netherlands New Guinea. Diplomatic lobbying was pursued both in camera and in international forums, particularly by Subandrio, culminating on the 15 August 1962 when the New York Agreement arranged for the transfer of sovereignty of the territory to Indonesia. As a tactical weapon against Dutch colonialism, Confrontation seemed a remarkable success for Sukarno. The apparent success of Confrontation was a legacy of the New Guinea dispute, whose impetus became a factor that encouraged Indonesian support for Confrontation with Malaysia.

Sukarno's notion of 'the new emerging forces' was another legacy of the New Guinea dispute. Sukarno coined the term at the Belgrade Conference of Non-aligned Nations in September 1961,¹⁷ and as events unfolded it provided a philosophical basis for supporting the handful of anticolonial rebels in Brunei, after December 1962. With this term he referred to the new nations of the world, or those still struggling for independence, as opposed to the 'old established forces'. Sukarno's formulation gave primacy to his anticolonialism, rather than Indonesian non-alignment. Nasser, Tito and Nehru were already the recognised spokesmen for the 'non-aligned movement'. Sukarno

formerly had aspirations of leadership of this select group; doubtless, the accompanying status would have enhanced his domestic power base. Yet the very solution Sukarno employed to oust the Dutch from New Guinea – the threat of war, not just between Indonesia and the Netherlands, but in the larger context of the Cold War – contravened the essence of non-alignment. This was summed up by President Kennedy's special assistant, Arthur Schlesinger Jr, who commented on the settlement of the New Guinea dispute:

Critics could plausibly attack the settlement as a shameful legalization of Indonesian expansion, and indeed it was; but the alternative of a war over West New Guinea had perhaps even less appeal.¹⁰

The principle of non-alignment involved more than dissociation from bloc politics or military alliance; it was an instrument of foreign policy that regarded international peace as a prerequisite.¹¹ It was a rejection of 'power politics'. Yet the Indonesian strategy in the quest for Netherlands New Guinea was the antithesis of non-alignment. Weapons were obtained from a variety of sources, but mostly from the Soviet Union, and mediation obtained from the United States to solve the Cold War crisis that was created by the massive input of weapons. Indonesia resorted to using both blocs, not in the spirit of non-alignment, but in such a way as to exploit the potential for conflict already existing between the superpowers.

While relations between Indonesia and China improved after ratification of the Dual Nationality Treaty in 1960, relations between India and China rapidly grew worse. Consequently, Nehru's wish to exclude China from a Third World conference that Sukarno had wanted to convene as a 'second Bandung', caused a rift between the two leaders. Implicitly acknowledging this rift, the Belgrade Conference ultimately issued two documents: one, the 'Statement on the danger of war and an appeal for peace', incorporated the ideas of Nehru, while the other, a 'Declaration of the heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries', was:

based largely, though not exclusively, on the ideas of President Sukarno. It referred to a conflict between 'the old established and the new emerging nationalist forces' and added that a 'lasting peace can be achieved only if this confrontation leads to a world where the domination of colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism in all their manifestations, is radically eliminated.'¹²

Of the twenty-five non-aligned countries at the conference, only three representatives agreed with Nehru's idea that, rather than anticolonialism, peace was paramount.¹⁷

Indonesia, China and Pakistan proposed a second Afro-Asia conference, but India, Yugoslavia and Egypt pressed ahead with plans for another non-aligned meeting. This was held in Cairo in 1964. By that time, Indonesia was in the throes of implementing Sukarno's ideas on confronting the 'old established forces' and had become enmeshed in a political quagmire, Malaysian Confrontation. The predictability of Sukarno's response to the Brunei rebellion had, to a significant degree, contributed to Indonesia's involvement. Sukarno's personal decision to apply the tactics of confrontation against the planned federation of Malaysia was driven by the momentum of his quest to lead the 'new emerging forces'. To maintain his international status, and to stay in control of internal forces that had already lowered the ramparts between Indonesia and the planned federation, which he saw as neocolonial facade, Indonesia assumed its confrontationist mode yet again.

The Brunei rebellion remains the focus of our attention, for it set in motion the events to which Indonesia subsequently responded. Closer scrutiny of the political conditions in Brunei prior to the rebellion – in particular, the British response to Azahari's proposals for constitutional reform – will throw light on the willingness of Azahari to comply with the wishes of the Colonial Office, and the willingness of colonial authorities to adhere to democratic principle only when the result favoured *their* retaining the final political veto.

Notes

1. See Frederick P. Bunnell, 'The Central Intelligence Agency – Deputy Directorate for Plans 1961 Secret Memorandum on Indonesia: a study in the politics of policy formulation in the Kennedy administration', *Indonesia*, no. 22, October 1976, p. 165. The comparison was falsely predicated upon ethnic similarity between Indonesian and Melanesian cultures, providing an irredentist motive simply on the basis of the former reach of the Dutch colonial empire. This '*Anschluss*' in 1962-63 was achieved at the cost of cultural division of the black-skinned inhabitants of the large, resource-rich island of New Guinea.
2. Report entitled Indonesian Relations With Communist China, prepared for Australian embassies worldwide by Gordon Joekel, Australian commissioner to Singapore, North Borneo, Sarawak and Brunei, 1960-63.

PRO FO 152440 D.H.10310/4. Between 1969 and 1972, Jockel was ambassador to Indonesia, after which he became director of the Joint Intelligence Organisation.

R.K. Jain (ed.), *China and Malaysia, 1949-1983*, Humanities Press, Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1984, p. 35, Document 41.

Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, London, Kuala Lumpur, 1965, p. 249. The first immigrants arrived in February 1821.

In the Bank Indonesia annual report, 1 April 1957 to 31 March 1958, the composition of Indonesian foreign trade for 1957 listed: rubber, 36 per cent; oil and oil products, 33.3 per cent; sugar, 1.8 per cent; tin, 5.6 per cent; copra, 4.4 per cent. Oil increased 44 per cent on the previous year.

Petroleum Press Service, March 1961, p. 90.

Ibid., p. 91.

This figure was stated at a meeting of the Executive Committee of Perbum in Jakarta, 13 October 1958. See *Review of Indonesia*, vol. 5, pp. 1-12, Inter Documentation Co. AG microfiche no. 94, p. 33. *Review of Indonesia* was a monthly journal issued by the secretariat of the central committee of the PKI.

Justus M. van der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia - Its History, Program and Tactics*, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1965, p. 204.

Jan M. Pluvier, *Confrontations - A Study in Indonesian Politics*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1965, p. 39.

Ibid., p. 40.

Commissioner-general South-East Asia to Foreign Office, 21 October 1957. CO 1030 604 82/713/01, Item 1.

J.M.A.H. Lims, interviewed at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, July 1982.

CO 1030 604 82/713/01, Item 5.

CO 1030 604 82/713/01, Item 6.

Ibid., Item 6.

Zulkifli Lubis, formerly the head of Indonesian army intelligence and supporter of the regional dissension in Sumatra, was suspected of organising this attempted assassination. After the 1958 rebellion, Lubis was gaoled; he vehemently denied involvement in the Cikini affair. When interviewed in Jakarta on 1 September 1983, Lubis reiterated his innocence over Cikini. One of the four Masjumi members arrested after the attempted assassination, Jusuf Ismail, admitted having received instructions from Saleh Ibrahim (who escaped to Sumatra) and claimed

that Lubis had issued the instructions to kill not just Sukarno, but also Major-General Nasution and D.N. Aidit.

In the Church Committee Hearings on Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders by the CIA, it was shown that the CIA had 'proceeded no farther than identifying an "asset" whom it was believed might be recruited to kill Sukarno'. See Bunnell, p. 153.

18. CO 1030.604.82/713/01, Item 34.
19. KPM controlled 80 per cent of Indonesian shipping, which was temporarily immobilised when the KPM management was taken over by the workers' union. See Masashi Nishihara, *The Japanese and Sukarno's Indonesia, Tokyo-Jakarta Relations, 1951-1966*, Monographs of the Center for Southeast Asian studies, Kyoto University, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1976, p. 123.
20. M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia, c. 1300 to the Present*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, p. 249.
21. CO 1030.604.82/713/01, Item 10.
22. *Ibid.*, Item 19.
23. *Ibid.*, Item 20.
24. *Ibid.*, Item 24.
25. *Review of Indonesia*, microfiche no. 84.
26. CO 1030.604.82/713/01, Item 32.
27. *Ibid.*, Item 90.
28. James Michelin, *No Man's An Island: A Study of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, pp. 84-5.
29. Nishihara, p. 106. The Kinoshita Trading Company supplied 'four new ships and five secondhand-ships, each weighing 2,500 DWT and costing a total of \$7.2 million'. The contract was concluded on 24 July 1958.
30. On 12 March 1958, the Soviet Union offered ten ships to Indonesia with a total tonnage of 35 000 DWT. Howard Jones, the new American ambassador in Jakarta, 'thinks that the central Government [in Jakarta] are genuinely embarrassed at the prospect of having to engage Soviet captains'. The State Department comment was: 'Presumably, the central Government would not accept officers of SEATO or Dutch nationality.' British Ambassador MacDermott to Foreign Office, 25 March 1958. CO 1030.604.82/713/01, Item 160.
31. Foreign Office to Jakarta, 4 March 1958, CO 1030.604.82/713/01, Item 45. If the source of the requisition rumour was Shell ('oil companies with installations in Riau') and the Foreign Office obviously took the rumour to be genuine, then the source was highly placed, not a waterfront rumour. It would serve no purpose, therefore, for the British

embassy in Jakarta to search any further for 'the source'. On the other hand, making it known in Riau that the British were aware requisitioning was proposed did serve a purpose if 'the source' was *not* in Riau, but in the administrative hierarchy in Jakarta. Riau was implicated because it was a politically sensitive area, not only as a result of the October 1957 problem with Singaporean-Chinese workers, but also because boats were to be requisitioned in Riau for an assault on rebel strongholds in Sumatra.

32. British embassy to Foreign Office, 25 January 1958, CO 1030.604.82/713/01, Item 37. To remove Sumitro (before the US policy reversal) might well have been interpreted by the CIA as undermining the political goals achieved by the PRRI declaration in February 1958 – the central government, by opposing the CIA-assisted secession, was seen as leftist; and the Indonesian army, by defeating the rebels, achieved unprecedented unity prior to the campaign against Netherlands New Guinea.
33. Professor Sunarto, interviewed in his home in Jakarta, 5 and 9 August 1989. Sunario was the Indonesian ambassador in the UK from 1956 to 1961.
34. CO 1030.604.82/713/01, Item 57.
35. *Ibid.*, Item 51a.
36. *Ibid.*, Item 167.
37. *Ibid.*, Item 167.
38. It should be stressed, however, that CIA support for the rebels soon waned. Allen Dulles said the rebellion was 'permitted to wither from lack of sustenance' (Burnell, p. 158). The political emergency caused by the rebellion thrust the Indonesian army to the forefront of the Indonesian politics, where it stayed until finally ousting Sukarno in 1965–66.
39. Goode to Secretary of State, 15 February 1958, CO 1030.605.82/713/01, Part B, Item 185.
40. Minchin, pp. 103–4. From PRO documents, Goode's involvement in Special Branch operations at the organisational and planning level was illustrated by a request he made to Hong Kong for extra Special Branch officers experienced in Cantonese and other Chinese dialects. This information was obtained from Part B of an Internal Security file on Singapore; Part A was not released, thereby obscuring the nature of Goode's 'special operation'. R. B. Black, Government House, Hong Kong, to Bill Goode, 6 May 1959, CO 1030.656.111/3/01, Part B, Item 77. The accompanying minutes alluded to planning for an operation to convey troops from Malaya to Borneo.

41. General Nasution. Interviewed in his home in Jakarta, 12 August 1980. Nasution stressed that the aircraft that dropped the weapons had four engines, and this indicated it could only have been American. An earlier drop occurred on 26 February. Nasution explained that he became aware of the 12 March arms-drop only because the American military attache at the Jakarta embassy (Colonel George Benson) made several urgent requests, ostensibly concerned with the safety of American citizens. First Lieutenant Sukari's paratroops, providentially called X-*ray* Force, landed shortly after dawn at Pekanbaru (the Caltex oil area in central Sumatra where the large arms-drop had just occurred). Thus the CIA, having urged the Sumatrans to rebel against Jakarta, may also have ensured that in one fell swoop most of the weapons that had been promised to the rebels fell into the hands of Nasution. This was the reason Zulkifli Lubis exclaimed, 'The Americans tricked us!' Lubis. Interviewed in his office in Jakarta, 1 September 1983. The trickle of support which continued (such as the small arms landed at Manado) simply necessitated the continued role of the now-centralised Indonesian arms at the forefront of Indonesian domestic politics.
42. There were 880 persons at the Rumbai camp, including 600 Americans, thirty-eight British, thirteen Australians, ten Canadians, three South Africans and one New Zealander. The remainder were locals, some of whom were rebels. More than 150 Americans had already been evacuated from the oil-loading stations on the east coast, but Rumbai residents remained. The central government refused to allow an airdrop of food. CO 1030 604 82/713/01, Item 67. Jakarta feared a weapons drop as well, and by refusing all other flights over the area was able to determine the time when the weapons drop occurred. Soon after the CIA plane was detected, central government paratroops confiscated the weapons before rebels had a chance to remove them from the airfield. The CIA-supplied weapons were subsequently used against the Dutch in the dispute over Netherlands New Guinea. Nasution. Interviewed in Jakarta, 21 January 1988. One further aspect that must have facilitated communication in this episode was that the US consulate-general in Singapore had 'established wireless communications with Rumbai Camp'. CO 1030 604 82/713/01, 12 March 1958, Item 86.
43. British embassy in Jakarta to Foreign Office, 14 March 1958. CO 1030 604 82/713/01 Item 105.
44. *Review of Indonesia*, microfiche no. 86, p. 16.
45. British embassy, Moscow, reporting to the Foreign Office, 2 April 1958, on an article published on 25 March. CO 1030 605 82/713/01, Item

186. That the rebels were being defeated, despite foreign assistance with weapons, did not take into account that the CIA weapons supply was cut off in the very early stages of the rebellion; otherwise the rebel opposition in Sumatra would have been far more formidable. The defeat of the PRRI was a political milestone that helped seal a 1960 Indonesian-Soviet arms agreement so large as to threaten Dutch superiority in arms in the New Guinea dispute. To further the illusion of left-wing influence in Jakarta, Adam Malik (who arranged the arms deal in Moscow) was depicted as both a Sukarno and left-wing supporter in the Japanese press, by Nishijima, Interviews; Adam Malik, Jakarta, 31 August 1983; Nishijima, Tokyo, 13 to 20 August 1983.

46. British embassy, Moscow, to Foreign Office, 15 May 1958, CO 1030 605 82/713/01, Item 204. P. Tjahaja, now a Canadian resident, was one of a dozen Sumatrans picked to be trained by American instructors in demolition. When the rebellion started, however, they were not permitted to return to Sumatra. In the opinion of Tjahaja, the Americans wanted only to ensure the rebellion started, not for Sumatra to secede, which was the supposed aim of the rebellion, Tjahaja, Interviewed in Amsterdam, 8 June 1984.
47. Fletcher Prouty (now in retirement as 'transportation consultant'), pers. comm., 29 June 1996.
48. CO 1030 605 82/713/01, Item 206. While the Special Branch operation in Borneo in which Goode was involved may have fulfilled the expectations of Soviet analysts, there was no evidence to suggest they were referring to this, nor that they had prior knowledge of any such operation. The Borneo reference may have alluded to the use of Indonesian labour on British plantations.
49. *Ibid.*, Item 205.
50. *Review of Indonesia*, microfiche no. 86, V.5 (1-12), 1958, p. 16.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
52. Fletcher Prouty explained that (under Allen Dulles) 'the man who ran that entire operation [CIA-funded Outer Islands rebellion] was Frank Wisner and he set up his base in Singapore. Sumatra was his primary target and ... I'd agree that New Guinea was in mind.' Pers. comm., 29 June 1996.
53. Pohon (see chapter 2) was linked with Special Branch, and had undergone training with MI5. Despite British intelligence having such an important source within the Sumatran secessionists, it was to no avail because Allen Dulles, while not actually starting or stopping the 1958 rebellion, remained the real driving force behind it.

54. See chapter 1.
55. James Mossman, *Rebels in Paradise – Indonesia's Civil War*, Jonathon Cape, London, 1961, p. 75.
56. George McTurnan Kahin, 'Malaysia and Indonesia', *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 37, 1964, p. 262; also, W. Stevenson, *Birds Nests in their Beards*, Hutchinson, London, 1965, pp. 182–95.
57. CO 1030 604 82/713/01, Item 106.
58. *Ibid.*, Item 78.
59. Howard Palfrey Jones, *Indonesia: The Possible Dream*, Gunung Agung Publishers, Singapore, 1980, pp. 116–17.
60. CO 1030 604 82/713/01, Part A, Item 121.
61. MacDermott to Foreign Office, 17 March 1958. *Ibid.*, Item 121.
62. Mossman, p. 232. The ironic tone of the last sentence derived from the British military fiasco in the Suez two years earlier, when a strategic reversal by Dulles left British intervention without US diplomatic support.
63. The most notable exception to this was Liem Sioe Liong, who by chance assisted in protecting Sukarno's father-in-law, and whose acquaintances with leaders in the Indonesian army subsequently assisted his business interests. See Jamie Mackie, 'Towkays and Tycoons: The Chinese in Indonesian Economic Life in the 1920s and 1980s', in *Indonesia, 1991, The Role of the Indonesian Chinese in Shaping Modern Indonesian Life*, p. 93.
64. CO 1030 604 82/713/01, Item 89.
65. *Ibid.*, Item 129.
66. CO 1030 605 82/713/01, Part B, Item 212.
67. British embassy, Jakarta, to Foreign Office, 15 July 1958. *Ibid.*, Part B, Item 216.
68. CO 1030 719 212/154/02, Item 3.
69. CO 1030 605 82/713/01, Part B, Item 170.
70. *Ibid.*, Item 170.
71. This explanation no doubt caused the Secretary of State some consternation, for it seemed unlikely that, if a reception to welcome an Indonesian minister was planned, the unexpected arrival of the secretary-general of the same department should throw Singapore immigration into confusion. The Indonesian visitors were: Dr R. Suwahjo; Dr Tan Tiang Gie (chief of Dredging Department, Ministry of Shipping); A.P. Sumarto Hadiwardoyo (acting chief of the Department of the Ministry of Shipping); and Major Harjono, from army headquarters, *Ibid.*, Item 216.
72. *Ibid.*, Item 216.
73. Colonel Ibnu Sutowo headed the first national oil company in Ind-

nesia, *Perusahaan Minyak Nasional* (Permina), which was established in 1957. The North Sumatran oilfields that were not returned to BPM were handed over to Permina. Sutowo was described as a 'VIP Indonesian', and was in close liaison with Shell. Thus, to say he was subjected to 'interrogation' was an exaggeration, although this was reportedly the cause of the delay according to Singapore officials and Sutowo, when he informed his superiors. See CO 1030 605 82/713/01, Item 220. In 1974, Sutowo (then head of Pertamina, the Indonesian state oil company) was the leading figure in a \$10 billion financial scandal.

74. Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 5 September 1958, CO 1030 605 82/713/01, Item 224.

75. Recorded on file was the reply only to Goode's letter to the Foreign Office; Goode's original correspondence of 25 September 1958 was not on file.

76. Foreign Office to British embassy, Singapore, 28 October 1958, CO 1030 606 82/713/01, Item 233A. Goode's statement was enigmatic indeed. Who – in the Borneo territories – had been refused an official position on the grounds that he was Indonesian? One such person was Azahari, a Brunei citizen but still described by Special Branch and the oil-intelligence group at Brunei Shell as pro-Indonesian. The Foreign Office said: 'We are also somewhat mystified by the reference to "their affairs" – presumably meaning those of Borneo.' Goode implied that an Indonesian consulate would extend its interests beyond its own compatriots.

77. CO 1030 606 82/713/01, Item 233A.

78. *Ibid.*, Item 233A.

79. *Ibid.*, Item 237.

80. *Ibid.*, Item 238.

81. D.N. Aidit, 'Political Report: United Forward Along the Path of Guided Democracy for the 100% Implementation of the President Sukarno Concept', delivered at the 7th Plenum of the PKI, Jakarta, 19 to 21 November 1958, and published in a supplementary issue to *Review of Indonesia*, no. 12, 1958, p. 11.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

84. British embassy, Jakarta to Foreign Office, 21 November 1958, CO 1030 606 82/713/01, Item 238.

85. This was pointed out to the British embassy by the head of the Asia and Pacific Division of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, Anwar Sani. *Ibid.*, Item 238.

86. This was pointed out to the British embassy by the head of the Asia and Pacific Division of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, Anwar Samsi. *Ibid.*, Item 238.
87. *Ibid.*, Item 236.
88. Far Eastern Department Brief for Secretary of State. Colonial Policy Committee Paper on Closer Association of Borneo Territories, 3 December 1957, CO 1030 556 59/5/01, Part A, Item 76. It was pointed out that 'the Australians', obviously not privy to the intimacies of the domestic power struggle in Singapore, did not share the optimism of the British in the long-term security of Singapore.
89. See *Saravak Report on the Census of population taken on 15th June 1960*, Kuching, 1962, table 6, p. 182; and Charles A. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1983, table 3, p. 7.
90. James Jackson, *Chinese in West Borneo Goldfields: a study in cultural geography*, Occasional Paper in Geography, No. 15, University of Hull, 1970, cited by Daniel Chew, *Chinese Pioneers on the Saravak Frontier 1841-1941*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1990, p. 19. Chinese miners' tombstones at Mandor dated back to 1745. The Chinese system protecting working and living rights became known as the *Kongs*.
91. D.G.E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*, Macmillan, London, 1964, p. 492.
92. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi - the Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 61.
93. Sir Alexander Waddell, KCMG, DSC. Interviewed at Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire, UK, 9 August 1991.
94. CO 1030 606 82/713/01, Item 253.
95. *Ibid.*, Item 254.
96. CO 1030 559 61/01.
97. CO 1030 606 82/713/01, Item 258. This action included the banning of Chinese newspapers. See footnote 44.
98. PRO FO 371, DH 10310/3.
99. Sukardjo Adjojo, the Indonesian lawyer assigned to defend Pope. Interviewed in Jakarta, 2 February 1988.
100. Lieutenant Colonel Pieters, commander of the Moluccas region, arrested Pope and one flying companion named Jan Harry Rantung, an Indonesian. Papers implicating both Taiwan and the CIA were in Pope's pocket, however; this was not the doing of the CIA officer who equipped the pilots on such covert missions, Colonel Fletcher Prouty. See transcript of documentary 'Allies', Slate 34, Take 1, Roll 25. Pope was not executed. He returned to USA during the week of the New York

- Agreement, 14 August 1962, by which Indonesia, with American backing, secured sovereignty of Netherlands New Guinea.
101. Coppel, p. 37.
 102. W.F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition*, Van Hoeve, The Hague, 1956, chapter 6, cited in Jimmie Mackie, 'Towkays and Tycoons: The Chinese in Indonesian Economic Life in the 1920s and 1980s', p. 83, in *Indonesia*, Cornell SE Asia Program, 1991. Proceedings of the July 1990 Cornell symposium 'The Role of the Indonesian Chinese in Shaping Modern Indonesian Life'. Wertheim has shown the strict Muslim *samtris* used Islam as a unifying shield to confront Chinese dominance of trade, and so preferred to describe anti-Chinese sentiment not in the 'middle-man' paradigm, but as competition on a group basis. Sarekat Islam first started with anti-Chinese motives.
 103. David Mozingo, *Chinese Policy Toward Indonesia 1949-1967*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1976, pp. 158-9.
 104. PRO FO 152440, DH 10310/2. Indonesian press statement issued to embassies in Jakarta, 22 December 1959.
 105. British embassy, Jakarta, letter to South-East Asian Department, Foreign Office, 2 February 1960, FO 152440/DH 10310/4.
 106. PRO FO 152440/DH 10310/4.
 107. Coppel, p. 37.
 108. Dennis Bloodworth used this expression in the *Observer*, 6 November 1959, and Mackie independently vouched for its accuracy. J.A.C. Mackie (ed.), *The Chinese in Indonesia: Five Essays*, Thomas Nelson, Australia, 1976, p. 228, footnote 20.
 109. Mazingo, p. 162.
 110. Donald Hindley, *The Communist Party of Indonesia 1951-1963*, Berkeley, 1964, p. 97.
 111. Elisabet Lind, 'The Rhetoric of Sukarno', in Thommy Svensson and Per Sorenson, *Indonesia and Malaysia - Scandinavian Studies in Contemporary Society*, Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies, Curzon Press, London, 1983, pp. 19-47. On the 'supernatural' aspect, see p. 34.
 112. Rex Mortimer, *Indonesian Communism Under Sukarno - Ideology and Politics, 1959-65*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1974, p. 39.
 113. Nasution, interviewed in Jakarta, 25 August 1983.
 114. The independence-day 1961 speech was entitled 'Revolution, Indonesian Socialism and National Leadership'. Department of Information, Republic of Indonesia.
 115. Lecture by Sukarno before students of Padjadjaran University, Bandung, 2 May 1958, 'Capitalism Creates Poverty'. Ministry of Information,

- Republic of Indonesia.
116. J.M.A.H. Luns, interviewed at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, 15 July 1982, when Luns was NATO secretary-general.
 117. Ruslan Abdulgani, interviewed in Jakarta, 16 August 1990.
 118. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi*.
 119. Douglas Hyde, *Confrontation in the East*, Dufour Editions, Pennsylvania, 1965, p. 51.
 120. Lim Chin Siong, interviewed in Singapore, 31 August 1991.
 121. Madam Supeni, Sukarno's personal appointee as Indonesia's 'roving ambassador', interviewed in Jakarta, 11 August 1989.
 122. The 1962 independence-day speech was entitled 'A Year of Triumph'. Department of Information, Republic of Indonesia.
 123. Public Record Office brief, 6 January 1955, CO 936/347, cited by Nicholas Farling, "'Ali-Ah': Britain and the Bandung Conference of 1955', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, vol. 23, no. 1, March 1992, p. 86.
 124. Minute, 10 January 1955, CO 936/347, cited by Farling, p. 88.
 125. Telegram 163, 16 April 1955, FO 371/116981 [D2231/242], cited in Farling, p. 100.
 126. Adam Malik, the Indonesian ambassador in Moscow, arranged for the large-scale purchase of Soviet ships and planes. The author interviewed Malik (at all times accompanied by his secretary, Adhayatman) in Jakarta, 31 August 1983. Malik made two important revelations: first, as the Indonesian representative in the 1962 New Guinea negotiations leading up to the New York Agreement, he had become aware that West New Guinea contained a substantial gold deposit that the Dutch, and subsequently the Americans, had not fully disclosed; second, before Malaysian Confrontation, he was aware of Sino-Soviet differences first ascertained by U2 flights over northern China in the late 1950s.
 127. According to Robert Amory, who was in charge of the Deputy Directorate of Intelligence in the CIA (responsible for supplying President Kennedy with an intelligence estimate of Indonesia's claim to Netherlands New Guinea): 'Indonesia has no claim ethnically to their allegiance [the indigenous people of West Iran] and certainly [Indonesia] has shown no administrative capability that would justify turning the Iranians [sic] over to them as vassals.' See Bunnell, p. 148. Because of Cold War considerations, however, Amory opted for a transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia.
 128. Guy Pauker, pers. comm., 7 January 1992. Pauker wrote: 'I was indeed the first Western scholar to study the role of the TNI in the political and economic life of Indonesia and one of the very few who saw in

the mid-1950s the major future role the military were to play in the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa ... I had a role in stopping American support to the [1958] rebellion when I was asked to brief the State Department and convinced them and the other agencies involved that the whole affair was not an anti-Communist crusade but a struggle for power between two, equally anti-Communist, TNI factions. I argued that if the U.S. continued to support the rebels, this would force Nasution and Jam to turn to the Soviets for equipment and we would have created a Spanish civil war kind of situation in Southeast Asia. I never told Nasution that story.' (Emphasis in original.)

129. Nasution. Interviewed in Jakarta, 2 September 1983.
130. Ibid.
131. Bunnell, Attachment A - 'President Sukarno - key to the Indonesian situation', p. 164.
132. Ibid., p. 159. Although there were a small number of Indonesian residents in West New Guinea, irredentism was a deliberate misnomer that implicitly supported the Indonesian claim. On Yamin, see Sheila McGregor, *Muhammad Yamin: An Examination of his Political Thought*, BA (Hons) thesis, University of Sydney, 1978.
133. Sir Alexander Waddell, KCMG, DSC, former governor of Sarawak, 1959-63. Interviewed at his private home in England, August 1991. This important revelation is explored in more detail below.
134. Sukarno's independence-day speech, 1961.
135. General Soedarto, a Jakarta-based presidential appointee during the dispute. Interviewed in Jakarta, 15 August 1989.
136. Ganis Harsono, *Recollections of an Indonesian Diplomat in the Sukarno Era* (edited by C.L.M. Penders and B.B. Hering), University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1977, p. 268.
137. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *A Thousand Days - John F. Kennedy in the White House*, Fawcett, New York, 1965, p. 494.
138. K.P. Misra, 'The Conceptual Profile of Non-Alignment', *Review of International Affairs*, vol. XXXI, June 1980, p. 12. Also on non-alignment, see: Peter Lyon, *Neutrality*, Leicester University Press, 1963; Leo Mates, *Non-alignment: Theory and Current Policy*, Belgrade, 1972; Obaid ul Haq, 'Two Cheers for Nonalignment', ISEAS, 1977.
139. G.P. Bhattacharjee, *Southeast Asian Politics: Malaysia and Indonesia*, South Asia Books, Minerva, Calcutta, 1977, p. 128.
140. Ibid., p. 126.

THE BRUNEI CONSTITUTION AND AZAHARI'S PROPOSED REFORMS

In the Brunei constitution, promulgated on 29 September 1959 after a decade of negotiations, the Colonial Office incorporated no more than a facade of democratic reform. Provision was made for a thirty-three-member legislative council to include only sixteen elected representatives; the seventeen who were not elected comprised eight ex-officio members, six official and three unofficial members nominated by the sultan. Thus the Colonial Office, in pre-empting the result of the first election held in Brunei, attempted to ensure that even if one party won every seat, then in theory that party would still be unable to attain a majority.¹ The process of democratisation that Sir Anthony Abell had started in Sarawak, as a prerequisite for decolonisation, faltered in Brunei.

In the constitutional negotiations between the sultan and the Colonial Office, Azahari's persistent call for the introduction of full representative democracy was not countenanced, yet the widespread popular support for the PRB could not be ignored. The political frustration with the ruling colonial power in Brunei became acute. British intelligence used this frustration to destabilise Brunei and Sarawak once it became apparent that, with the decolonisation that was planned, Azahari's PRB and the Sarawak Chinese seemed destined for government.

The reluctance of the Colonial Office to introduce full representative democracy in Brunei cannot be dissociated from BMP's apprehension that a government under Azahari would assume control of the large oil reserves. Azahari repeatedly advised the BMP executive that in the event of the PRB forming a government, no change at all would be expected in the oil-drilling agreements that produced the bulk of Brunei's revenue.² Both the BMP and the Colonial Office effectively stonewalled PRB demands for democratic reform, however. From the BMP perspective, if Brunei joined any larger federation such as the Borneo federation that Azahari and the Colonial Office both at one time espoused, or the Malaysia federation still in planning by the Colonial Office, the rapport between the sultan and BMP would dissipate. If the sultan became constitutional monarch in the Borneo

federation that remained Azahari's political goal, the control of the oil industry would no longer be his sole domain; similarly, if Brunei joined a federation of the Borneo territories, Malaya and Singapore, the one-to-one arrangement between the sultan and BMP would have ended, inevitably making oil negotiations more complex.⁴ For BMP, therefore, and for the Colonial Office, it was more convenient to maintain the format of the traditional sultanate.

Consequently, it was in the interest of BMP to continue depicting Azahari as politically unreliable, as pro-Indonesian. The implacable reaction of the Colonial Office to Azahari in this light resulted in the 1959 constitution falling short of earlier democratic ideals. This was more the outcome of the close collaboration between BMP's intelligence network and Special Branch than of any personal intervention from individuals in the Colonial Office. Azahari's former links with the Indonesian revolution fuelled BMP suspicion from the first. Azahari's democratic idealism and the popular support for the PRB were equally regarded by the Colonial Office as expedient in the politics of Brunei oil, over which Britain was determined to retain control.



Azahari's PRB gained official approval in 1956 and began to campaign for electoral representation and the creation of a constitutional monarchy for the sultan. Because Azahari was regarded as anti-British, however, he failed to gain British support. His idealism was viewed as tantamount to demanding a reduction in British power, when in fact he saw his role as a leader coming inevitably in the wake of the withdrawal of British colonial rule. No sooner had the PRB surfaced officially than the Colonial Office was urging Sir Anthony Abell to mount a program to counter the PRB's success in gaining public support. After spending a week in Brunei in mid-November 1956, Abell wrote to his superiors:

You mention a specific programme of action against Azahari and I can assure you we have it constantly in mind. He is at present, however, very careful not to antagonize the Government... Until we can provide an alternative to Azahari and his party it might well be a mistake to chase him too hard... Our first task is to find an alternative to the Party Ra'ayat. It would be simple if it could take the form of a King's party but we cannot do that effectively unless we drive a wedge between His Highness and his traditional advisers and that he would not countenance. Although I know he shares most of my views of his Ministers, they are

strongly entrenched round and in the Istana [palace], and his life would be made a misery to him if he deserted their interests.'

Abell believed his efforts to introduce advisory councils in Brunei were 'a step towards bringing the Government into closer touch with the people', but such efforts (he said) were 'vulnerable to Azahari's propaganda.' The dilemma of the Brunei high commissioner was that his proposed reforms centred on the same corrupt areas of government that were the focus of Azahari's criticism. While Sir Anthony's reforms had popular support, the primary allegiance of these supporters was to Azahari, not the ruling colonial power, and this support extended from grassroots to high levels of government. Realising that the PRB had commandeered the political initiative in Brunei, Abell vented his anger:

The vacuum in Brunei caused by the lack of local government or any political alternative to the Party is sucking in members at a high rate.'

Abell noted in a Colonial Office report that Azahari was 'careful to avoid any criticism of His Highness', but attacked the State Council 'which he says is dominated by the British Resident and consists of a group of illiterate and corrupt Ministers.' At the same time, he informed London that during his trip to Brunei, the sultan was well-received in Temburong, which was a stronghold of the PRB. This he interpreted as a sign that not all public support favoured Azahari, without due consideration that the religious affiliation of the sultan and Azahari had the capacity to bridge their political differences. This was a paradox that the colonial power could only resolve, and ultimately did, by separating the two forcefully – as occurred at the time of the Brunei revolt. Abell and the Colonial Office, both of whom considered Azahari anti-British, persisted with a policy of denial as if, with political blinkers, they remained unaware of the breadth of the nationalist movement in Brunei, or the depth of tradition pertaining to the Brunei sultanate. This shortcoming was partly self-imposed, but also the result of misinformation; and much of the advice given to Sir Anthony Abell and the Colonial Office came from Special Branch and from BMP intelligence sources.

Azahari's PRB continued to make progress in 1957, particularly among government servants, causing the colonial authorities to question the benefit of further democratisation in Brunei. Although demanding no more than popular representation, Azahari was actively

seeking parliamentary supremacy. Thus the reform process in Brunei from 1957 was tempered by the realisation that the introduction of democracy would favour the PRB most of all. The solution for Britain lay somewhere between the high and low levels of democratisation: political control of the richest oilfield in the Commonwealth could also be in jeopardy if Brunei simply batted down to become a police state. Such a stance would provoke international response in the UN arena, where many former British colonies, Muslim states and Cold War opponents would vote against Britain. Abell considered introducing mercenaries:

I have discussed the question of police establishment and the strengthening of the C.I.D. and Special Branch ... The State will not be able in the foreseeable future to recruit within the State a force of sufficient numbers or reliability and mercenaries from somewhere will be required.⁹

Tactics already utilised in Singapore were re-employed in Brunei to maintain British domination in the small, oil-rich enclave. The *Sarawak Tribune* took note of the clause in the Brunei draft constitution relating to troops outside Brunei being brought in to quell disturbances. W. Wallace, the Colonial Office adviser who had previously briefed the administration in Singapore on the matter of internal security, now suggested to Governor Abell of Sarawak that a similar provision should be made for Brunei so that UK troops could enter 'without waiting approval of the Sultan'.¹⁰ The sultan was not required to consult the Executive Council 'if the case is so urgent that there is insufficient time to summon the Council'.¹¹ The tactic employed in Singapore to preclude Lim Chin Siong from entering the Legislative Assembly was also tried in Brunei to lock out Azahari. In one of the clauses added to the draft constitution without the prior knowledge of the sultan, it was proposed that, once convicted of a criminal offence – as Azahari had been in the Brunei Film Company affair – a person was ineligible to become a member of the Legislative or Executive Council. The sultan intervened, however, and insisted on changing the draft constitution, so the British attempt to block Azahari's political career came to nothing. Furthermore, the sultan considered the outright statement of powers of the high commissioner blatantly colonial, inviting criticism. Because the clause would be 'attacked by the public', the sultan wanted it included in a more general form, disguised in a separate agreement, where it would 'not be so noticeable or provocative'.¹²

The Brunei high commissioner saw disturbing implications in the sultan's apparent protection of Azahari. The Sultan may have been utilising the nationalist support for Azahari as additional political leverage for himself in formulating the constitution, but at the same time these two leading Malays in Brunei seemed much closer than any equivalent fraternity between the Sultan and the British colonial authorities. At *Idul Fitri*, the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan for many in Brunei, a long queue of devotees visited the sultan's palace as a mark of respect for their spiritual leader. The queue stretched to Azahari's house too, as a mark of respect for their new political leader. When Azahari visited the palace, as he did every year on that day, the sultan, who was performing the task dutifully, asked Azahari in an aside how many people had called at *his* house and was politely amused to know the number was the same.¹³

In 1957, Governor Abell also used the end of Ramadan as an occasion to honour the sultan. To mark the opening of Brunei Airport, an air marshal, accompanied by a squadron of jet fighters overhead, paid his respects. The opportunity of the moment was used to reduce the sultan's demands on certain clauses in the constitution. Abell would not negotiate two items: concealing the reserve powers of the governor, and having the last word in the selection of the British resident. Thus he remedied an earlier unsuccessful attempt at negotiation made by the Brunei resident, J. Gilbert. In Abell's estimation, Gilbert's mistake was in seeking to have the sultan finalise alterations to the constitution before the end of Ramadan – during which the sultan had been 'denying himself cigarettes and a good deal else I am told'.¹⁴

The sight and sound of British air-power was a rare honour and entailed an element of compulsion. The willingness of the sultan to agree to British demands was assuredly assisted by an item of news from the Middle East at that time, given prominence in the *Sarawak Tribune*. Sir Bernard Burrows, British resident of Bahrain, with ten Venom jets in the background, was photographed pressing the jet-pilots to bomb the fortresses of the rebel imam of Oman.¹⁵

When the Brunei high commissioner reached agreement with the sultan on a draft constitution that made no allowance for electoral representation, Azahari resolved to lobby the Secretary of State, Alan Lennox-Boyd, in person. (The subsequent inclusion of sixteen elected representatives, although still a minority, was a concession granted as a result of Azahari's lobbying.) Azahari sought approval for the PRB to send a delegation to see the Secretary of State to seek self-government

in the near future. An interview was held with the high commissioner to discuss their aims, but the approval was in contrast to Abell's personal opinion divulged to an associate in the Colonial Office: 'I do not wish to discourage Azahari from the trip,' wrote Sir Anthony, 'as I feel that the more of the public's money he spends on sky-larking the better.'¹⁰ By May 1957, the early idealism of Sir Anthony Abell was transformed into a cynicism that condoned a less-than-democratic constitution.

The Colonial Office had no intention of considering Azahari's plea for democracy in Brunei. Together with the sultan, the Colonial Office prepared a draft constitution without any concessions towards forming a parliamentary government of elected representatives. Azahari succinctly stated his objection to this early 1957 draft: 'Every office holder under the Constitution will hold office at the Sultan's pleasure and this is not a democracy,' he explained.¹¹ On the contrary, the Colonial Office intended to maintain the autocratic rule of the sultan because this policy would tend to preserve not only the superior position of the British government *vis-à-vis* the Brunei sultanate, but also the privileged position of the British monopoly on the Brunei oilfields. To achieve this, Azahari's righteous stance had to be ignored, blocked, derided and undermined. Anticipating opposition, Azahari sought the assistance of a British expert on constitutional law.

Raeburn

Walter Raeburn was in private practice in London, with a specialty in constitutional law. He was prominently associated with Sir Ivor Jennings, who had been the eminent adviser to the 1956 Singapore delegation under David Marshall. Jennings had also been the British representative on the commission under Lord Reid in 1956, approved by Her Majesty the Queen to devise a constitution for the Federation of Malaya. Initially, neither Raeburn nor Azahari divulged to the Colonial Office that their first contact on legal matters had begun four years earlier. Nor was Sir Anthony Abell aware of this longstanding friendship when he asked his superiors in London to dissuade Raeburn from assisting Azahari. Abell's impression of the PRB leader, apparently acquired directly from the intelligence services, described Azahari as: an irresponsible opportunist seeking power at all costs. His ultimate aims are removal of British influence, destruction of the Sultanate and replacement by a Government headed by himself. Our information is that his

political associates in Singapore and Malaya are Indonesian Nationalists and Communist fellow travellers and in Singapore well-known delinquents; they indicate means he is prepared to use to further his ends.³⁰

From the reply of the Secretary of State, Alan Lennox-Boyd, it was clear that Azahari stood accused of being anti-British in the constitutional debate: 'Partai Rakyat has as much right to employ a lawyer to put their demands into coherent form,' explained Lennox-Boyd, 'as any prisoner at the Old Bailey.'³¹

On the 20 May 1957, Walter Raeburn informed the Colonial Office that he had been briefed by Azahari to go to Brunei in June to give advice on the constitution to the PRB. 'As regards Azahari,' Whiteley, of the Colonial Office, forewarned his subordinates before an introductory visit by Raeburn, 'it will be necessary to tread delicately confining our remarks to a factual statement of his party's apparent opposition to local government.' Azahari had criticised the plan for local government because it avoided using an electoral procedure. The plan met with an unfavourable popular response also, because the local bodies were assigned the task of levying local rates, formerly covered by oil revenue. For this reason, the local government proposal was assured of being rejected.³² Conditions had been created whereby Azahari had little option but to oppose this local government move, thereby providing BPM and the Colonial Office with an example of PRB's opposition to democratic reform. This was intended for a wider audience than just Brunei. The reaction of the colonial authorities to this rejection was that it would be undemocratic to *force* the people to accept democratic ways, thus reinforcing the image of 'Brunei backwardness'. The editorial in the *Straits Times* (13 June 1957) showed a familiarity with British tactics:

The visit to Brunei of a British lawyer to advise the Partai Rakyat on the drafting of a 'merdeka memorandum' offers sharp contrast to the British Government's assertion, only nine months ago, that the people of Brunei had rejected the proposals of the Sultan in Council for substantial autonomy in local government affairs.³³

In a ninety-minute introduction in May 1957, Raeburn visited the Colonial Office. He was confronted with an obvious prejudice against Azahari and against the political aspirations of the people of Brunei. Brunei's total population 'only equalled that of Cheltenham', they were 'backward' and just emerging from an 'almost feudal state'. (Cheltenham was known, among other things, as an area for retired

colonial officers.) Raeburn was told by the Colonial Office spokesman, J. Johnston, that:

our information was that Azahari's political associates outside Brunei were mostly extreme Indonesian nationalists or fellow travellers.²¹

Raeburn already knew that Azahari was acquainted with several Malay nationalists, such as Dr Burhanuddin and Ahmad Boestaman from the postwar MNP, whose political inspiration was drawn from the Indonesian anticolonial struggle, but to call these persons 'Indonesian' conveyed a misleading impression. In a subsequent meeting with Johnston, Raeburn tried to correct this misapprehension, widely held in the Colonial Office, concerning Azahari's links with Indonesia. Johnston's notes recorded Raeburn's efforts to clarify the situation, stating:

whatever his [Azahari's] connections in the past, it was quite untrue to say that Azahari was an associate of fellow travellers etc. at the present. He said Azahari had a responsible outlook and wants to co-operate.²²

The Colonial Office report on the interview with Raeburn declared he was not very accurately informed about Azahari.²³ This merely highlighted Colonial Office prejudice as ingrained and unyielding, bent on self-preservation, but there was also a suggestion this prejudice was inherited from afar. '*Our information*' was how Johnston referred to his source of intelligence on Azahari without being specific. The phrase and the information echoed Abell's advice of the week before, which originated mainly from Special Branch and from the oil intelligence network established by BMP. The Colonial Office described the PRB as 'in effect an opposition to the Sultan'. Yet the concept of Kalimantan Utara with a constitutional monarchy, which was the PRB platform, was not directed against the sultan. These claims by the Colonial Office did not deter Raeburn, so when pressed to postpone his brief he did not comply. It was put to him that 'to prepare political demands on behalf of Partai Rakyat would imply a rejection of the Sultan's new constitution'. Self-interest in the request was obvious, considering the changes to the draft constitution by the authorities in Sarawak were designed to secure long-term British control of Brunei. A record of the meeting shows the Colonial Office spokesman told Raeburn his involvement 'would be damaging to the general British interest but he [Raeburn] professed not to be able to see this at all'.²⁴ Abell's thoughts on Raeburn were pencilled onto a note from the Secretary of State, and a similar bias against Raeburn was revealed in

his comments, such as: 'naturalised British subject of European origin - there is no security record'; 'a bore, but we can't stop him'; and, 'I am afraid he sees no wider loyalty than to his clients'.²⁵

Abell had already confirmed for the Colonial Office that Azahari and the PRB had widespread popular support. Yet in Raeburn's presence, the Colonial Office spokesman cast aspersions on reports of the PRB as a 'national movement', both in the degree of local popularity and in the total population of Brunei in comparison with other South-East Asian countries. The strength of the PRB, according to figures supplied to the Colonial Office by Raeburn, was 16 000, which (he pointed out) represented 'a very high proportion of the adult male population'.²⁶ Raeburn asked if PRB demands would be acceptable if modified, and speculated that if their demands remained wholly unsatisfied they might be tempted to secure their ends by violent means. Johnston's response indicated that the Colonial Office regarded the small population of Brunei a political asset because it would be relatively easy to control if the PRB resorted to violence:

These sort of considerations arose in the case of national movements and were hardly applicable to the situation in Brunei. He [Raeburn] then went on to be very wise about how wrong everyone had been to say there was no national movement in Cyprus and again to speculate on whether Partai Rakyat did not perhaps command wider support than we thought ... He has got it into his head that Brunei is a puppet Sultanate run from London.²⁷

The reluctance of the colonial authorities to prepare to relinquish power in Brunei was influenced, perhaps even caused, by deliberate misinformation on Azahari. This flow of intelligence came from Special Branch and BPM. The influence of the oil company was such that it was capable of presenting direct information in London to either support or bypass initiatives of Sir Anthony Abell in Kuching. Two examples illustrate this. First, the BPM representative in London, Dr Nuttall, informed Whiteley of the Colonial Office that the political reports on Azahari and the PRB forwarded to London by Hector Hales should not be sent back to Sarawak for viewing by Sir Anthony Abell.²⁸ Unaware of this during his time of service, Sir Anthony was dismayed when the matter was brought to his attention.²⁹ This created a serious discontinuity of intelligence and was an indication that Hales's policy had priority over that of the Brunei high commissioner. The second example is concerned with Hales supporting the idea of estab-

including a political party in opposition to PRB. Because names and dates were erased from the official record, which was simply designated 'Note',³¹ the question arises whether Hales or Abell (see above) was the first to suggest the need for the Colonial Office to create a political party in opposition to Azahari. Because BPM intelligence sources had the power to restrict information being relayed to Sir Anthony Abell, this would suggest that the Seria oilfields, and not Kuching, had become the real centre of political power in British Borneo, and that the colonial administration was already an anachronism.

Abell, on the subject of Azahari, wrote:

One must believe *some* of the Special Branch's reports and from them it is clear that he associates when away from Brunei with all the doubtful trash which might be useful to him if he wished at any time to make trouble.³²

Of the two intelligence services supplying the governor with information, one, from BPM, he *received* some of the time, and the other, from Special Branch, he *believed* some of the time. We may conclude that a gap was developing between the intelligence community and the colonial authority in Brunei and Sarawak.

One matter on which Hales and Abell agreed was the adverse effect on the sultan of a group of schoolteachers who were acting as his advisers. Hales named two individuals – Chegu Marsal and Pengiran Ali – and the Teachers' Association as having a deleterious effect on the sultan's political initiative. Governor Abell saw no alternative to the sultan as:

the key to most of our political problems ... and if he does not see sense soon we must seriously consider whether or not we should build the new agreement and the new constitution round such an unstable element.³³

There was an implicit threat here: Abell was alluding to either the replacement of the sultan with another who was more compliant, or the replacement of the sultanate altogether. Abell commented that the schoolteachers were 'rabidly nationalistic', and as a result played right into the hands of Azahari 'who is now a clever tactician and surrounds himself with Raeburn's nauseating aroma of sweet reasonableness'.³⁴ Only six months earlier, Abell had described Azahari as:

not a very clever or an experienced man and he is surrounded by first-rate thugs.³⁵

The addition of Raeburn to Azahari's constitutional armoury obviously changed the high commissioner's opinion of Azahari's political finesse. Raeburn and Azahari prepared a Memorandum on Constitutional Proposals, which the PRB put to the Colonial Office for consideration alongside the draft constitution. It sought internal self-government through a broad-based constitutional monarchy to replace traditional aristocratic rule. The memorandum stressed that the people of Brunei were loyal and devoted subjects of the sultan:

They seek, indeed, as an ultimate goal even closer relations with other kindred members of the Commonwealth. The urge which stirs them in the name of 'Merdeka' is not of the character of a revolt against oppression, still less a wish to overturn the existing order in conformity with some foreign doctrine.⁶

So moderate was the tone of the memorandum that it pointed out there was no reason why civil servants appointed by the colonial authority should not continue to function in their respective offices under a new constitution. Raeburn explained at length that the sentiments and aspirations of the people of Brunei found in Azahari their political voice, and he took pains to refute the notion that their support was the result merely of effective propaganda.

Raeburn formulated a legal argument to accommodate the paternalistic logic that an education, preferably an English education, was essential before Brunei people could grasp the concept of electoral representation:

It can be and has been suggested that such is the political backwardness of the people of Brunei that their vote would not amount to what could fairly be called a democratic voice. Such an assertion though easily made calls for proper proof. The known facts do not appear to prove anything of the kind.⁷

In Raeburn's opinion, the PRB included some brilliant young politicians who were sincere and capable, and fully competent to run a ministerial system of government based on an elected Legislative Council. He referred to Azahari as being of the calibre of Ernest Bevin, the former British Foreign Secretary.⁸

When Raeburn visited Brunei in June 1957, David Marshall (who befriended and defended Azahari in the Brunei Film Company affair) suggested that Raeburn include a Singaporean Chinese in his visiting party. Lim Cher Keng, an independent member of the Singapore

Assembly, accompanied Raeburn with the intention of rallying the Brunei Chinese to support the PRB. Lim proved to be a political embarrassment. He preached a violent anticolonial and anti-British theme that was contrary to the moderateness of Raeburn and Azahari. Abell informed the Colonial Office:

He [Lim] has not succeeded in interesting the influential Towkay class but unfortunately many Chinese youths have been impressed with his views and have been brought into contact with Party Ra'ayat and may in the future introduce a communist element into the Party.⁷

Ruminating on the political possibilities in July 1957, before Azahari discussed his proposals in London, Johnston, the Colonial Office spokesman who interviewed Raeburn, seems to have shed some of his prejudice in favour of Azahari, no longer describing him as a subversive backed by Indonesia. Johnston levelled personal responsibility at the sultan, not the Colonial Office, for the inadequacies of the constitution, describing it as:

a very limited step forward by comparison with the constitutional demands which Azahari and the Party Ra'ayat have been formulating.⁸

Johnston informed Abell that, in his opinion, the Colonial Office had reached a turning point in the internal affairs of Brunei, and proceeded to panegyrisé on the era of lost opportunities:

Looked at from 8000 miles away one can only think – given that some kind of nationalism was bound in this day and age to emerge – that this is exactly the sort of nationalism one would hope for i.e. a nationalism which was anxious to preserve the old forms, to maintain the closest links with us, to go about its constitutional business peacefully ... On present plans it looks as though what may happen is that the Sultan's Constitution will be announced, it will be opposed by Azahari and his people and then their own proposals will be turned down flat.⁹

Nevertheless, Johnston clearly showed the Colonial Office had no intention of approving Azahari's plea for greater democratic content in the proposed constitution. A draft of the constitution, published on Friday, 26 July 1957, made no provision for an elected majority.

Police and security arrangements included assistance from North Borneo and Sarawak to handle the expected violence when the PRB proposals for democratic reform were rejected. In confirming the preparedness of the police, Whiteley in the Colonial Office commented

to his superior, Sir John Martin, that he agreed with Sir Anthony Abell 'that the time has certainly not yet come for overt action against Azahari.'⁴⁵ Despite the moderation of the PRB memorandum and Azahari, the Brunei high commissioner still considered it inevitable (probably as a result of Azahari's initiative to start a trade union among the oil-workers) that an emergency would arise:

from Azahari's machinations in Brunei. If the trouble was prolonged and was used by Chinese communists in the oilfield's labour force, we would probably require help from outside.⁴⁶

Azahari, however, maintained the peace in Brunei. While he approved of attempts to reduce the traditional xenophobia of the Brunei populace, he was not linked in any way – other than providing the daily bus service for the oil workers – with the Communist Chinese in the oilfield labour force. The epitome of moderation, he arranged with the Colonial Office to discuss in person the reforms suggested by the PRB. The effect of linking Azahari to possible communist unrest on the oilfields, shortly before the PRB delegation was to negotiate constitutional change with the Colonial Office, could only have been derogatory. It was in keeping with Abell's privately expressed opinion that he did not believe in Azahari's sincerity.⁴⁷ More significantly, it was in keeping with a Colonial Office decision, made on 29 August 1957, to undermine Azahari's political standing.

This was a Machiavellian policy that the Colonial Office adopted, and its murky origin implicated the BMP.⁴⁸ A dossier on Azahari and Brunei had been sent on 19 August 1957 from Kuching to London 'with suggestions of possible action that might be taken against Azahari,'⁴⁹ but there had been earlier, covert moves by BMP. In mid-August, Whiteley, representing the Colonial Office, had lunched with Dr Nuttall, the BMP spokesman in London, to discuss suggestions by Hector Hales of possible courses of action to deal with Azahari. They agreed 'it would be a mistake to make a martyr of Azahari.'⁵⁰ This important meeting seemed to canvas possible methods of political elimination more extensively than Whiteley subsequently conveyed to Sir John Martin, for whom the 'overt action against Azahari' was perhaps deliberately understated. Because the threat of assassination was subsequently employed against Azahari as a political weapon,⁵¹ it would seem plausible that the meeting broached the subject of martyrdom unmetaphorically, so Whiteley's statement to Martin did not ring true when he said:

Such action, I assume, would be in respect of misuse of party funds and repayment of loans from the Government.⁵⁷

However, the important aspect of this policy to eliminate the political presence of Azahari should be underlined: that is, while 'overt action' was previously a moot point for Abell,⁵⁸ it became policy immediately after BMP officials promoted the idea at the Colonial Office. This shows BMP to be at the root of Azahari's demise. A directive of the Brunei high commissioner in late August, two weeks after the anti-Azahari campaign was urged onto the Colonial Office agenda by BMP, verifies the policy was in operation, although perhaps not with the vigour BMP would have preferred. The Brunei high commissioner's response was recorded in a Colonial Office minute:

The HC advises that while material which would be likely to discredit Azahari should be prepared and plans to use it made, no actual action should be taken.⁵⁹

The reason for Abell's dilatory approach was that he now considered Azahari a moderate, compared to some others in the PRB. No action should be taken, Abell cautioned, because first 'we should exploit this situation'.⁶⁰ Abell urged the Colonial Office to pursue a policy of moderation, because the alternative that he prophetically foresaw held only the promise of political violence: 'I cannot see how we can avoid trouble,' he penned to his superiors, 'if Azahari is frustrated politically.'⁶¹

At the time the delegation of three PRB members led by Azahari planned to discuss the proposed constitution with the Secretary of State, the sultan would also be in London for the same reason. The sultan then intended to visit Scotland, Paris and Rome. Eric Pretty (the same who installed the sultan in questionable circumstances and attempted to deny Azahari the right of return from Indonesia in the early 1950s) was now installed in the Brunei Government Agency in Trafalgar Square, and was appointed to arrange the entire visit to Europe. In addition, the sultan intended to buy a house in London, for himself and for students from Brunei studying in London.

In London, the sultan met officials from the Colonial Office at 3 p.m. on 11 September 1957. Raeburn's memorandum was criticised by Sir John Martin, in an apparent effort to appease the sultan, for what the Colonial Office described as absurdly rapid advances. (Sir John was standing in for Lennox-Boyd, who had returned ill from a trip to Africa. Raeburn too had fallen ill, and was convalescing in the Black

Forest in Germany.) Sir John explained to the sultan that Raeburn's effort was typical of the universal trend of the time, and:

Governments must take account of this spirit or be faced with strife and loss of control. The problem for Governments was to see how far they could go to satisfy such demands without danger of losing proper control of the administration.⁵⁵

The Colonial Office still wanted a number of concessions to be included in the final draft, and were opposed to the sultan's request for a *Mentri Besar*, a state secretary and state financial officer to be appointed immediately the constitution came into operation. The official response was that such a change would greatly reduce the powers of Her Majesty's Government 'to help and assist Brunei'.⁵⁶

By the time Alan Lennox-Boyd saw the PRB delegation and Raeburn, on 30 September, an important change to the draft constitution had been made between the sultan and the Colonial Office: the District Councils were to be elected by secret ballot. Still the Legislative Council did not have an elected majority. The Secretary of State urged Azahari to withdraw a circular distributed in Brunei on 19 September, urging PRB members to boycott the constitution. The circular claimed that the draft constitution was designed to defeat their struggle for self-government. In reply to this request, Azahari said that the draft constitution left everything in the hands of the sultan; he would be chairman of the Executive Council, contrary to his statement that he would not take part in politics. He reiterated that moderation was the principle which had guided the party's memorandum.

Moderation and denial

The Colonial Office obviously had no intention of reciprocating Azahari's gesture of moderation. In the penultimate draft, the sultan was to appoint twenty-one of the twenty-eight members of the Legislative Council, the other seven being the president and the *ex-officio* members; any member could be unseated or dismissed altogether at the discretion of the sultan; and the sultan or the high commissioner could veto any bill. In short, there was no likelihood of the Colonial Office 'losing proper control of the administration'. The PRB evaluation of the draft, addressed to His Highness the Sultan in Council, noted:

While we can fully appreciate that there may well be no personal intention on the part of Your Highness arbitrarily to give effect to autocratic

powers, under the proposed Enactment there would be nothing to prevent some other holder of Your Highness' exalted office from packing both the Executive and the Legislative Councils with sycophants and office-seekers ... Nor would there be any lawful means whatever of bringing about an amendment to the constitution designed in any way to curtail the use of autocratic power ... A constitution which depends entirely for its safeguards for the subject on the benevolent forbearance of the Sovereign himself, is in effect no constitution at all.⁴⁷

The Colonial Office ensured that the visits by the sultan and Azahari were conducted in succession. This tactic was employed so the PRB delegates were put on 'the wrong foot' with news about the introduction of a secret ballot, universally accepted as one of the touchstones of democracy. The Colonial Office noted: 'This enabled us ... to refuse to discuss the memorandum or to promise any reply on it.'⁴⁸

News of this 'success' was distributed to British embassies around the world as 'Constitutional Advance in Brunei'. It announced that the Legislative Council in Brunei would be comprised of twenty-eight members, including fifteen who were not directly nominated officials. Of these fifteen, eleven were to be chosen by and from the District Councils, for which direct elections by secret ballot replaced appointment by the sultan. A brief reference to Azahari was included:

The Sultan's proposals, will probably be acceptable to moderate opinion, but not to the progressive Partai Rakyat ... formed by A.M. Azahara [sic] on his return after several years in Indonesia.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, the sultan was touring the Continent according to the travel plan arranged by E. Pretty. As an extra duty, a speech was prepared (and translated) for the sultan so His Highness could inform the people of Brunei of his mission to London. The subject was the proposed new constitution:

These are my proposals. They have been submitted to the State Council and District Councils to see whether they think any of the proposals should be amended. This will enable you, my people, to advise me whether there should be any changes which I will consider early on my return ... You, my people, have asked for a voice in the government of Brunei, and it will now be available to you.⁵⁰

Azahari was invited to a nuclear nonproliferation conference in Japan before he returned to Brunei on 5 November 1957. Such was his disappointment over the constitutional negotiations in London that upon

his arrival he offered his resignation from the PRB. Azahari maintained this stance throughout the early months of following year, even until the end of the second PRB Congress on 18 May 1958. According to the May 1958 report from the Brunei State Intelligence Committee (in which Special Branch had a role):

It was not until the secret sessions of the Congress that he [Azahari] finally agreed to resume the office of President, subject, he said, to certain conditions which have not yet been disclosed.⁷

The means by which this information was obtained suggested that Special Branch had an informer even within the secret sessions of the PRB Congress that were closed to all but the leading executives of the party. This was confirmed by the head of Special Branch, Roy Henry, who explained that 'Partai Ra'ayat was well penetrated'.⁸

The May 1958 intelligence report included several other relevant observations. One of these related to H.M. Salleh, on the PRB executive: 'Elements of the Party incited by Salleh,' claimed the report, 'might turn to violence.'⁹ This snippet of political prescience had particular relevance in relation to the start of the Brunei revolt, not yet even in the planning stage. The report dealt more fully with the role of Azahari at the PRB Congress:

Azahari was the only speaker whose address contained statements of policy, attacked the Government's activities in the educational, economic and agricultural fields. At the secret sessions of the Congress, matters discussed included the party's policy towards Federation, proposals for a second 'Merdeka Mission' to London and demands for early elections. It would appear that the Party will strongly support Federation.¹⁰

Azahari had even started a weekly magazine, published every Wednesday, called *Malasia*, to promote the concept of federation as a 'Malay homeland'.

This was a goal Azahari pursued even before the PRB was formed. In Malaya, when Azahari attended the UMNO General Assembly in December 1955, he requested the assistance of Tunku Abdul Rahman, then chief minister of Malaya, to form an independent federation of British Borneo as preliminary to an eventual link-up with Malaya. According to Sopiee, Azahari 'called upon the Federation to sponsor a united front to demand independence and the incorporation of northern Borneo in the Federation of Malaya'. Sopiee added that one of Azahari's objectives in forming the PRB:

was to establish a 'Malay Homeland' comprising the Federation, Singapore, Sarawak, Brunei and British North Borneo. Significant too in view of later events, Ahmad Boestaman, Chairman of the Malayan Party Rakyat, confirmed on 21 February 1956 that his party was also working for the creation of such a 'Malay Homeland':⁵⁵

Azahari had met Boestaman during the visit in December 1955. The pro-Indonesian stance of Boestaman and Dr Burhanuddin Al-Helmy – both of whom were refused visas to attend the 1958 PRB Congress in Brunei⁵⁶ – was known from their roles in the postwar MNP, which at one time posed a threat to British recolonisation of Malaya. After seven years in detention, Boestaman was released in June 1955 and in December formed the *Partai Rakyat Malaya* (PRM). This occurred before Azahari formed the PRB only because colonial authorities in Brunei took seven months before the party was officially registered;⁵⁶ the political inspiration for the formation of the PRB did not follow in the wake of the PRM. In February 1958 – when in Indonesia the Outer Islands rebellion began, and in Borneo Sir Anthony Abell launched the concept of closer association – in Malaya, Boestaman became chairman of the People's Socialist Front, which was formed by his PRM and the Malayan Labour Party, Burhanuddin was president of the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party, and was 'sympathetic to the idea of close ties with other states where Islam was the dominant religion'.⁵⁷ Although no longer as politically close as in the postwar years, Boestaman and Burhanuddin still considered Indonesia in a favourable light and, by association, Azahari made himself vulnerable to accusations that PRB policy was promoting Indonesian influence in British Borneo.

During the seven-month delay before Azahari obtained official approval to form a party, the proposed PRB constitution had to be changed to comply with official requirements. For example, specific references to Kalimantan Utara were removed. As it stood when approved, however, the PRB constitution included the term *Kepulauan Melayu*,⁵⁸ which was subsequently interpreted by some zealous critics of Azahari as including the Indonesian archipelago.⁵⁹ But any claim that the PRB constitution referred to amalgamation with Indonesia was incongruous with the workings of the residing colonial power. Would reference to Kalimantan Utara be removed, but another reference proposing to join with Indonesia be left intact? Azahari denied that he inferred the Indonesian archipelago should also be included in the political unification that he envisioned. 'The Indonesians already

had *their* homeland; they already had their independence,' Azahari explained. 'He had expressed this same view (*Daily Express*, 4 March 1957)' when he declared the PRB aim was 'self-government within the British Commonwealth', adding that 'there was no possibility of Brunei merging with Indonesia'. Independence for Brunei and the Borneo territories was seen by Azahari as synonymous with British decolonisation. Because of the involvement of Boestamam, however, whose postwar goal was the unification of Malaya and Indonesia, it was inevitable that Azahari's aims suffered distortion. Consequently, much of the historiography of Brunei has adopted a denigratory approach to Azahari. Ranjit Singh has analysed Azahari's goal of a Malay homeland in such a way. According to Singh: 'Reviewing Azahari's stand on federation, it can be seen that he had no definite objective.' Singh claimed that Azahari pursued three schemes at the same time: resurrecting the glories of the former Brunei empire, linking the individual Borneo states with Malaya and Singapore, and creating a Malay homeland similar to 'Sukarno's dream of 1945'.

Azahari's links with Indonesia were destined to resurface. In Brunei in February 1960, Boestamam and Burhanuddin attended the annual congress of the PRB. As in 1958, it was held in the Hassanal Bolkiah cinema, named after the sultan's son, who was born one year after the war ended. This was one of the few buildings large enough to accommodate the crowd but, at the same time, the choice of venue was intended as a gesture of honour towards the sultan. Also present alongside Azahari and the PRB officials were the political leaders from Sarawak (Ong Kee Hui) and North Borneo (Donald Stevens). Azahari called on the three Borneo territories to form a united political front to promote unification, and Ong Kee Hui and Donald Stevens supported this quest. 'We believe that the time is very near,' Azahari declared, 'for British Borneo to unite on a basis of national inspiration and not on colonial inspiration.'

Azahari continued to advocate unification of the Borneo territories even after the Tunku launched the proposal for a federation of Malaysia in May 1961. Azahari maintained that the proposed Borneo federation should have precedence over the proposed Malaysia federation. He was not directly opposed to the Malaysia plan, but the participation he envisaged was not the Borneo states individually, but as one unit. Nevertheless, he was often depicted as a staunch opponent of Malaysia, and for some observers this later provided (inaccurately) a motive for the Brunei revolt.

The inaccuracy is evident in J.A.C. Mackie's account, *Konfrontasi*, which creates the impression that Azahari was anti-Malaysia (he was not), that he was anti-sultan (he was not), and that he was anti-British (he was not – as neither Donald Stephens nor Ong Kee Hui proved to be.) After the Tunku proposed Malaysia in 1961, writes Mackie:

Azahari was associated with Donald Stephens and Ong Kee Hui in the first expression of Bornean opposition to it, although the Sultan of Brunei seemed inclined to look sympathetically upon the idea. Thus Azahari's commitment to a Bornean union and his opposition to the Sultan's affiliation with Kuala Lumpur were of long standing.⁷

The sultan had a close affiliation with Kuala Lumpur – his early education was in Malaya and some local rulers were relatives – but was reluctant to cement this with political merger. The more the Colonial Office pressed him, the more obvious became his inclination to abstain.

Examples of the sultan's support for Azahari prior to the Brunei revolt suggest the sultan regarded Azahari's political goals as achievable. Even if the sultan considered his involvement with Azahari merely a contingency plan in case the Kalimantan Utara proposal did eventuate, the monarch-subject bond based on religious affiliation surpassed the patron-client relationship between the sultan and the Colonial Office. Distinct from either of these was another, the sultan-BMP relationship, a third iron in the fire. The inevitability of decolonisation favoured the option with Azahari, however, and ties between the two seemed strong despite the interest of the Colonial Office to separate them. When the sultan's 1959 constitutional delegation, which was bound for London, had dinner in Singapore with Azahari, he soon after published a sixty-photograph record of the evening. The Brunei State Intelligence report commented that the idea behind the report was 'to plant an impression in the minds of the Partai Rakyat [PRB] that he [Azahari] and the Sultan have come to a secret agreement'.⁸ The report also noted the presence of the Indonesian consul.

Further changes to the Brunei constitution enabled sixteen of the thirty-three members to be elected, before its promulgation in 1959. The Colonial Office was satisfied that the constitution excluded the PRB from attaining government and elections were promised. There was no denying the popular strength of the PRB and (until the Brunei revolt) the sultan discreetly retained his option of becoming a constitutional monarch. Azahari did not stand for election but was personally nominated by the sultan to a place in the Legislative Coun-

cil. In other ways, too, the sultan's public support for Azahari enhanced the public standing of the PRB, to the dismay of the Colonial Office. In March 1961, for instance, Azahari was summoned by the sultan, who was leaving for the *haji* to Mecca with Temenggong Indra Putra, Azahari's uncle. The sultan requested that Azahari safeguard the peace in Brunei. In January 1962, the sultan included Azahari in the committee of enquiry into whether Brunei take part in the proposed federation of Malaysia. The sultan could just as easily have had Azahari excluded from these prominent participatory roles, and doubtless such a move was the more preferable from the point of view of the Colonial Office. The sultan appointed Azahari to a position which provided him a forum within the colonial structure to demand its dismantling. On the other hand, another interpretation of the sultan's motives for doing this may have been to exert pressure on the Colonial Office to gain greater personal concessions in the throes of decolonisation. Azahari moved a resolution in the council to promote Kalimantan Utara in preference to Malaysia. Because his mass support remained unquantified before the Brunei elections in August 1962, however, his voice in the council (which still reflected its colonial origins) was not regarded as representative of public opinion.

Azahari, as one of the non-elected seventeen members in the Legislative Council, gained the support of several others, so when Azahari's party won every seat in the first elections,¹ it seemed he was destined for government despite all efforts by the Colonial Office to thwart his rise to power. The implications for the politics of Brunei, and for the British territories in South-East Asia, were profound – and the regional unrest created by the Brunei revolt soon embroiled Indonesia.

Notes

1. The sixteen elected representatives were chosen from the fifty-five seats on the district councils, for which direct elections were held. See D.S. Ranjit Singh, *Brunei 1839-1983: The Problems of Political Survival*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1984, p. 169.
2. Azahari interview, 1991.
3. In 1992, the oil industry was still the sole domain of the sultan (Sarifuddin's successor was his son Bolkuah) and the wealth accumulated by him was estimated to be US\$37 billion.
4. A notable example of the benefits to BMP of the one-to-one relationship was the increased oil royalty agreement in 1954. Royalties on the

declining Serra field were increased, while royalties on the yet-to-be-discovered offshore fields were decreased significantly.

5. Brunei high commissioner to J.B. Johnston, 25 November 1956. CO 1030 237 111/8/01. An inordinately large number of files dealing with Azahari and political developments in Brunei have been retained by the Colonial Office. These number from 238 to 243, and deal with the period from 1954 to 1956.
6. Brunei high commissioner to J.B. Johnston, 25 November 1956. Ibid.
7. Ibid., paragraph 1.
8. Ibid., paragraph 2.
9. Ibid., paragraph 7.
10. Ibid., Item 2.
11. *Sarawak Tribune*, 31 July 1957, p. 3.
12. Brunei high commissioner to Secretary of State, 17 April 1957. CO 1030 460 36/8/01, Part A, Item 1. Note the proximity of the date with Lim Yew Hock's constitutional conference in London (10 April 1957).
13. Azahari interview, 1991.
14. Abell to Johnston, Colonial Office, 13 May 1957. CO 1030 460 36/8/01, Part A, Item 4.
15. *Sarawak Tribune*, 31 July 1957, included in the Colonial Office file, without comment. Ibid., Part A. The accompanying comment by Burrows was that the situation might need 'a bit more rush'.
16. Abell to Johnston, 13 May 1957, Ibid., Item 4.
17. *Liverpool Post*, 27 July 1957, cited in CO 1030 460 36/8/01, Part A, Item 6.
18. Brunei high commissioner to Johnston, Colonial Office, 27 May 1957. CO 1030 464 36/8/02, Part A, Item 6, point 3. Emphasis added.
19. Secretary of State to Brunei high commissioner, 31 May 1957. Ibid., Part A, Item 9.
20. Azahari interview, 1991.
21. *Straits Budget* editorial, 13 June 1957, from the *Straits Times*, 11 June 1957. CO 1030 464 36/8/02, Part A, Item 15.
22. Notes from meeting between Johnston and Raeburn, 30 May 1957. CO 1030 464 38/8/02, Part A, Item 8. Emphasis added.
23. Johnston's note on discussion with Raeburn in London, 17 July 1957. CO 1030 464 36/8/02, Part A, Item 18.
24. Ibid., Part A, Item 1.
25. Ibid., Part A, Item 8.
26. Ibid., Part A, Item 9.
27. Memorandum on Constitutional Proposal, by Walter Raeburn and the

- PRB. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 24, p. 2.
28. Report by J. Johnston, Colonial Office, on meeting with Raeburn, 30 May 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 8.
29. *Ibid.*, Part B, Item 95.
30. Sir Anthony was informed of this irregularity when interviewed in July 1991. It raised the possibility that Hector Hales was a representative of MI5 or MI6; and if so, the fracas in 1951 over BPM's refusal to pay tax was perhaps no more than Hales establishing himself as a bona fide 'oil-man' at the expense of the new governor, Abell. See chapter 4.
31. CO 1030 464 36/8/02, Part A, Item 14. The minutes for Item 32 reveal the author of the 'Note' was probably Whiteley.
32. Abell to Johnston, 9 August 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 33. *Emphasis added.*
33. Abell to Johnston, 9 August 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 33.
34. *Ibid.*, Items 31 and 32.
35. CO 1030 237 111/8/01.
36. Memorandum on Constitutional Proposals, CO 1030 464 36/8/02 Part A, Item 24, p. 1.
37. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 24, p. 6.
38. Abell to Johnston, 6 July 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 17.
39. Abell to Johnston, 6 July 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 17. On the Towkay class, see chapter 5, footnote 63.
40. Johnston to Sir David Watherston, 25 July 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 21.
41. Johnston to Abell, 25 July 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 20.
42. Minutes 41A, point 6, 2 September 1957, to Sir John Martin by Whiteley. *Ibid.*, Part A.
43. Abell to Whiteley, 12 September 1957. *Ibid.*, Item 55.
44. Abell to Johnston, 9 August 1957. *Ibid.*, Item 33.
45. It was mentioned only in skeletal form in official minutes and the actual reference was missing from Public Record Office files. Minutes on Item 38, CO 1030 464 36/8/02, Part A, deal with Item 37, which is missing from the files.
46. Whiteley to Abell, 6 September 1957. CO 1030 464 36/8/02, Part A, Item 42. Whiteley was acknowledging receipt of the dossier, apparently sent by Chief of Police Wilson.
47. Note by 'GCW' (Whiteley), 13 August 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 30.
48. See chapter 8.
49. Minutes for Item 41A to Sir John Martin by Whiteley. CO 1030 464 36/8/02, Part A.
50. See footnote 5.
51. Minute by Pyke-Howard, 29 August 1957, CO 1030 464 36/8/02,

- Part A, minutes on Item 38. Item 37 was 'missing' (removed from the Public Record Office). In the minutes on Item 41A, it was revealed that Item 37 consisted of Abell's impressions of Azahari.
52. *Ibid.*, minutes on Item 38. The impression created by this incomplete record was that Abell preferred a moderate approach to deal with Azahari, while others, such as BPM, wanted to confront Azahari more aggressively. Abell's words 'exploit this situation' were intended to be cautionary and authoritative, aiming to ameliorate, not aggravate, the Brunei political scene.
53. Abell to Whiteley, 5 August 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 32.
54. Note of meeting with His Highness the Sultan, Duli Pengiran Pemancha, Dato Perdana Menteri, Pengiran Yusoff bin Pengiran Haji Abdul Rahim, Sir John Martin Whiteley, and Pyke-Howard, 11 September 1957. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 53.
55. *Ibid.*, Item 53.
56. The Secretary of State informed Azahari that it 'would not be proper' for him to accept the petition; it was to be addressed to the sultan. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 70.
57. *Ibid.*, Item 71. Notes by Melville, Colonial Office, who had a final informal talk with the PRB delegation on Thursday afternoon, 4 October 1957.
58. *Ibid.*, Item 84, 15 October 1957.
59. *Ibid.*, Item 72. Draft Address for the sultan to make in London; then to be sent to Brunei for publication.
60. CO 1030 465 36/8/02, Part B, Item 109. (Marked 'original file FED HI/429/01'.)
61. Roy Henry. Interviewed at the Royal Commonwealth Society, London, 15 August 1991.
62. CO 1030 465 36/8/02, Part B, Item 109.
63. *Ibid.*, Item 109.
64. *Singapore Standard*, 20 February 1956, and *Malay Mail*, 21 February 1956, cited in Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, *From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation - Political Unification in the Malaya Region, 1945-65*, Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 130.
65. *Sarawak Tribune*, 19 May 1958. One other politician, Chegu Harun, president of the Singapore People's Party, was also refused entry to Brunei to attend the 1958 PRB Congress.
66. See Arnold C. Brackman, *Southeast Asia's Second Front - the Power Struggle in the Malay Archipelago*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1966, p. 137.
67. Gordon P. Means, *Malaysian Politics*, University of London Press, London,

- 1970, p. 227.
68. Haji Zaini Hap Ahmad (ed.), *Partai Rakyat Brunei – The People's Party of Brunei: Selected Documents (Dokumen Terpilih)*, Institute of Social Analysis, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, 1987, p. 85. Fasal 4: Tujuan (b). (*Kepulauan* means 'archipelago').
69. See Brackman, pp. 136–8; and Singh, p. 132. The term *kepulauan* seldom linked with *Melayu* was equated with the term 'Malay Archipelago'. As used in prewar times, this referent included Indonesia.
70. Azahari interview, 1991.
71. *Daily Express*, 4 March 1957, cited in CO 1030 659 111/8/01.
72. Singh, pp. 132–3.
73. See Singh, p. 149; and *North Borneo News and Sabah Times*, 19 March 1960, cited in J.R. Angel, *The Proposed Federation of Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei – The Development and Decline of the British Borneo Concept*, MA thesis, Sydney, 1965, p. 363.
74. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi – The Indonesia-Malaya Dispute 1963–1966*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, p. 115.
75. Brunei Intelligence Report, April 1959, CO 1030 465 36/8/02, Part B, Item 129. The report for March 1959 was missing.
76. PRB won fifty-four of the fifty-five seats at the time of the elections. The independent candidate who won the other seat joined the PRB immediately after the election. Azahari interview, 1991. See also Singh, p. 170.

THE PHILIPPINE CONNECTION

The colony of North Borneo, while part of Azahari's planned Kalimantan Utara, was also the subject of an anticolonial claim by the Philippines in 1962. This claim referred to a territorial agreement in the early 18th century between the sultans of Brunei and Sulu, the archipelago of 300 or so islands linking North Borneo and the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. In the same way that Brooke in the 19th century acquired territory as recompense for suppressing rebellion in the Brunei sultanate, in the early 18th century there was a rebellion in the northern marches put down by the renowned warriors of the sultan of Sulu, in 1704, or perhaps even earlier, in 1675.¹ After more than two and a half centuries, however, the agreement between Brunei and Sulu had become blurred, and whether it involved a lease or an actual cession of territory in northern Borneo was no longer clear in the mid-20th century.

The legal incertitude did not detract from the anticolonial impetus of the claim, when made at the optimum moment to achieve political prominence. During the 1950s, the sultan's heirs and their lawyers had conducted a low-profile campaign against the colonisation of North Borneo. Their claim achieved spectacular publicity in the Manila press only when Diosdado Macapagal became president of the Philippines. The *Philippines Free Press* launched the campaign with the headlines 'North Borneo Belongs to Us' on 30 December 1961, the very day Macapagal was inaugurated, which drew the pertinent comment from Michael Liefer:

In view of President Macapagal's previous involvement with the claim it would seem to be more than mere coincidence that a revival of interest in the matter followed his success in the elections of November 1961.

Although a former associate editor of the *Free Press* claimed the paper was unaware of Macapagal's prior involvement with the claim, the general editor, E. Theo Rogers, an American, would not confirm this.² Napoleon G. Rama, the lawyer-journalist who wrote the first article, was presented with the documents and research on the issue by

a Filipino lawyer, Nicasio Osmeña.⁷ Freelancing in the world of international diplomacy and political intrigue, Osmeña enjoyed top-level contacts with the governments of the United States and the Philippines, and his role alongside Azahari in the events surrounding the Brunei revolt was crucial.

By challenging Great Britain, the Philippines did more than just duplicate the anticolonial focus created by the Indonesian dispute over Netherlands New Guinea. When the New York Agreement in August 1962 condoned Indonesian regional expansion into New Guinea, the ignominious reversal of the Netherlands seemed to confirm Sukarno's appellation of the waning 'old established force'. The regional significance of the North Borneo claim, when first lodged by the Philippine government, remained in the shadow of the Indonesian dispute over New Guinea. Conspicuous though Sukarno's success was, the North Borneo claim filled a political hiatus after August 1962, so the Philippines became the current voice of anticolonialism in the region, not so much in alliance as in rivalry with Indonesia.

Macapagal had previously derived political advantage from such an anticolonial issue as North Borneo, the postwar claim on the Turtle Islands – various small islands lying off the north-east coast of the territory of North Borneo. The successful conclusion of this dispute was welcomed by the newly independent Philippines as a benefit of ending American administration. The Turtle Islands dispute, however, was not a legal precedent for the anticolonialism of the 1962 North Borneo claim.⁸ Although similarities existed, such as in the high level of American involvement, the North Borneo dispute has particular significance because it influenced Azahari, the PRB and the Brunei rebellion.



Macapagal's involvement began with the Turtle Islands claim against Britain. As head of the Philippine delegation, Macapagal conducted legal research which led to his interest in the North Borneo claim. The following brief historical explication shows how, and by whom, the two were first linked.

Soon after ousting the Spanish, the American authorities in the Philippines discovered that the British North Borneo Company, in their zest to rid the area of pirates, had exceeded the 9-mile limit of the Turtle Islands.⁹ A provisional agreement between the company and US authorities was concluded in 1907, arranging for a temporary

waiver of the American claim without prejudice to a final delimitation of the boundary.

There the matter rested until 1922, when another dispute erupted. An Admiralty report (June 1927) stated that the border issue had been reactivated for the benefit of US authorities as a means of deflecting some of the avid Filipino nationalism onto the British in North Borneo; furthermore, this ploy alleviated the American position, which was created by Washington's unwillingness to relinquish sovereignty.⁵⁶ According to the report, at the same time as the US government pressed for surrender of the Turtle Islands (which by former agreement were rightfully theirs to claim) another dispute surfaced. In December 1922, in the Philippine House of Representatives, it was claimed that a lease of territory belonging to the sultan of Sulu and held by the British North Borneo Company, would expire the following year.⁵⁷ Filipino nationalists sided with America rather than contest the issue alone with Britain, but no sooner had the colonial allegiance with America been renewed than the dispute quickly dissipated. The boundary was surveyed in 1930 and Britain and America agreed that one year's grace would be all that was necessary to effect a change of sovereignty of the Turtle Islands, whenever the request was made. When Macapagal resurrected this agreement in 1946, the Colonial Office (in place of the company) did not dispute the claim.

By claiming and asserting the sovereign rights of the Republic of the Philippines over the Turtle Islands, Macapagal achieved an important milestone in the expression of Filipino nationalism and in his political career. He subsequently served in the Philippines embassy in Washington and continued his research into the North Borneo question. As a congressman, in April 1950, he called on the Philippine government to stake a claim to North Borneo.⁵⁸ The British legation in Manila, through a consultant in international law in London, E. Saslawski, dismissed the issue as 'valueless';⁵⁹ the Philippine ambassador in London, Jose E. Romero, also sought an opinion on the North Borneo claim from the same expert. Although not a high-profile public matter, the claim reappeared on special occasions, such as the Philippine national-day parade on 4 July 1952, where (the *Manila Chronicle* reported the following day) a banner was displayed demanding annexation of the disputed territory of North Borneo.⁶⁰ Only twelve days after the Philippines achieved independence in 1946, Britain declared the territory of North Borneo a Crown colony, and the national-day celebration served as an annual reminder of continuing anticolonial issues.

The colonial aspect was further accentuated by the negligence of the British government in not maintaining the payment of an annuity to the heirs of Sultan Jamalul Kiram of Sulu, who died shortly before World War II. Calixto DeLeon, an attorney from Jolo, the capital of the Sulu archipelago, obtained a resumption of payments. The most prominent of the heirs, Princess Tarhata, who completed her education at the University of Illinois, sought legal assistance from Chicago lawyers on the right of the British in 1946 to claim North Borneo as a colony. The British government paid the sum of \$9 million to the North Borneo Company,¹¹ but the Sulu descendants, who regarded themselves the owners, received nothing. The *Chicago Tribune* reported that the attorneys 'threaten to carry the case to the United Nations if Britain proceeds with the seizure'.¹² The *Herald Tribune* simultaneously declared that the day after Britain annexed the territory, 'nine Filipinos started legal action to take North Borneo away from England'.¹³ There followed a succession of legal experts. Among these were Teopisto Guingona, a judge, in 1946; Agripino Escareal, a congressman, in 1950; and in 1957 Vicente D. Gabriel, who tried to terminate the lease made in 1878 so as to annul the postwar transfer from the North Borneo Company to Britain. This prompted a Colonial Office comment that if any claim made on behalf of the Kiram heirs became an international dispute:

the Philippines will want a say in the share-out ... [and] if Indonesia prosecuted a claim, the Philippines would counter-claim.¹⁴

Noble has pointed out that the territory alleged to be the property of the Sulu sultanate, while covering North Borneo in the main, also encroached upon Indonesia, but only once did the Kiram attorneys mention this.¹⁵ The Indonesian government did not intimate any wish to annex North Borneo or any part of North Borneo, yet the Colonial Office comment blithely referred to Indonesia as though such a threat was to be expected. For a decade after World War II, British authorities ignored the plea of the Sulu descendants and their succession of attorneys, until Nicasio Osmeña assumed power of attorney.

In a character sketch of Osmeña provided for the Colonial Office by Geoffrey Jackson, an adviser to the British delegation at the General Assembly, 'Nick', as he was known, was described as 'the ne'er do well son of a former [1944-46] Philippine President'.¹⁶ Osmeña's father, Don Sergio, came ashore with General MacArthur in October 1944. Nick Osmeña was the oldest of ten children; the youngest was Sergio Jr, who became a politician.¹⁷

By October 1958, the change brought about by Osmeña was evident in Colonial Office correspondence:

The position of HMG [Her Majesty's Government] regarding the claim to North Borneo might be open to attack by good lawyers.²

Nicasio Osmeña helped advance American involvement to the extent of recommending that 'Uncle Sam take over and establish missile bases in Borneo' for the security of 'South-East Asia'.³ De Lazover, an associate of Osmeña, harangued the Colonial Office on the danger of 'the Reds' with the warning: 'In nearby Sarawak, they have already established a beachhead.'⁴

Osmeña had previously used his legal status as an intermediary for the Kiram heirs' financial transactions to draw in a Welsh-German businessman with Philippine connections, H.G. Owen-Orentsin, to approach Dr Nuttall, the BMP-Shell representative in London. Osmeña and Owen warned Shell to protect their concessionary rights in North Borneo. The Colonial Office apprised this as 'a mixture of blackmail and confidence trickery',⁵ while according to Nuttall:

The Philippine Government which would press this claim on behalf of the legitimate heirs, successors etc. at the United Nations, feel that this claim would be successful. However, it may bring up a further complication in the way of a counter-claim by the Indonesian Government who control the major part of the island of Borneo.⁶

The dire significance of Nuttall's assessment reinforced other Colonial Office reports that 'certain unfriendly powers are very eager that this subject [North Borneo] should be brought up at the United Nations'.⁷ Indonesia was not mentioned specifically, yet was strongly indicated in the Colonial Office minutes of a talk between Holloway and Owen, in which it was stated that:

...all Mohammedan, ex-colonial, Asiatic and Communist states would support a Philippine claim in the United Nations.⁸

Indonesia was admirably qualified in the first three categories and, in the opinion of many Western observers, was well on the way to fulfilling the fourth. Moreover, both countries had been outspoken in United Nations debates at that time on the issue of sea-boundaries for archipelagos. Indonesia and the Philippines sided in opposition to:

virtually all territorial sea proposals in an effort to preserve their claim that waters between the islands of an archipelago should be treated as internal waters.⁹

Osmena arrived in Jesselton, capital of North Borneo, on 17 April 1958 to discuss the claim and to investigate smuggling on the east coast,²⁸ which greatly benefited North Borneo Chinese entrepreneurs. Both subjects were discussed in the Philippine Congress the previous month, after a speech by Salipada Pendatun. His solution to end the smuggling was for the Philippines to claim the territory, then lease it to the United States to be fortified as a bastion against communism in South-East Asia.²⁹ According to George Clutton, the British ambassador in Manila, the Americans were becoming 'increasingly interested in North Borneo from the military point of view'.³⁰ So Pendatun's speech was not dismissed as mere hyperbole when the possibility existed that American politico-military interests might support a Philippine claim to North Borneo.

Because Pendatun was a Muslim from Mindanao, there was a further significance to his interest in claiming North Borneo. Commenting on the growth of Islamic solidarity during 1958, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lennox-Boyd, informed the governors of North Borneo and Sarawak:

In the last year or so, thanks largely to attention paid them by the Indonesian, Pakistan and Egyptian governments, there has been a marked increase of Islamic consciousness among the Muslim minority in the Southern Philippines and there has grown up amongst them a feeling of unity and kinship with Muslim nations in Southeast Asia which is not felt in the same way by the Christian majority.³¹

So strong was this Islamic consciousness that the Philippine government feared a separatist outbreak in the south, according to Lennox-Boyd. Because Sulu and the Muslim provinces of Mindanao had centuries-old connections with Brunei and North Borneo, Manila was concerned that the formation of a predominantly Muslim federation of Malaysia, or even a federation of Borneo states, might threaten the unity of the Philippines. This prospect might prompt the Philippine government, warned the Secretary of State, 'to press a claim to North Borneo as a means of averting the danger'.³²

As well, Tunku Abdul Rahman, returning from a visit to Brunei in September 1958, predicted territorial claims on British Borneo would be made by the Philippines, and by Indonesia; he added that he held hopes of the Borneo territories forming an association with Malaya.³³ The Tunku conceived a strategy that he considered would deflect the interest of both neighbouring powers, and so provide extra time — a

minimum period of ten years was mentioned – for the people in British Borneo to acquire political maturity so as to accept rule from Kuala Lumpur rather than from Jakarta or Manila. The Tunku envisioned a cultural and economic pact between the independent nations of South-East Asia, and labelled it SEAFET, the South-East Asian Friendship and Economic Treaty. In January 1959, the Tunku announced his intention to visit Sarawak and North Borneo on his way to Manila, where he would provide a profile of SEAFET. On 20 December 1958, during talks with former Commissioner-General MacDonald, who was *en route* to the opening of the sultan of Brunei's mosque, the Tunku first heard 'apparently quite gratuitously ... [of] a possible super-federation' of Malaya, Singapore and the three Borneo territories.¹¹ MacDonald and the Tunku also talked about the supposed threat from the Philippines and Indonesia. The former had no legal basis and could be resisted without qualification, in the opinion of MacDonald. The Tunku specifically asked about possible Indonesian claims to Brunei and Sarawak. MacDonald's reply typically lacked Colonial Office duplicity:

MacDonald replied that when he was Commissioner General, Indonesian authorities in Jakarta had on several occasions told him that Indonesia did not intend at any time to make any such claim, adding that he thought this would hold true in the foreseeable future.¹²

The Secretary of State was irate, and resolved to visit Kuala Lumpur immediately to rectify the situation. He would also brief the Tunku on the best answers to give when in Manila, because 'the Tunku more than once asked MacDonald what he should say in Manila if he were in fact tackled about the alleged Filipino claim to North Borneo'.¹³ The Tunku left Malaya on 2 January 1959, lunched in Kuching with Governor Abell, stayed one night at Jesselton with Governor Turnbull, and arrived in Manila the next day. On instructions from the Secretary of State, the Tunku's set response to questions on North Borneo was that the Philippine government had not yet made a claim to the territory.

SEAFET was dealt a fatal blow in April 1959 by the Philippine Foreign Secretary, Serrano. Having visited Kuala Lumpur on his way to a SEATO conference in Wellington, Serrano gave a press conference in Hong Kong, at which he stated that SEAFET might become an economic offshoot of SEATO.¹⁴ Although the Indonesian prime minister, Juanda, discussed SEAFET when he visited Kuala Lumpur in early May 1959, the suggested association with SEATO effectively precluded any positive Indonesian response.

Indonesia and the Philippines reached an agreement on 27 July 1960 regarding joint navy patrols to reduce piracy, smuggling and illegal entry. In September, President Sukarno and his travelling entourage of forty-six persons, including the head of the army, General Nasution, and the PKI leader, Aidit, visited Manila on a chartered Pan Am jet, *en route* to the United Nations. Foreign ministers Subandrio and Serrano discussed a projected Philippine-Malayan plan for greater socio-economic cooperation, to be called the Association of South-East Asian States.¹⁰ With neighbouring North Borneo, the Philippines struggled even to reach an agreement on smuggling; the results were so unsuccessful that, for a period in late 1959 and early 1960, the Philippine navy in the southern Philippines broke off relations with the North Borneo police.¹¹ Smuggling remained a contentious issue.

Two years earlier, the president of the Philippines, Carlos Garcia,¹² had sought the cooperation of the British ambassador in Manila to reduce smuggling, but without success. The chief of staff of the Philippines army visited the southern islands to set up a special task force to suppress the smuggling of goods from North Borneo. Cheaper cigarettes and tobacco, for instance, were depriving the government in Manila of significant revenue. Yet in the opinion of British officials, the issue of smuggling was being used 'to aggravate argument about the exiguous Sulu claim to parts of North Borneo': the suggestion that Filipino intelligence and customs officers should be stationed in North Borneo to combat smuggling was rejected out of hand.¹³

Nicasio Osmeña, despite his diplomatic passport obtained by virtue of his father's former position, was given no official hearing in Jesselton on the North Borneo claim, or on smuggling. Consequently, in April 1958, Osmeña headed to Washington, and British authorities in Jesselton believed he intended to approach the State Department for assistance in the North Borneo claim. The Jesselton law firm where Osmeña had deposited the titles, rights and interests of the claimants to North Borneo informed the North Borneo authorities that all documents were removed 'for use in Washington'.¹⁴ Several months later, however, when the British embassy in Washington raised the subject of North Borneo with the State Department, it was revealed that no discussion on the subject had taken place since October 1957.¹⁵ Because Osmeña subsequently displayed a familiarity with the leading official of the CIA in Manila, however – and in November 1962 accompanied Philippine Congressman C. Villareal¹⁶ and Azahari to meet this person in Manila to discuss the Kalimantan Utara proposal¹⁷ – Osmeña may

have contacted the CIA when in Washington in 1958, but no documentary evidence is presently available to verify this assumption.

The first contact between Osmeña and Azahari was shortly after 3 February 1962, when British colonial authorities set out a constitutional basis for the proposed Federation of Malaysia.¹⁷ Osmeña, writing from Manila, invited Azahari to the Philippines to discuss the political overlap between the Kalimantan Utara proposal and the claim to North Borneo. As the Kiram attorney, Osmeña had also written to the sultan of Brunei with the proposal that the Philippines would be more supportive of the Kalimantan Utara proposal than the alternative plan to form a federation of Malaysia. Azahari was called by the sultan of Brunei to discuss Osmeña's proposal. The sultan reaffirmed his willingness to become ruler of 'the United States of Kalimantan'.¹⁸ Because Kalimantan Utara was a territorial reconstruction of the sultanate, and seen as a part-solution by the Sulu claimants and the Philippine government, Osmeña indicated a willingness to relinquish the claim on North Borneo. Whether or not these proposals were outside Osmeña's jurisdiction is another matter: in effect, Osmeña presented the lure of Philippine support for greater PRB defiance of the British. Using his obvious familiarity within the ruling hierarchy in Manila, Osmeña intimated that the offer of Philippine support came from the government, even after he had transferred his power of attorney. British provocation also contributed to the Philippine government's taking up of the issue.

Britain's readiness to repudiate the Sulu claim to North Borneo seemed an affront to Filipino nationalist sensibilities. Feelings were heightened after February 1962, when the 'Cobbold Commission'¹⁹ began to ascertain the wishes of the people in North Borneo and Sarawak. (Brunei was excluded on the grounds that the sultan's word was the express wish of the people.) When the Sulu territorial claim to North Borneo was taken over by the Philippine government, however, the significance of the claim was propelled immediately to the level of an international dispute. The decisive factor that achieved this change of status in international relations was in addition to Macapagal's previous interest, and Osmeña's excellent links with the government in Manila: the transfer of the claim into the hands of the Philippine government (Liefer has shown) was the outcome of a provocative British *aide-memoire* handed to the Philippine ambassador in London on 24 May 1962.²⁰ It suggested that a public dispute over North Borneo might lead to territorial claims by other South-East Asian countries.

and was 'so framed that it became necessary [for the Philippines] to define a position [on North Borneo]':⁴⁰

The form of the note provided a perfect opportunity for a Philippine response to lay claim to North Borneo.⁴¹

The *aide-mémoire* effectively provoked a response from the Philippines, and in doing so sparked an element of disputation that necessarily included Indonesia by virtue of geographical contiguity. On 22 June 1962, the day after the Cobbold Commission reported favourably on the prospect of forming Malaysia, the Philippine government, in reply to the *aide-mémoire*, announced its claim to North Borneo.

Indonesian opposition to the plan to form Malaysia at first seemed reticent and overshadowed by the Philippines, a country similarly populated by Malays but with considerably less anticolonial status than Indonesia. When the Philippines stood against 'the British lion' over the North Borneo dispute, Indonesia was drawn closer to the smouldering anticolonialism as an invitation to restate its position. On 10 August 1962, when the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Subandrio, spoke with his counterpart in Manila, Vice-President Pelaez, Indonesian support for the North Borneo claim was neither confirmed nor denied.⁴² The New York Agreement was signed five days later. For Indonesia to have remained silent or uncommitted on the state of anticolonial affairs in neighbouring British Borneo would have implied an unprincipled smugness in its victory over the Dutch, and this would have detracted from the support that Indonesia derived from the Afro-Asian bloc. In September, although still not stating outright support, a former Indonesian prime minister, Ali Sastroamidjojo, strongly implied Indonesian approval of the anticolonial stance adopted by the Philippines.⁴³ Support for the North Borneo claim was becoming tantamount to an anti-Malaysia stance.

The British intention to form Malaysia seemed to ride roughshod over the Philippines' claim to a significant portion of the territory of North Borneo. The colonial disregard for the local inhabitants, as in Brunei, was a reflection of the disregard for the Philippines as peripheral to the proposed federation. This provided a thematic anticolonial thread that was common to Indonesia, the Philippines and to the PRB's espousal of Kalimantan Utara.

At the invitation of Osmeña, Azahari visited Manila in November 1962. After discussions on North Borneo, Pelaez and Azahari concluded that if the Philippines pursued the claim it would promote

Indonesian interest in the region, if only because the land boundary between Indonesia and North Borneo was not yet a fixed survey-line.²⁰ Azahari's insistence that the territorial integrity of Kalimantan Utara should remain intact was respected, although claims to the contrary were subsequently made.²¹ Having met several prominent Filipinos through Osmeña's introductions, Azahari returned to Singapore in early December with the understanding that the Kalimantan Utara proposal was warmly supported by the Philippines. According to Azahari, the only promise he made was to acknowledge the former domain of the sultan of Sulu by constructing a palace (or palatial residence) at Sandakan for their benefit in North Borneo, once the territory was part of Kalimantan Utara.

Osmeña had promised Philippine support for Azahari to present his case at the United Nations in December that year. Representatives from Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo would attend, while Azahari presented the case for self-determination and independence in the form of Kalimantan Utara. Telegrams were to be sent from the three Borneo states to New York, demanding independence, and timed to coincide with Azahari's plea at the United Nations. Such was the plan, but it never eventuated.

Azahari was unaware of the rapid political changes that had taken place in Brunei during the month he was in Manila. One of his brothers flew to Johore to inform him. Only a few days before Azahari's return, several top PRB members had been arrested in northern Sarawak by Special Branch, and the PRB understood the party leaders in Brunei would also be arrested soon, and the PRB dismantled. In the ensuing panic, H.M. Salleh urged the PRB to revolt, and messengers had been sent already with instructions to start the revolt on the morning of 8 December. Azahari foresaw that such precipitate action might deprive the PRB of its ultimate political goal, but he could do nothing to stop the revolt at that late stage. Hurriedly, he prepared to fly to Manila, where the representatives from Sarawak and North Borneo were to join him before heading to New York. Azahari and another PRB official, Zaini (who was not immediately informed by Azahari of the impending revolt in Brunei), were in Manila when the revolt started.

Philippine intelligence subsequently suggested that the planning for the revolt was done, in conjunction with Indonesian military intelligence, during Azahari's visit to Manila in November 1962. Philippine sources claimed Azahari's link was one of the Indonesian military attachés in Manila, Lieutenant Colonel Santoso Suparman.²²

According to the Philippine intelligence report:

Suparman did not confine his activities to information gathering. During the later part of 1962, the Indonesian Embassy became involved in the abortive Brunei rebellion. Sheik A.M. Azahari, the leader of the uprising against the British arrived in Manila and got all-out assistance from the Embassy and some Filipino newspapermen. There were strong indications that the December 8, 1962 revolt was mapped out in Manila with the assistance of the Indonesian Military Attaches. There were several closed-door conferences by Hardojo, Francisco Dipasupil and Primitivo Mijares [*Manila Chronicle*], Azahari, Zaini and the Military Attaches before and after the revolt.⁷⁷

No such plan for revolt was mapped out by Azahari. For Philippine intelligence to impute that such a plan existed, on the basis of the meetings referred to above, was deliberate misrepresentation. Indonesian involvement in the 'closed-door conferences' concerned the fate of North Borneo, not the planning of the Brunei revolt. The above report creates the impression that both Hardojo and Suparman met with Azahari, as though jointly conspiring to strike against the British in Brunei, but this was not correct. Significantly, the report also noted that Osmeña and Hardojo maintained close contact, 'probably conferring on the claim to North Borneo',⁷⁸ yet the presence of Azahari during these meetings was not mentioned. So central a figure was Osmeña in all of Azahari's meetings in Manila that, were the allegation of planning rebellion correct, Osmeña too would have been implicated in the purported planning. More significantly, the report shows Philippine intelligence was aware that the Indonesian personnel at the Manila Embassy did not work entirely as one unit. On the contrary, the report identified 'a Subandrio bloc', that is, a bloc connected with the Indonesian Foreign Minister's intelligence network, the BPI.⁷⁹ Hardojo was pro-Subandrio, and so was the Indonesian embassy's first secretary for press and public relations, Boes Effendi, who formerly worked in Subandrio's Jakarta office. Suparman, however, was linked to Indonesian military intelligence under Brigadier General S. Parman, who was the adviser to General Yani on external operations.⁸⁰ By placing Hardojo alongside Suparman in supposedly secret meetings with Azahari before the Brunei revolt, Philippines intelligence was linking the Indonesian army with activities which Subandrio may have been pursuing independent of either the Indonesian army or the Indonesian president.

The allegation in the Philippine intelligence report that the Brunei revolt was mapped out in Manila, with Indonesian assistance, raises important questions: In terms of arms and training, how prepared was the PRB to launch a revolt in December 1962, and to what extent was Indonesia involved in this training? These questions, and Subandrio's independent role, are addressed in the following chapter.

Notes

1. See Michael Liefer, *The Philippine Claim to Sabah*, Hull Monographs on Southeast Asia, No. 1, Inter Documentation Co., Switzerland, 1968, p. 4; Lela Garner Noble, *Philippine Policy toward Sabah - A Claim to Independence*, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1977, pp. 12, 235; Cesar Adib Majul, 'The Sulu Sultanate and the Original Acquisition of Sabah', in *Symposium on Sabah*, Manila, 1969. Majul prefers 1675 as the date of cession or lease.
2. Liefer, p. 13.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 14. According to Liefer, Macapagal's connection with the claim was written up three months after the first article appeared in 'the colorful covers of the *Philippines Free Press*', on 30 December.
4. E. Theo Rogers, who was contacted by me in 1992, refused to comment on this or any aspect of the *Free Press* campaign. Rogers's wife, Nati Crame, was a well-known stage actress in Manila. Her father was Rafael Crame, a former head of the Internal Security force known as the Philippine Constabulary, established at the turn of the century by the Americans to subdue Filipino aspirations of independence.
5. Nestor Martinez Nisperos, *Philippine Foreign Policy on the North Borneo Question*, PhD thesis, Political Science, International Law and Relations, University of Pittsburgh, 1969, p. 140. See also Noble, p. 49. Noble claims that Sergio Osmeña Jr, brother of Nicasio, gave the documents to Teodoro Loesin, editor of the *Free Press*, and from him Napoleon G. Rama took up the issue.

The political affiliation of Loesin is referred to in a Philippine intelligence report on the activities of Indonesian nationals in the Philippines. A representative of the Indonesian embassy in Manila, Hardojo, who was the press and public relations officer, had tried to dissuade Loesin from writing unflattering articles about Sukarno. According to the report, Loesin was so unaccommodating that Hardojo suspected him 'of having been "sponsored" by some aliens in Manila to attack Indonesian policies and personalities'. See *Operation Cactus - a special report*

- prepared by Branch 13, Operations Group, NICA. Period covered: 1 August 1962 – 31 December 1963. This 297-page report, marked 'Secret' and dated 14 February 1964, Manila, was one of four copies only. In the foreword, it is noted that 'coordination with friendly intelligence agencies has been exploited to the maximum'. This report was obtained from the former head of Philippine intelligence via a source who requested anonymity.
6. For the early American colonial background, see footnote 13, chapter 3.
 7. Australian Archives, ACT A981/1, Item Treaties 564, p. 3.
 8. Admiralty Report, June 1927, M.01879/27, Australian Archives, *ibid.*, p. 8.
 9. *Philippines Herald*, 12 December 1922, cited in Admiralty Report, *ibid.* Guillermo Villaneuva, representative of Negros Oriental, was the driving force behind the debate.
 10. Noble, p. 54.
 11. CO 1022 399 334/6/01, The Philippine ambassador in London, Jose E. Romero, also sought an opinion on the North Borneo claim from the same expert, E. Saslawski. See CO 1030 536 39/6/01, Part A, Item 1.
 12. *Manila Chronicle*, Saturday, 5 July 1952, cited in CO 1022 399 334/6/01.
 13. CO 1030 536 39/6/01, Part A, Item 45.
 14. *Chicago Tribune*, 21 June 1946, *ibid.*, Part A, Item 62. The Chicago law firm was Adams, Howard D. Moses and Culver.
 15. *Herald Tribune*, 21 July 1946, *ibid.*, Item 62.
 16. 3 December 1957, *ibid.*, Part A, Item 13. The reference to Indonesia was appended to the original minute.
 17. Noble, p. 240, footnote 14.
 18. Minute by G. Jackson, 2 October 1958, in letter by G.K. Gaston (UK Mission to UN) to Wallace, CO 1030 536 39/6/01, Part A.
 19. An appraisal of the Osmeña family is provided in Resil B. Mojares, *The Man Who Would Be President – Sergio Osmeña and Philippine Politics*, Maria Cacao, Cebuano Studies Center, Cebu, 1986. Don Sergio was an orphan, 'He was a child of less-prosperous relations and grew up in the margins of the wealthy Chinese-mestizo Osmeña family, which was of the mercantile and landowning 19th-century elite of Cebu' (p. 106). Nicasio, who never married, 'pursued the glories of the flesh' and was considered 'a fabulous glamour boy of Manila in pre-war days' (p. 108). Nicasio and Sergio Jr were arrested for treason in 1945 by the American Counter-Intelligence Corps, the latter for 'profiteering and giving material aid to the enemy', and Nicasio 'for "pimping"' (according to US

Intelligence reports) for the Japanese officials' (p. 22). The charges were later dismissed.

20. Minute by Jackson, 2 October 1958, CO 1030 536 39/6/01, Part A. At one stage, Osmena's quest for North Borneo gained the interest of Dr Stanislaus de Lazoverf (a White Russian who earlier had achieved notoriety by being involved in the death of Rasputin). Lazoverf founded a Panamanian corporation, Borneo Development Inc, which was capitalised at \$1 million with Swiss bankers as underwriters (according to Jackson) 'to shake HMG's claim to the territory ... (and) to extract from HMG hush-money many times their original investment'. Jackson's informant was 'a source close to President Eisenhower'.
21. *Singapore Standard*, 4 June 1959.
22. Memo prepared by de Lazoverf for the Colonial Office, 10 December 1958, CO 1030 536 39/6/01, Part A, Item 62.
23. Wallace, 21 November 1957, *Ibid.*, Part A, Minutes to Item 5.
24. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 1, and Minutes. Owen first approached Lord Warwick, who contacted the Colonial Office. Holloway spoke with Owen at Lord Warwick's request. Owen warned that trouble was brewing in North Borneo for Britain. Nuttal met with Holloway on 24 October 1957 to discuss this matter.
25. *Ibid.*
26. H. Nield, 16 October 1958, *Ibid.*, Part A, Minute to Item 45.
27. Ann L. Hollick, *United States Policy and the Law of the Sea*, Princeton University Press, 1981, p. 136.
28. Extract from Monthly Intelligence Report, April 1958, CO 1030 536 39/6/01, Part A, Item 29.
29. George Clutton, British embassy, Manila, to ES Tomlinson, Foreign Office, 24 March 1958, *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 28. Pendatun was a guerrilla fighter during the war. Clutton commented that Pendatun 'made a fortune from the sale of loot which he smuggled out of Indonesia to Mindanao and became a senator on the proceeds'.
30. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 28.
31. Secretary of State, 29 November 1958, CO 1030 608 82/761/01, Item 10.
32. *Ibid.*, Item 11.
33. Brief for the Secretary of State to visit the Federation of Malaya, *Ibid.*, Item 25.
34. Minute by Sir John Martin to Secretary of State, 30 December 1958, CO 1030 608 82/761/01, Item 4.
35. Secretary of State to governors of North Borneo and Sarawak,

- 27 December 1958, *Ibid.*, Item 5. The Secretary of State was paraphrasing MacDonald's talk with the Tunku.
36. *Ibid.*, Item 3.
37. G.W. Tory, high commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, to W. Smith, London, Commonwealth Relations Office, 8 May 1959, *Ibid.* In Kuala Lumpur, Serrano spoke with Dato Razak (deputy prime minister), Dr Ismail (Minister for External Affairs) and Tan Siew Sin (Minister for Commerce and Industry).
38. FO 371 152612 P10361/2.
39. FO 371 152612 P10362/3.
40. Garcia's predecessor, Ramon Magsaysay, was among twenty-five persons killed when the presidential plane, *Mt Pinatubo*, crashed into Mount Manungul, on Cebu, in the early hours of 17 March 1957.
41. CO 1030 536 39/6/01, Part A, Item 29.
42. *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 33. Extract of Monthly Intelligence Report, April 1958. Donaldson and Burkinshaw was the law firm in Jesselton.
43. A.J. de la Mare, from the British embassy in Washington, was informed by State Department spokesman Gordon Mem that no discussion on North Borneo had occurred since Benjamin Valenzona had visited in October 1957 to discuss the Philippine claim. De la Mare to ES Tomlinson, Foreign Office, 6 June 1958, *Ibid.*, Part A, Item 33.
44. C. Villareal was 'closely connected with Philippine Intelligence'. Source: see request for anonymity, footnote 5.
45. Azahari interview, 1991.
46. Azahari. Interviewed in Bogor, Indonesia, 13 August 1990. This interview was the source of all information in this paragraph.
47. *Ibid.*
48. The commission comprised Lord Cobbold (governor of the Bank of England), Sir David Watherson (chief secretary, Malaya), Sir Anthony Abell, Dato Wong Pow Nee (chief minister, Penang) and Enche Muhammad Ghazali bin Shafie (permanent secretary for the Ministry of External Affairs, Malaya), who was closely linked with British intelligence.
49. Liefer, p. 21.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
52. *Manila Times*, 11 August 1962.
53. *Strait Times*, 29 September 1962.
54. Azahari interview, 1991.
55. *Ibid.* Tunku Abdul Rahman, for instance, claimed that Azahari intended to hand over North Borneo to the Philippines, Osmeña, in the *Manila*

Times, 19 October 1962, anticipated some territorial concessions for the heirs. As a condition of Philippine approval for Kalimantan Utara, this expectation was discarded during Azahari's visit to Manila in November. Another claim Osmeña made after the Bruner revolt was that his fee for helping Azahari regain North Borneo was \$80 million, a claim intended to discredit Azahari.

56. Suparman was trained in intelligence by the US army in Okinawa. Prior to the Manila assignment in August 1962, he was a specialist on the Chinese in Indonesia. See Operation Cactus – a special report prepared by Branch D, Operations Group, NICIA, Period covered: 1 August 1962 – 31 December 1963, p. 64. The air attaché was Lieutenant Colonel Dono Indarto. The naval attaché was Lieutenant Colonel Hotma Harahap.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 74. Dipasupil was Azahari's press-relations contact in Manila.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

THE INDONESIAN CONNECTION

In December 1958, according to the monthly record of the Brunei State Intelligence Committee, the two leading officials of the PRB, A.M. Azahari and Yassin Affendy, visited Singapore, where they contacted Ahmad Boestaman, Dr Burhanuddin and some Indonesian officials.¹ The report did not name the Indonesian officials. Azahari's explanation was that representatives of the Indonesian embassy in Singapore occasionally attended the same official functions there as he did, and while acknowledging that he met privately with Boestaman and Burhanuddin, he denied the special significance attributed to the Indonesian officials in the report. 'The report expressed doubt as to whether the Indonesians were acting as representatives of the Indonesian republic or as members of Darul Islam 'with whom they [PRB] have previously been in contact.'² Despite this claim, which was made in the December 1958 report, no previous meetings were recorded in any of the available intelligence reports.

The doubt expressed in this report requires closer analysis. The report inferred the presence of at least one Indonesian who was an official representative; had he been Darul Islam only, the report would not have posed such a question. If we assume that Azahari's previous meetings with Indonesians were with Darul Islam representatives only – as stated in the report – his connections may be summarised as either primarily religious, or at least with a politico-religious group that Jakarta regarded as illegal. Nevertheless, British intelligence continued to depict Azahari as though linked with the central government of Indonesia, when the aforementioned Indonesian official was the first instance of such a link. BMP's early description of Azahari, it should be recalled, went so far as to suggest he was in Brunei 'on leave from Jakarta.'³ BMP found political advantage in promoting the supposed links between Azahari and Indonesia, but this report is evidence that such claims by BMP were fallacious. Moreover, because one of the Indonesian ex-officials in Singapore, Pohan, was connected with MI5, the doubt expressed in the report (that is, whether one official represented the Indonesian government or Darul Islam) would seem

to be contrived.⁵ If Azahari had previously met Indonesian embassy staff in an official capacity at social functions, and Darul Islam representatives unofficially, what was the special significance of this meeting? From Azahari's point of view, the implied link, or possible future link, with the unnamed Indonesian official, was an extraordinary interpretation of normal events. In the report, however, the meeting between Azahari and the anonymous Indonesian official was imbued with a special significance, the key to which was perhaps the identity of the official, which was not revealed. Nevertheless, the political opportunity that this new link provided was soon exploited by the British, who availed themselves of an opportunity, a few months later, not of severing but of strengthening ties between Indonesia and Azahari.

Azahari's contact with Indonesia led to plans in 1960-61 for the PRB to obtain military training for recruits from Brunei. Azahari's approval for such training was given (in the secrecy of the PRB executive) with the same idealism and nationalism that was evident in a similar suggestion made by the *Pengiran*s in the constitutional committee appointed by the sultan in 1954. In section XIX, Part A, of the draft constitution, they wrote:

We support fully the formation of an army composed of Malays only and we consider the appropriate name for such army is *Askar Brunei* [the Brunei Regiment]."

British colonial authorities strongly disapproved of forming a Brunei Regiment in 1954. When the PRB in 1962 began training in jungle clearings on the edge of town (because the initial Indonesian contact brought no results), however, Special Branch saw more advantage in tactically biding time.

Special Branch did not disband the small PRB groups that conducted parade-ground drills, army style, with wooden sticks. Three sources verify that Special Branch was well aware of PRB operations: one, the Brunei State Intelligence Committee (linked with Special Branch) had an informer at the executive level in the PRB, and recorded this information on file; and two, the head of Special Branch for Sarawak and Brunei, Roy Henry, admitted that the PRB was 'well-penetrated' with informers.⁶ The third source was outside the circle of intelligence operations but still under the influence of the Colonial Office: Bob Young, a district officer in northern Sarawak, reported to his superiors there was evidence that jungle-training had taken place near Sipitang, a coastal town between Brunei and North Borneo. Young considered

the implications of this extremely important and, to maintain secrecy, he requested his wife, Margaret, to type out his report.⁹ One month before the Brunei rebellion, this report was handed to Chief Secretary Jakeway, whose office in Kuching was alongside that of Roy Henry.¹⁰ Bob Young was concerned that an outbreak of rebellion in Brunei would spread immediately to Sarawak, and this was clearly stated in the report. Unaware that Special Branch was closely monitoring the activities of the PRB, Bob Young deduced that because military-style training was taking place a rebellion might well be in the offing. Bob Young apparently did not appreciate the need for Special Branch to maintain a façade of ignorance; and even less did he suspect that the head of Special Branch, Roy Henry, was planning to exploit this situation in order to foment rebellion in early December 1962. Tom Ainsworth, the Secretary of Defence in Kuching, advised Young that he had 'better tone it down. And Bob decided not to tone in down because this was what he felt was true.'¹¹ Bob and Margaret Young were sent back to England immediately. Before they left Kuching, Bob Young specifically said: 'If Azahari tries a coup in Brunei, it will immediately spread to Limbang and Lawas.'¹²

The PRB 'military training' was linked to an abortive plan to have Indonesians train Brunei recruits. This plan was the result of a visit to Jakarta made by Azahari in 1959, his first visit since his departure after the independence struggle. His return was in exceptional circumstances – an emergency medical operation in Jakarta. Paradoxically, Azahari's return was not without prompting from British intelligence, and the 1958 intelligence report held a key as to how this came about.

The December 1958 report also noted Azahari had made arrangements to enter Singapore Hospital for an operation. His appendix, which had given him severe pain on two previous occasions,¹³ required attention, but the third PRB congress in Brunei was to be held in January 1959. His intention was to attend the congress then return to his recently wed wife, Jamilah binte Samusi (a committee member of the Singapore-Malay Students' Union) in Singapore, where he would have the operation. At this time, Azahari was a frequent visitor to Singapore because he was editor of a newspaper there, *Suara Bakti* ('the voice of service'), a name with utilitarian and religious connotations.

Azahari collapsed in Brunei the day before the congress began, on 23 January, and was admitted into Brunei hospital as an emergency with acute appendicitis pain. An operation was required, as explained in the biographical memoirs of Dr Joseph Wolf who treated him:

Wolf, curious about the charisma of the man, asked Azahari what his policy for Brunei was, and the latter frankly told him it was to unite the three Borneo territories under the Brunei Sultan with himself as Prime Minister.¹⁴

As evidenced in his memoirs, Dr Wolf explained in a similarly candid vein the reason he did not operate on Azahari was because *he was prevented from doing so*:

Strict orders came from the higher-ups forbidding Wolf to operate on the political leader who had come to be considered as a 'dangerous element' ... Subsequently, Azahari went to Indonesia to have his appendix removed.¹⁵

Azahari was aware that his life was in danger without an operation, so he removed himself from Brunei hospital and flew to Singapore on 24 January.¹⁶ He was also aware that his life might still be in danger if he decided on an operation in Singapore. In his estimation, British authorities in Brunei (by denying him an operation there) had already indicated a preparedness to bring his life to an end. In Singapore, however, his medical plight immediately and inexplicably became more widely known, but without the added complication that his life was threatened on two counts, medical and political. The British tactic of denying Azahari medical attention in Brunei led to Azahari's presence in Singapore, where an offer was made by the Indonesian embassy to fly Azahari to Jakarta for an operation. By this means, Azahari's Indonesian contact, which was noted one month earlier by British intelligence, was renewed (although not necessarily the same person). Azahari had no explanation as to who publicised his plight, and remained unaware of the identity of the Indonesian embassy official who arranged the mercy-flight to Jakarta.¹⁷

Such Indonesian assistance advanced the Indonesian national pride by showing publicly that Jakarta had both the expertise and the humane instinct to assist in this situation, in preference to Singapore. It was a gesture of pan-Malay sentiment as much as it was anticolonial. The offer by Indonesia obviated Azahari's need to travel to India. This was his alternative to obtaining medical assistance in Singapore once he realised the possible danger to his life 'from the higher-ups'.¹⁸ There were several possible explanations of how this link-up between Azahari and Indonesia was achieved: one was that Indonesian involvement came about as the natural progression of events that otherwise would have taken Azahari to India; another, that Ahmad Boestamam may

have acted as a middleman, but there was no evidence of this in January 1959, and yet another, that British intelligence was behind the denial of an operation in Brunei and the publicity given Azahari's presence in Singapore. The third, as paradoxical as it seems, was not inconsistent with the available evidence. Azahari, seriously ill in Singapore, seemed destined to revisit Jakarta but not on his own initiative. While not conclusive, the evidence suggests an affirmative answer to the question whether or not Azahari's return to Jakarta, after an absence of almost a decade, was achieved through the intercession of British intelligence.¹¹

For the Indonesian embassy to have intervened in this way, to have offered an alternative hospital for the operation, it should be emphasised that the prior approval of the Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio, would have been sought. Moreover, in transporting Azahari from Singapore to Jakarta, there was no question of obstruction by British intelligence. Without denying the cogent argument that the Indonesian Foreign Minister act quickly to capitalise on a political opportunity and so brought Azahari to Jakarta, other possible explanations should not be discounted: one, British intelligence deliberately presented Indonesia with this opportunity;¹² and two, pursuing this further, there was some understanding or link between Subandrio and British intelligence.

Having endured these extraordinary pre-operational procedures, Azahari was flown to Indonesia to have his appendix removed. Then, for a period of forty-five days, he recuperated in Bogor, where he had been a student during the Japanese occupation. In Bogor, Azahari met his former commandant from the days of the Indonesian independence struggle, Sambas Atmadinata, who had risen to brigadier general and Minister for Veterans. He supplied Azahari with a car and a driver – just as Azahari had supplied him with a car and a driver in 1945. It was a joyful reunion. Azahari left for Singapore and returned to Brunei. This link with Sambas led to another trip to Indonesia in July–August 1959, mustering support for Kalimantan Utara but making no arrangement for any military training.

British intelligence were aware of Azahari's plan to visit Indonesia. Although Boestaman and Burhanuddin were initially restricted from entering Brunei, Azahari was not restricted from visiting Indonesia. The application for a permit to visit Indonesia was noted in the monthly intelligence report:

Three applications have been received recently from Partai Rakyat members for endorsement of their passports in order to allow them to proceed

to Indonesia. It is understood that they are intending to go there in order to obtain political advice and education. Azahari is also reported to be intending to visit Indonesia probably in July.

The official on the PRB executive who was most vociferous in promoting the need for such training – and later in 1962 'drove the PRB executive to make the decision to revolt, then condemned the revolt'²² – was H.M. Salleh. A report of the Brunei State Intelligence Committee in May 1958 commented on this very aspect of Salleh, noting that the PRB might be incited by Salleh to turn to violence.²³ Salleh was imprisoned for a brief time in mid-1958 on a perjury charge (during a court case that he had brought against the Crown).²⁴ Soon after, he resigned from the PRB vice-presidency in favour of Yassin Affendy, a PRB official who had fought with Allied forces in Borneo during World War II. Salleh retained his executive position, however. The British resident in Brunei, D.C. White, commented on Salleh:

Salleh and his clique are now merely strong-arm racketeers. The danger potential lies more in the criminal rather than the political sphere, as there are large numbers (for Brunei) of young men of low educational standards for whom jobs cannot be found and who might well join Salleh in his activities.²⁵

When Azahari and Yassin Affendy visited Jakarta in 1961, also present was another PRB member, Mohammed Manggol, who played a seminal role in the move to form a Brunei Regiment. Manggol became immersed in the plan to seek Indonesian assistance in training. Sambas arranged a meeting with the Indonesian army chief of staff and Minister of Defence, General Nasution. They discussed the Kalimantan Utara proposal in the light of the announcement by Tunku Abdul Rahman that a Federation of Malaysia was a likely option for British decolonisation. Because of the widespread popular support for PRB policy, Azahari envisaged that his position after Brunei's first elections (due in 1961 but postponed until 1962) would permit him to implement the Kalimantan Utara proposal by constitutional means. Azahari's endeavour to achieve independence for the states in British Borneo received only moral support from Nasution; the Indonesian support needed to form a Brunei Regiment and the proposed training of a PRB militia was initiated through a separate source – Subandrio.²⁶ Nasution's early non-involvement is consistent with Harold Crouch's

account in which Nasution denied intervening in the Kalimantan Utara issue until after the Brunei revolt. According to Crouch:

Nasution ... had known the rebel leader, A.M. Azahari, for many years and sympathized with his aspirations for an independent state of North Kalimantan. Together with his former intelligence chief, Colonel A.E.J. Magenda, Nasution attempted to gain influence with Azahari and, through the army interregional commander for Kalimantan, Colonel Hassan Basri, he established active contact with dissidents in Sarawak from February 1963. Nasution evidently hoped to prevent Subandrio's Central Intelligence Board (BPI) from monopolizing contact with the rebels, but increasingly the BPI gained control in this field. The BPI took charge of military training given in Indonesia to rebel youths, mainly of Chinese descent, from Sarawak and Sabah, and the BPI apparently organized the raids into these territories which commenced in April 1963.²⁷

Crouch, in clarifying the origin of Indonesian military involvement in the Kalimantan Utara issue, draws attention to Legge, Palomka and Sundhaussen, all of whom laid the primary blame on Nasution.²⁸ Crouch has not, however, defined the time of earliest support by Subandrio, a crucial factor in determining Indonesian – or rather, BPI – involvement prior to the Brunei revolt.

The nexus of responsibility was at the head of Indonesian army intelligence, Colonel (later Brigadier General) Magenda, who at the same time was linked with Subandrio's BPI. Magenda and Subandrio originated from the same area near Malang, East Java.²⁹ Even though it was through Subandrio that armed assistance was arranged, Azahari took it for granted (perhaps mistakenly) that Nasution was told of this plan to begin training a Brunei regiment because Magenda, who was directly connected with Nasution, arranged this with Azahari. Magenda's deputy, Lieutenant Colonel (later Brigadier General) Mohamad, was appointed to take charge of the training. The PRB representative assigned to lead the group to be trained was Mohammed Manggol.³⁰ Through his irresponsible actions in Tarakan even before training began, it became evident that the Indonesian army (other than through the BPI link, General Magenda) did not assist in the pre-Brunei revolt training of PRB personnel. Subandrio was the organiser, but when Sukarno was informed in 1962 he channelled his rancour towards Nasution. This incident impressed upon Sukarno the urgent need to constrain the army's increasing political mobility, and was a factor in Sukarno's decision to replace Nasution with General Yani as head of

the Indonesian army.¹¹ When Yani assumed the new post in June 1962, Brigadier General S. Parman became head of intelligence, and soon after sent an army colonel to Johore to tell Azahari to expect no help from Indonesia in training underground military cadres.¹²

These repercussions, however, need to be viewed in the light of the incident Manggol caused. Manggol was sent from Jakarta to Tarakan, the oil-refinery island in the northern part of East Kalimantan, to await the arrival of PRB recruits who travelled overland from Brunei. The first batch comprised twenty-six young men. They left from Temburong District, the section of Brunei that was separated from the main portion by the Limbang incursion as a legacy of the Brooke era, and passed through Sarawak before crossing the Indonesian border near the source of the Mentarang River, about 4°S. At this point, there was a gap in the mountain range, the highest peaks of which outlined the location of the unsurveyed Sarawak-Indonesian border. The North Borneo border was directly north. The Indonesian guide who brought the PRB recruits through the forest was a crocodile-hunter hired for this task.¹³ They were to continue down the Mentarang, which joined the Sesayap River, and be met by Manggol on a small island near Tarakan. However, the Indonesian army commander of East Kalimantan, General Soehario, decided to investigate personally a report by local inhabitants that shots had been heard on a small island near Tarakan.¹⁴

Even before the arrival of the recruits, Manggol was apprehended while passing time by shooting birds at a waterfall. He had been supplied with a pistol before he left Jakarta. Manggol (described disparagingly by Soehario as 'a playboy') was taken to Balikpapan for questioning, after which Soehario sent him back to Jakarta. When the PRB recruits arrived, Soehario ensured that, after a short period in detention, they retraced their steps back to Brunei. Thus the plan of Magenda and Subandrio was disrupted.¹⁵ After an arduous round-journey of several months, the PRB recruits arrived back at Brunei having had no training whatsoever.¹⁶ Months passed before a second batch was organised and, together with the first recruits, sent on their way again into Indonesian territory. By May 1962, there were forty-six in all, but their destination had become an open secret and was even reported in the *Borneo Bulletin* ('Jungle Grapevine Buzzes: Armed Indonesians on the March' and 'Border Villages Report Trek of Youths'):

A mysterious Indonesian-led Borneo Liberation Army of about 1000 men may be hiding in the jungle near here, or may be encamped in

Indonesian territory close to the Sarawak border, ready to march into British Borneo, according to many sources in this region. About 100 young men from the British Borneo territories, the sources said, have left their homes in the territories to join the armed force ... The group was led by Indonesians. The young men, according to the Natives, said that they were going to Indonesia to be trained to carry out an armed struggle to 'liberate the Borneo territories'.

The army was referred to as the North Kalimantan National Army (*Tentara Nasional Kalimantan Utara*, or TNKU). In Jesselton, North Borneo, these reports were denied by the Indonesian Consul, R. Moentoro, who explained that Indonesia had no territorial ambitions in Borneo and that such reports only harmed existing good relations.²⁶ The Indonesian consulate was in Jesselton because the Colonial Office had refused permission for it to be established in Kuching. With Yani as chief of staff of the army, however, and Parman as head of intelligence, the planned assistance from Subandrio's BPI in the training program came to nothing, and the PRB subsequently improvised with its own training program. In an attempt to compensate for the lack of professionalism, and doubtless maintain an air of enthusiasm after the setback with the intended training program, PRB supporters sought at least to look the part: for uniforms, they purchased green cloth in abundance from Brunei stores. The obvious goal to form a Brunei Regiment derived from nationalist fervour, not revolutionary intent. PRB personnel remained untrained, unarmed but for household weapons common throughout British Borneo, undisciplined, and susceptible to demagoguery.

One month after the *Borneo Bulletin* reported the TNKU was afoot, British authorities announced that a full-scale military exercise would be conducted in Sarawak involving the British army and the Sarawak constabulary in a series of long-distance and medium-distance patrols.²⁷ These patrols encountered no sign of the TNKU, nor did they effect other 'jungle operations', such as gun-running, which was occurring at the same time. This illegal trade had another source altogether, neither Indonesian nor British.

According to the British governor of Sarawak, Sir Alexander Waddell,²⁸ an official from the American embassy in Singapore, who in mid-1962 was endeavouring to establish an American consulate in Kuching, was at the same time 'meeting secretly with (Sarawak) Chinese' in the countryside. The name of this representative was William Andreas

Brown.⁴¹ Sir Alexander Waddell said that Brown was from the CIA, and that he was 'contacting underground groups ... [who were] easily stirred up'.⁴² The governor was informed that Brown was part of American intelligence only after the meetings with the Chinese had become known, for the governor expressed his displeasure that such meetings were being conducted. Brown would 'go up-country and have meetings with people you'd think he had no business in meeting', explained Waddell.⁴³ Roy Henry, head of Sarawak Special Branch, confirmed for the governor that Brown was CIA, and explained that Brown was part of a joint intelligence organisation in the Far East known as Security Intelligence Far East, SIFE, based in Singapore. He allayed concern that Brown was engaged in anti-British activities.⁴⁴ British intelligence had previously made an unsuccessful attempt to do what Brown did, according to Roy Henry. The person assigned this task, 'John Slimming, MI6', had tried to present himself as 'pro-CCO' (Clandestine Communist Organisation) but according to Roy Henry, 'the CCO saw through him'.⁴⁵ In addition to Brown, there was another American in Sarawak at this time, dealing in arms with the Chinese. His name was Frank C. Starr.⁴⁶ Also connected with the CIA, Starr had been supplying weapons in the Indonesian area for a decade: at first in the Moluccan separatist movement⁴⁷ in 1951, which steered the Indonesian government against the continued Dutch presence in New Guinea; then in 1958-59, to rebels during the Outer Islands rebellion, in which the CIA obtained sufficient exposure for its covert role to become public knowledge.⁴⁸ William Stevenson, a London-born, Canadian author-journalist for the *New York Times*, with links to British intelligence,⁴⁹ referred to Starr's activities:

Long after the rebels [of the 1958 Outer Islands rebellion] had been taken over, as it were, by Sukarno, a well-known American gun-runner was still supplying weapons and ammunition to what he supposed were anticommunists. They were in fact the communist-sponsored North Borneo Nationalist Army.⁵⁰

Stevenson's account of Starr's activities was a timely publication in 1963, in so far as the role of the American gun-runner was an important preliminary to Malaysian Confrontation. Significantly, Stevenson chose a context of postwar Anglo-American jealousy over decolonisation extending into the 1960s to portray Starr, and described his gun-running as a continuation of 'these bumbling rivalries'.⁵¹ As breezy as Stevenson's account was, it nonetheless acquired a serious degree of strategic

importance because with seeming impartiality it claimed British and American intelligence interests were not in cooperation at this juncture, yet the abovementioned SIFE operation has shown they were.⁵²

Other inaccuracies by Stevenson merely contributed to the political volatility of the moment. Starr did not supply weapons to the TNKU; nor was the TNKU communist-sponsored. There was a firm link between the TNKU and Sarawak in that there were several branches of the PRB in northern Sarawak, 5th Division.⁵³ The most prominent Sarawak Malay supporting the PRB was Achmad Zaidi, whom Azahari had first met during his veterinary studies in wartime Bogor. Zaidi subsequently became the TNKU Minister for Defence. Even though Starr did not supply Zaidi or the TNKU with arms, the ubiquitous gum-runner did supply weapons to the Chinese in southern Sarawak. These Chinese were communist-sponsored (the CCO) and although no strong ties existed between the CCO and the TNKU, the CCO had strong racial and historical ties with the Chinese in the neighbouring Indonesian province of West Kalimantan. The covert action of William Andreas Brown and Frank C. Starr bolstered the bravado of the CCO for independence rather than servility in a Kuala Lumpur-dominated Federation of Malaysia. Stevenson, employing his preface and conclusion to maximum effect, concocted a scenario of a communist-dominated TNKU directed by Indonesia, which he claimed not only supported but planned the Brunei Revolt:

The [TNKU] guerrillas, trained and equipped in Indonesia, and directed by the Indonesian communist party, staged an uprising at the end of 1962 in a part of British Borneo. Although the revolt was suppressed it revealed a new North Borneo National Army, which is sworn to free this territory for Sukarno.⁵⁴

Stevenson's claims, that not only Starr but also the Indonesians equipped the TNKU in the revolt, are both incorrect. At the time of the Brunei rebellion, the TNKU had still not received training or arms from Subandrio's BPI. Starr's dealings were not conducted with TNKU, nor did the TNKU indirectly receive weapons from Starr. Using a yacht to transport his merchandise, Frank C. Starr supplied rifles to the Chinese in Sarawak (and possibly West Kalimantan). His illicit trade became a political embarrassment in Kuching, however, when his yacht ran aground off Lundu, a town near the Indonesian border in the extreme south-west of Sarawak. British authorities confiscated the yacht but Starr received only a light penalty. The charge, 'the illegal

importation of firearms';⁷ would have had far more serious political implications had his clients been publicly identified. After local Sarawak authorities arrested Starr for his illegal arms operation, his exit from Sarawak was obviously secured by a higher authority. Starr was requested merely to leave Sarawak. Such a mild sentence, rapidly carried out, prevented disclosure of any larger SIFE stratagem involving the Chinese of Sarawak and West Kalimantan.

As a postscript to the gun-running operations in south-west Sarawak, an operation that combined the Sarawak constabulary and the Brunei police was mounted in north-east Sarawak. It was alleged (*Borneo Bulletin*, 4 August 1962) that the operation 'smashed a gun-running syndicate':

The operation followed reports that firearms, stolen in the Temburong area of Brunei, were being sold to Indonesians across the national boundary. As much as \$700 was being paid for a gun.⁸

Any claim that there was a gun-running operation from Temburong, a PRB area, was fanciful. Were the Indonesians buying weapons on the Sarawak border to arm the TNKU in Brunei, from whence the weapons came? This report of gun-running in Temburong tended to shift the focus of attention as far away as possible from where the gun-running actually occurred in south-west Sarawak.

Sarawak-West Kalimantan

British authorities in Sarawak had been monitoring communist sympathy among the Chinese population since the early 1950s. For five months up to 16 January 1953, a state of emergency was declared around Kuching while authorities assessed the strength of the Sarawak Indonesia Peoples' Liberation Army. General Sir Robert Lockhardt, deputy-director of operations in Malaya, said there was:

no indication of any general plan of Communist terrorism in Sarawak and that the recent incidents were probably the work of a small gang.⁹

When the Sarawak authorities described the gang as 'immigrant Chinese based in Indonesian Borneo', the Indonesian government sent a mission to enquire and talks were held in Kuching. Communism in Sarawak gathered little support in the early 1950s 'except among some Chinese schoolteachers, students and schoolboys',¹⁰ but this consolidated by the end of the decade.

Where the Chinese population⁵⁷ was clustered in the 1st Division of Sarawak, around Kuching and the surrounding countryside, and in the 2nd Division, around Simanggang, and in the 3rd Division around Binatang, left-wing activity was present, but it was most concentrated between the 15 Mile and 25 Mile sections on the Kuching-Serian road.⁵⁸ Many Chinese farmers cultivated pepper, rubber and vegetables on both sides of the road. Contiguous to this area were Land Dyak longhouses and villages, and a number of Malay kampongs. To the south and west of this focal region, the country was mountainous to the Indonesian border. To the south-east, cultivation followed the road as far as Bala Ringin, and similarly gave way to mountainous country as far as the border, which, in effect, was a watershed between two river systems.

The early left-wing influence burgeoned in Sarawak because the impending decolonisation was equated with political independence. Most boards of management in the Chinese school system had been taken over by left-wing militants in the early 1950s,⁵⁹ reflecting the ideological influence and traditional ties with China maintained by 'overseas Chinese'. The Sarawak Overseas Chinese Democratic Youth League, comprising Chinese secondary students, was started in October 1951, only to disintegrate when the state of emergency was declared.⁶⁰ P.J. Boyce has claimed that the incipient communist movement in Sarawak first took the form of the Sarawak Advanced Youth Association (SAYA) in 1956, and subsequently was known to the colonial authorities as the Clandestine Communist Organisation (CCO).⁶¹ Douglas Hyde, on the other hand, has described the CCO without the colonialist epithet simply as the Sarawak Communist Organisation, in which SAYA was its 'youth base'.⁶²

The Sarawak United Peoples' Party (SUPP) was the first political party to emerge with official approval. It was formed in 1959 by Ong Kee Hui and Stephen Yong, and was intended to be broadly representative of the different races in Sarawak, yet the educational and commercial superiority of the Chinese inevitably influenced the constituency of SUPP. Moreover, as Michael Leigh has added:

The government had been aware of communist activities within the Chinese community, but it had not anticipated the enthusiasm with which the 'angry young Chinese' would cluster behind SUPP ... The militant left-wing Chinese did wholeheartedly support SUPP.⁶³

SUPP was penetrated by the CCO,⁶⁴ whose influence in the party was

the subject of several special reports. One such report, by the Department of Information, Sarawak, dealt with SAYA:

The SAYA, a prototype of a Communist Youth League in Sarawak, has been the subject of a number of Special Branch papers, which have revealed its organisational structure, policy and tactics. The SAYA's influence is known to be widespread. It affects all areas of Chinese population in the State, particularly in unaided Chinese schools, the Sarawak United Peoples' Party and some Trade Unions.

A Sarawak government account of communist influence in the state (published after the Brunei revolt) first brought the CCO into public focus:

While predominantly a local Sarawak growth the Organisation has depended for inspiration on the teachings of Marxism/Leninism and especially on those of Mao Tse Tung. This kind of stimulation and guidance has undoubtedly come from outside. It would also be surprising if the CCO did not have links with the Communist Party of China and possibly with other communist parties outside Sarawak.

The communist influence among the Sarawak Chinese had a sympathetic counterpart in the neighbouring province of West Kalimantan. This was confirmed as early as 1953 when British Ambassador Kemp, who was based in Jakarta, visited Kalimantan. Kemp reported:

The strength of Chinese Communism in West Kalimantan was admitted by the governor of South Kalimantan [Moerdjan] to be a serious problem. It is therefore an enigma why the regent of Surabaya, Bambang Suparto, whose political complexion is decidedly red, should have been posted there as Resident ... The governor was worried about students who are going to Red China for indoctrination and who will probably eventually return to Kalimantan.

In the early 1960s, the most prominent PKI representative in West Kalimantan was Sofian, a member of the Central Committee, but he lacked the administrative power wielded by the Dyak governor of the province, J.C. Oevang Oeray. Sofian, who was of Arab descent and came from Medan, helped to form the Sarawak Guerrilla Army, or *Pasukan Guerrilla Rakyat Sarawak*, PGRS, after the Brunei revolt. This was one of the Indonesian armed groups involved in *Konfrontasi*. At first, the PGRS was aligned with Azahari's political goal of Kalimantan Utara more than it was with CCO idealism, but as Malaysian

Confrontation progressed, Sofian took charge of PKI *pepada* groups, and the control of PGRS passed to Boon Kwei Chen, also known as Lai Paka, a name adopted during *Konfrontasi*.²⁰ PGRS and another group, the *Pasukan Rakyat Kalimantan Utara*, PARAKU, were both dominated by Chinese. Thus, in addition to the Indonesian army forces that began operations along the Sarawak border also in 1963, there were three other armed groups united in their opposition to British colonialism, the PKI *pepada*, PGRS and PARUKU, making for an overall complexity of political ideology riven with racial factionalism. None was operating before the Brunei rebellion, however.

Of the twenty-two provinces in Indonesia in July 1960, the governors or deputy-governors of six were PKI sympathisers. Of these, two were in Kalimantan – A. Pranoto in East Kalimantan, and Tjilik Riwut in Central Kalimantan.²¹ In South Kalimantan in August 1960, at the prerogative of Madji Maksid, a ban was imposed for several months on all PKI activity and organisations – coinciding with the post-PRRI ban imposed by Sukarno on the PSI and the Masjumi, which came into effect also in August. According to a Foreign Office evaluation of West Kalimantan, Oevang Oeray, governor of the province, was not a PKI sympathiser, although he was a member of Partindo.²² This was an important exception to the general conclusion of Daniel S. Lev that 'by 1960-1961, the PKI came to wield predominant influence over Partindo'. 'Bonding between Chinese in Sarawak and West Kalimantan was primarily a racial bonding, not political. The two main Chinese dialects in Sarawak and West Kalimantan, Hakka and Teochow, originated from neighbouring regions slightly north of Hong Kong.'²³

The significant trans-border relations between Chinese communists in West Kalimantan and Sarawak was not supported by the army command in West Kalimantan. The military commander of West Kalimantan in the 1960-62 period was Sudarmo. He was replaced in late 1962 by Riyacudu, who originated from Palembang, which had a significant Chinese population and perhaps for this reason was known for being amenable towards Chinese, but he was not pro-CCO or pro-PKI.²⁴ In 1964, General Suparjo, who had left-wing sympathies, took overall control of West Kalimantan as 'task force commander', but by this time *Konfrontasi* was in its final stages and Suparjo became a victim in the political upheaval in October 1965. His replacement, A.J. Winoto, participated in the 1967-68 annihilation of the guerrillas who remained along the Sarawak border. Most of these were Chinese. British forces in Sarawak, from whom the Chinese had fled after the

Brunei revolt, ensured there would be no cross-border return for these hapless exiles, who in 1965 were caught in Operation Hammer.⁷⁶ Significantly, the governor who assisted Winoto in his blood-letting was the same Oevang Oeray who had been governor at the time of the Brunei rebellion. Both Winoto and Oevang Oeray were members of the Indonesian political party known as Partindo, often described as a left-wing group, 'which was responsible for arousing anticolonial sentiment in Jakarta once refugees from Sarawak fled into West Kalimantan after the Brunei revolt. As announced one week after the revolt, Partindo party chief in West Kalimantan, Stefamus Ngo La Hay, directed party members to aid and house any rebels who sought refuge in Indonesian territory, and his stance was supported by the Partindo secretary-general, Mohammed Supardi. According to the *Straits Times* (16 December 1962):

Partindo regards the Brunei incident as a revolution of the Northern Borneo people against capitalism and imperialism.⁷⁷

One of the effects of the Brunei revolt was a spate of refugees from Sarawak into West Kalimantan. When the rebellion started, Special Branch simultaneously began arresting Chinese unconnected with the rebellion, and unconnected but for the Kalimantan Utara proposal with the PRB.⁷⁸ Earlier in August 1962, Special Branch had arrested a dozen members of SUPP, among them a prominent Chinese editor, Lui How Ming, of the *Sa-Miu Pao* newspaper in Miri, for opposing the Malaysia plan. Lui was accused of being a communist.⁷⁹ Immediately after the revolt, however, Special Branch arrested fifty SUPP Chinese leaders, in addition to many Kedayan and Malay members of SUPP 'who were charged with complicity in the revolt'.⁸⁰ About 1000 Chinese fled across the border into Indonesia.⁸¹

A member of the Sarawak Council Negri, Dato Gribble, who witnessed this campaign, commented: 'Roy Henry's boys took the opportunity to start rounding up the left-wing in Sarawak'.⁸² A British intelligence report later summed up the effect of these arrests and other timely provocations:

Owing to the disruptive effect of arrest and increased security force activities, many youths left the area in an attempt to cross over into Indonesia.⁸³

'Security force activities' included the timely arrival of British commandos, creating further incentive for many Chinese around Kuching

to panic and flee to Indonesia soon after the Brunei revolt.⁶⁵ The first British forces from Singapore to arrive in Labuan, off Brunei, were a Gurkha battalion and the Queens Own Highlanders, under Brigadier Glennie. These initial forces, the 'spearhead battalion' on stand-by in Singapore to cover any emergency, were to be followed immediately by 700 men from the 3rd Commando Brigade, Royal Marines. In Singapore, they boarded the HMS *Albion*, a 'troop-lift helicopter ship' that was a converted aircraft carrier. The commandos were not sent to Brunei, however, but to Kuching. Although their commanding officer, Brigadier E.C. Barton, had also been sent to assist the governor of Sarawak 'should anything "blow-up"', it was subsequently claimed that the arrival of the *Albion* in Kuching was unintended.⁶⁶ Brunei was the intended destination, and this was soon clarified, but because troops had already disembarked the impression on the local Chinese was that war was about to erupt around Kuching. Confronted by the gigantic *Albion*, helicopters, and 700 commandos, the rifles supplied by 'Starr of Texas' were sufficient only for the local communist underground to realise that they faced an overwhelming force, and many sought refuge across the border.

Partindo

The Indonesian response to events in British Borneo was largely determined by Partindo, a nationalist party that espoused left-wing policies, yet had a composite membership covering the entire spectrum of Indonesian politics. Sukarno was aware of this diversity, yet condoned it – perhaps because he saw Partindo emerging as a vanguard party to cater for his own idealism, his 'socialism *à la* Indonesia', or as a natural political progression from the National Front, which was formed in 1959 as an 'instrument for mass mobilisation' in the quest for Netherlands New Guinea.⁶⁷ The sixty-one members of the Front's central board included several cabinet ministers and prominent leaders of mass organisations, as well as representatives of the armed forces and the three main political groupings in Indonesia, the Moslems, the Nationalists, and the Communists:

The aims of the Front were declared to be 'the gathering together of all revolutionary forces to guide them in completing the national revolution' and 'organizing the closest cooperation between the Government, the people and other state bodies.'⁶⁸

The National Front, which was located next to Partindo headquarters in Merdeka Square, was headed by Werdoyo, who also was a chairman of a wing of Partindo.

Historically, Partindo was the party to which Sukarno turned after Dutch colonialists in the 1930s first imprisoned him. The Dutch disbanded Partindo in 1936. More than two decades later, after Sukarno had greatly reduced the number of political parties as impediments to administration, and introduced his concept of 'guided democracy', Partindo was resurrected in August 1958, forming a separate ideology to the PNI (Nationalists).²⁸ While the PNI slogan was '*Marhaen Menang*', 'Marhaen is winning', the Partindo slogan was '*Marhaen Berjuang*', 'Marhaen is struggling'.²⁹ (Marhaen was the invention of Sukarno, the archetypal Indonesian peasant, and Marhaenism was the ideology he espoused accordingly to meet the needs of Indonesia.) Partindo's political face was publicised by such events as the establishing of the Cuban-Indonesian Friendship Society, in September 1960, at which Werdoyo and Aidit were photographed together with the Cuban ambassador.³⁰ It was not until 1961, however, that Partindo acquired any political stature, after a conference in Semarang, a city renowned for its relatively high proportion of Chinese inhabitants. Some left-wing and right-wing members of the Murba party³¹ joined Partindo, and the PKI also ensured it was well-represented in the new party. As well, left-wing PNI members broke away to join Partindo, with the approval of Sukarno – for the secretary-general of Partindo was his adopted son, Asmara Hadi.³² Because Partindo gathered widespread membership from Chinese who were too wary of the political repercussions to support the PKI openly, it was fitting for Asmara Hadi and the Partindo secretary-general, Asnawi Said, to travel to Shanghai on 24 September 1960, to meet the vice-chairman of the Peoples' Republic of China, Soong Ching Ling. The occasion marked the implementation of the Dual Nationality Treaty and the inauguration of the new Indonesian ambassador to China, Sukarni, chairman of the Murba party. The general chairman of Partindo was a well-respected Chinese lawyer, Oei Tju Tat, who was later appointed by Sukarno as the leading civilian in the administrative hierarchy during *Konfrontasi*.³³ Asmara Hadi had none of the gifts of rhetoric of his famous father, however, and preferred a friend of his on the Partindo executive to speak for him at public gatherings – Iskandar Kamel, formerly Ibrahim Ya'acob. In Jakarta, he was a prominent Partindo spokesman on political matters in the British Borneo territories, Singapore and Malaya. Iskandar Kamel was still

linked with Boestaman and Burhanuddin, as he had been in the 1930s and 1940s. Yamin too, before he died in 1962, was another who was associated with Partindo, but he did not join. The anti-Malaysia policy of the new party carried with it connotations of Indonesian expansionism because such spokesmen as Yamin and Ya'acob had promoted the concept of a 'Greater Indonesia'.

The Partindo chairman for foreign affairs, Tomi Anwar, who was also the editor of the Partindo daily newspaper, *Bintang Timur* (Star of the East), had established links with former MNP member, Ahmad Boestaman, from the time of the Indonesian revolution. In 1946-47, Tom Anwar had visited Kuala Lumpur 'to see how Boestaman supported the independence struggle'. 'The previous editor of the Partindo paper was Edi Tahsin; through him, Subandrio had direct contact with Partindo.' 'The PRB had direct contact with Partindo through Iskandar Kamel.' In late 1961, when invitations to the Partindo conference to be held in Semarang were issued by Asmara Hadi to various political parties in Singapore, Malaya and Brunei, Boestaman and several others attended, but Azahari did not. 'At that conference, Partindo policy opposing the British plan to form Malaysia first took shape. Dr Subandrio and Iskandar Kamel, through Partindo, exerted crucial influence in the initial Indonesian stance towards the Malaysia proposal.

As a consequence of Iskandar Kamel maintaining his watch on the political pulse of British decolonisation, Partindo was the first Indonesian political party to oppose the planned formation of Malaysia. Partindo's anticolonialism seemed of little consequence, however, alongside the subsequent impact of the PKI's reservations on the planned federation, as expressed shortly after in a resolution passed by the Central Committee in December 1961: 'yet Partindo was the harbinger of this political issue. Mortimer has shown the Malaysia issue, even at the PKI seventh congress in April 1962, to be on the periphery of the PKI agenda, with other issues, such as the Congo, Algeria and Cuba, taking precedence:

Generally speaking, PKI comments on Malaysia prior to the outbreak of the Brunei revolt in December 1962 did not occupy great prominence in the party's arsenal of propaganda ... and Aidit's advice to the party was merely to 'pay close attention' to British plans.'

Ideological differentiation between Partindo and the PKI was made even less distinct by Tunku Abdul Rahman, who drew attention to the role of Ya'acob (that is, Kamel) in fermenting anti-Malaysia sentiment

in Indonesia, describing the Malayan nationalist as a 'well-known Communist'.¹⁰⁰ Not only the PKI, but also Boestaman's Socialist Front in Kuala Lumpur was influenced by Iskandar Kamel's opposition to the concept of Malaysia once the idea was launched by the Tunku on 27 May 1961. Mackie commented:

It can hardly have been a sheer coincidence that the hardening of the Socialist Front's attitude to Malaysia at this time followed so closely on the Partindo conference in Indonesia which Boestaman attended and which was soon followed by the PKI's declaration of its opposition to the scheme.¹⁰¹

The PKI newspaper, *Harian Rakyat*, published its 'first informative background article' on Malaysia one week after Partindo's *Bintang Timur* on 12 July 1961 reported that the PRB objected to the Tunku's format for Malaysia.¹⁰² Only when Aidit was interviewed in early 1962 by Alex Josey¹⁰³ (Lee Kuan Yew's long-serving press officer, who was attached to MI5)¹⁰⁴ was the PKI's opinion on the plan to form Malaysia given publicity. Aidit's opposition to its inherent neo-colonialism came after similar opinions had already been expressed by Partindo, and he mentioned to Josey that he had recently met in Jakarta 'several Malayan leaders [who] were in Indonesia to attend the Partindo Congress'.¹⁰⁵ With insight into British plans for decolonisation thus provided, and given Iskandar Kamel's continuing role in Partindo, the resolution of the PKI Central Committee on 31 December 1961 was perhaps inevitable.¹⁰⁶ It was consistent with PKI ideology, even though the anti-Malaysia lobbying before the resolution was mostly the work of Partindo. Josey included part of the resolution in his interview with Aidit:

The Indonesian people will certainly support the righteous, patriotic and just resistance of the people of Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo against the efforts for the establishment of this Federation of Malaysia.¹⁰⁷

Josey commented that the resolution merited careful study because it summarised the PKI attitude towards Malaysia. Aidit called the planned federation 'an unacceptable colonial intrigue', stressing that 'all the peoples in these territories should first obtain real independence'. The sentiment echoed Azahari's plea precisely, yet those who saw only sinister similarity failed to recognise the local application of the 1960 United Nations resolution on self-determination and independence, a central tenet of Azahari's political principles. Josey added that the

PKI had considerable influence 'among Communists in Malaya and throughout the region of South-east Asia.'¹⁰ Because Malaya and Singapore were mentioned specifically beforehand, the reference to PKI influence alluded strongly to the other British colony prone to communist unrest – Sarawak. On the basis of this resolution by the Central Committee, the PKI was subsequently accused of instigating or covertly supporting the Brunei revolt, when, if assistance had come from any Indonesian quarter, it had been from Subandrio.

Subandrio, instead of seeking to ameliorate relations between Malaya and Indonesia when it had still been possible to do so in 1962, concealed a vital opportunity, according to Sukarno's roving ambassador, Madam Supeni.¹¹ Subandrio interfered with official correspondence from the constitutional monarch of Malaya, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, who wrote an invitation for President Sukarno to visit Kuala Lumpur for discussions on the subject of the planned Federation of Malaysia. This official letter was conveyed through Foreign Office channels. It was given to the Indonesian ambassador in Kuala Lumpur, and would have been brought to the notice of Subandrio before being passed on to Sukarno. But Sukarno never received the letter. Later, in 1963, the existence of the letter was brought to the attention of Madam Supeni when she was in Kuala Lumpur. Supeni checked and found a copy of the letter in the files of the Indonesian embassy there. By the time Sukarno was made aware of the invitation to visit Kuala Lumpur, one year after the letter was written, reciprocal animosity between Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur had made any such visit a political impossibility. By interfering in the delivery of this letter, Subandrio (in the opinion of Madam Supeni) significantly contributed to the hostile atmosphere that generated Malaysian Confrontation.¹²

Notes

1. CO 1030/465/36/8/02, Part B, Item 119.
2. Azahari interview, 1991.
3. CO 1030/465/36/8/02, Part B, Item 119. The Darul Islam movement since the early 1950s had pursued the goal of a separate Islamic state within Indonesia. Because of their avowed religious aims, the Darul Islam rebels had remained detached from the 1958 Outer Islands rebellion. These two groups did not join forces until 7 February 1960, by which time they were little more than scattered pockets of resistance.
4. See chapter 3, footnote 2.

5. See chapter 2, footnote 69.
6. CO 1030 113/36/8/01, Part A, Report of Constitutional Advisory Committee, 23 March 1954.
7. CO 1030 465/36/8/02, Part B, Item 109.
8. Roy Henry, interviewed at the Royal Commonwealth Society, London, 15 August 1991. Roy Henry became head of Special Branch in Sarawak-Brunei in 1960 after two years as divisional superintendent, based in Sibul (3rd Division).
9. Margaret Young, interviewed in London, 14 July 1991.
10. The location of Jakeway's office was important, not only because of its proximity to the head of Special Branch, but also because it was on *the other side of the river* from where Governor Waddell's office was located. Waddell, who 'liked going for walks', left much of the Colonial Office paperwork to Jakeway, who was the head of the secretariat. Waddell visited Jakeway once a fortnight for Supreme Council meetings. After the Brunei revolt, Sir Derek Jakeway, KCMG, OBE, became governor of Fiji; also posted to Fiji as police chief was Roy Henry, QPM, CPM, PJK, JMN, PNBS. Source: Governor Waddell, KCMG, DSC, interviewed at Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire, 9 August 1991. Derek Jakeway refused an interview.
11. Margaret Young interview, 14 July 1991.
12. *Ibid.* Bob Young returned to Lawas as a district officer after the Brunei revolt. He and his temporary replacement, Bill Weekes, later realised the 1962 report (which had been utterly ignored by colonial authorities) had political significance – in the context of the Brunei revolt – and, when back in London in 1964, they resolved to inform the press. Before they could do so, however, Bob Young (who shortly before had scaled the highest mountain in Borneo) died of a 'heart attack' as he boarded a London bus; and Bill Weekes was found dead in his car in Kent. It was claimed Weekes had consumed too much alcohol, locked the garage door, and accidentally left the motor of his car running. Had Young's report been published in the British press, it may well have prompted the sultan of Brunei to review his post-revolt allegiance to the British government and Brunei Shell; as well, because the report shed light on the degree of British provocation in the Brunei revolt, it implied a political advantage for British interests in the Indonesian-Malaysian confrontation that ensued.
13. Azahari interview, 1991. Azahari's appendix had flared twice before, once in Johore and once in Singapore. In his previous treatment, a Chinese doctor stopped the inflammation without having to remove the appendix.

14. Kee Thuan Chye, *Old Doctors Never Fade Away – The Life of Sir Dr Joseph Wolf of Iauou*. TEKS Publishing, Kuala Lumpur, 1988, p. 159.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
16. CO 1030 465 36/8/02, Part B, Item 126.
17. Azahari interview, 1991.
18. Apparently Azahari had expressed concern for his life before he left Brunei and thought it might be necessary to travel to India for an operation, rather than be admitted in Singapore. A contact in India was Haji Mohammed bin Haji Manggol, an associate of Azahari from the Brunei Film Company episode, who was studying law at Madras. Manggol had left Brunei in 1955 after two terms of imprisonment.
19. See chapter 2, footnote 69.
20. If this were so, then the accusation made by Dr Wolf, that the withholding of medical assistance was tantamount to attempted assassination, must be questioned. Surely, an assessment of the urgency of Azahari's medical condition, when still in Brunei, was available to the 'higher authorities' when they intervened in the first place. Obviously, Azahari was sufficiently well to reach Singapore and even Jakarta.
21. CO 1030 465 36/8/02, Part B, Item 130.
22. Azahari interview, 1991. The decision to revolt, made in Azahari's absence, is explained more fully later in this chapter, in the context of the revolt. When the suggestion that H.M. Salleh may have been an informer was put to Azahari, his reply was that Salleh, inexplicably, was not arrested at the time of the Brunei Film Company; that he was only briefly incarcerated at the time of the Brunei rebellion; and that in Brunei now, H.M. Salleh was 'a big-shot'. Azahari offered no further comment.
23. See chapter 6.
24. A similarity exists here with conditions in 1946 (see chapter 1), when Saleh Umar was released from a British prison and shortly after led *peuda* in the killing of the *ketajaan*. Was the British prison used as a secure locality for pre-operational briefing? H.M. Salleh had been arrested once before by the British, in 1945, when accused of wartime collaboration with the Japanese.
25. White to Abell, 3 January 1959, CO 1030 465 36/8/02, Part B, Item 118.
26. General Nasution. Interviewed in Jakarta, 6 August 1990. In the opinion of General Soeharto, however, Nasution was aware of the arrangement with the PRB, even though he may have been able to disclaim personal responsibility for such training. Soeharto was commander of East Kalimantan during Malaysian Confrontation, until replaced by Brig-

dier General Sumitro in December 1964. Interviewed in Bekasi, 12 May 1991.

The most likely motive for the assistance given by Subandrio – and indeed, the express motive for the assistance by Nasution *after* the Brunei revolt – was to prevent the emergence of an independent (and Peking-aligned) Chinese state of Sarawak, bordering West Kalimantan. Nasution's overall motive in opposing the federation of Malaysia was to stem its potential to become Chinese-dominated.

27. Harold Crouch, *The Indonesian Army and Politics in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1978, p. 60. The training of rebel youths of Chinese descent who fled from Sarawak in December 1962 was not exclusively a BPI operation. BPI training (including Brunei Malays) was conducted in Java once Confrontation started. While BPI may have initiated the raids into Sarawak, the Indonesian army and the PKI soon predominated. They operated more as rivals than as a joint force, even though both were in opposition to the colonial forces in British Borneo.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 60. See J. D. Legge, *Sukarno*, Penguin Press, London, 1972, p. 365; Peter Palomka, *The Indonesian Army and Confrontation: An Inquiry into the Functions of Foreign Policy under Guided Democracy*, MA thesis, University of Melbourne, 1969, p. 93; Ulf Sundhausen, *The Political Orientation and Political Involvement of the Indonesian Officer Corps, 1945–1966: The Siliwangi Division and the Army Headquarters*, PhD thesis, Monash University, 1971, p. 546.

The involvement of Indonesian army colonel Hassan Basri *after* the Brunei revolt, as claimed by Crouch, was confirmed by PRB vice-president, Yassin Affendy (who was apprehended by the British in early 1963). Source: Y. Affendy. Interviewed in Kuala Lumpur, 24 July 1990.

29. Soehario interview, 12 May 1991.
30. Mohammed Manggol was contacted in Jakarta in May 1991, when he was working as editor of the Indonesian army newspaper *Berita Yudha*, but refused to be interviewed.
31. Soehario interview, 12 May 1991.
32. Azahari interview, 1991. It is unclear whether Sukarno regarded Subandrio or Nasution as the prime mover in the covert training program, although it became a pretext for moving against Nasution. Differences between Sukarno and Nasution went far deeper than mere political viewpoints. Because Subandrio's connection with Azahari continued after Nasution's effective demotion – for example, Subandrio's BPI arranged for Azahari to come to Jakarta from Manila after the Brunei revolt – it would seem that Subandrio's role was paramount also in the

- training program.
33. The Indonesian 'recruiter' was Major Muljono; according to Dick Morris, district officer in Limbang in December 1962. Details on Muljono included even the tattoo of a flying bird on the upper part of his left arm. Dick Morris. Interviewed in the home of Mr and Mrs Morris, Sydney, July 1990.
 34. Soehario had recently returned from a four-month exploratory trek through the forests of East Kalimantan, accompanied by twenty soldiers. In some remote parts, he was surprised to find Indonesian inhabitants still with pictures of the Dutch royal family in their longhouses, testament to the continuing influence of Dutch missionaries in the region. General Soehario. Interviewed in his home in Jakarta, 16 February 1991.
 35. *Ibid.*
 36. Azahari interview, 1991.
 37. *Borneo Bulletin*, 26 May 1962.
 38. *Ibid.*, 9 June 1962.
 39. *Ibid.*, 16 June 1962.
 40. Waddell interview, 9 August 1991.
 41. In 1992, William Andreas Brown was the US ambassador in Israel. A letter of enquiry (December 1992) to His Excellency Ambassador Brown on the matter of meeting with the Chinese in Sarawak in 1962, and the supply of weapons, received no reply.
 42. Waddell interview, 9 August 1991.
 43. *Ibid.*
 44. Roy Henry. Interviewed at the Royal Commonwealth Society, London, 15 August 1991.
 45. Roy Henry interview, 15 August 1991. John Slimming joined the Malayan police force in the early 1950s. After studying Chinese at the Government Officers' Language School, in 1958 he joined the British Information Service for three years. In 1968, Slimming wrote a work of fiction about the Malayan Emergency and Sarawak, entitled the *Pepper Garden*, published by Heinemann, London.
 46. Roy Henry interview, 15 August 1991.
 47. Soehario interview, 16 February 1991. 'Starr of Texas' was how Frank C. Starr described himself. At the time of the Moluccan rebellion, he had made a proposal to build a factory for desiccated coconut and was selling machinery. Formerly, he worked in the oil industry in Netherlands New Guinea, in the postwar oil capital, Sorong. Before the 1958 rebellion, he sold a troop-transport ship to the Indonesian government; afterwards this ship was used to carry pilgrims to Mecca. A close asso-

- ciate of Starr was Ali Budiandjo, the first Indonesian director in the American gold-copper project in Netherlands New Guinea. Freeport Indonesia production began in 1971-72.
48. British journalist James Mossman publicised the names and aims of the CIA operators in Sumatra, calling them 'dismal spooks ... [who] were delighted at the prospect of a neat little right-wing conspiracy'. See James Mossman, *Rebels in Paradise - Indonesia's Civil War*, Jonathon Cape, London, 1964, p. 174. Although the analysis was misdirected, the publicity was not: it focused attention on the role of the CIA.
49. As reported in the *Washington Post*, 17 September 1989, Stevenson's links enabled him to gain access to the official history of the British Security Co-ordination, the wartime group formed with the agreement of Churchill and Roosevelt to bring America into the war. BSC was 'an umbrella organization for regular British intelligence collection through MI6 and special wartime operations'. The leader of BSC was a Canadian, Sir William Stephenson, about whom William Stevenson later wrote the book *A Man Called Intrepid*. Allen Dulles (a leading Wall Street lawyer acting for Standard Oil) was connected with the BSC, before his role in the American wartime OSS (Office of Strategic Services) and, in the 1950s and early 1960s, the CIA. Nelson Rockefeller also was with the BSC. Like Dulles, he must have played a Janus-faced role: that is, by depriving Japan of oil in its war against China, Standard Oil prompted the Japanese attack on the Netherlands East Indies, and also Pearl Harbour. By opening the door to American public support for entry into the war, which Britain desperately needed, the BSC at the same time risked closing the door on British colonial possessions in South-East Asia. The Atlantic Charter was thus a beacon for the Anglo-American alliance, undone by postwar rivalry.
50. William Stevenson, *Birds' Nests in Their Beaks*, Hutchinson, London, 1965, p. 266.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 265-6.
52. Precisely which sections of British and American intelligence were co-operating in SIFE remains unclear. A strong possibility exists that this cooperation was based on an arrangement concerning oil. If the 1961 scenario in Sarawak involved MI6-oil interests with CIA-oil interests, and neither were tied directly to their respective government policies, SIFE was an intelligence operation resembling the wartime BSC. While the larger joint goal was now anticommunism (rather than anti-Hitlerism), the short-term goal centred on Indonesia. There was still rivalry in the short term, for while the US group favoured a political solution

based on the Indonesian army, the British group had planted their hopes in civilian political leaders under Sukarno.

53. See above, Young report, footnote 12.
54. Stevenson, p. xiii.
55. Roy Henry interview, 15 August 1991.
56. *Borneo Bulletin*, 4 August 1962.
57. Information Department, *Sarawak – Political and Economic Background*, Chatham House Memoranda, Royal Institute International Affairs, Oxford University Press, May 1957, 'Internal Security', p. 10. The 'recent incidents' included the death of a policeman, as recounted in chapter 3.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
59. Chinese population of Sarawak in 1960 was 229 154 of a total of 744 529. See L. W. Jones, *Sarawak: Report of the Census of Population taken on 15th June 1960*, Government Printing Office, Kuching, January 1962, p. 128.
60. This is most likely where William Andreas Brown conducted his meetings with the anticolonial Chinese. A British report (dealing with the British operation which finally crushed all communist influence in this area) confirmed the strength of Chinese communists in this area at the time of the Brunei revolt. K. G. Robinson, a senior officer in the Sarawak Education Department, compiled the internal report, *An Account of Psychological Operations in the Area of Operation Hammer*, covering the specific period 5 July to 17 August 1965. It dealt with the Chinese youths who fled Sarawak after the Brunei revolt. It claimed that in the three-year interim before the first batch returned from Singkawang, on the west coast of West Kalimantan, they were trained in modern arms. On 27 June 1965 (according to Robinson), they returned with rocket launchers, machine-guns and grenades, and killed six civilians. As part of the background, the report read: 'Following the Brunei revolt, the communist organisation formulated plans to rouse militant units. Provision was made for the formulation of *sixteen such units in the Batu Gany area of the 17th Mile alone*' (Emphasis added.) The source of this report (who prefers to remain anonymous) was formerly in the Sarawak public service.
61. Michael B. Leigh, *The Rising Moon: Political Change In Sarawak*, Antara Book Company, Kuala Lumpur, 1988, p. 11.
62. P. J. Boyce, 'Communist Subversion and the Foundation of Malaysia', in J. D. B. Miller and T. H. Rigby (eds), *The Disintegrating Monolith – Pluralist Trends in the Communist World*, Papers from a Conference at the Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, August 1964, ANU, 1965, p. 196.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 196–7. Boyce's claim is unreferenced.

64. Douglas Hyde, *The Roots of Guerrilla Warfare – A Background Book*, The Bodley Head, Sydney, 1968, p. 70.
65. Leigh, p. 15.
66. The CCO was also known as the Sarawak Communist Organisation, SCO, and the North Kalimantan Communist Party, NKCP. See Zakaria Haji Ahmad and Zakaria Hamid, 'Violence at the periphery: a brief survey of armed communism in Malaysia', in Lim Joo-Jock (ed.) with Van S., *Armed Communist Movements in Southeast Asia*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1984, pp. 51-2. The date for PKI assistance to the NKCP (or CCO) was stated vaguely as 'during the early 1960s', (p. 60), thereby avoiding the need to express an opinion on PKI involvement prior to the Brunei revolt.
67. Sarawak Information Service, *The Doomed Man – A Profile of a Member of the Sarawak Advanced Youth Association*, 1965. This report was intended to influence official preparations for elections in 1965.
68. Sarawak Information Service, *The Danger Within: A History of the clandestine Communist Organisation in Sarawak*, Government Printing Office, Kuching, 1963, p. 45.
69. CO 1022 443 436/535/01.
70. Goh Gian Tjuan, interviewed in Amstelveen, the Netherlands, 11 August 1991.
71. The others were: Central Java (deputy governor, Sujono Atmo), West Java (deputy governor, Astrawinata), Jakarta Raya (deputy mayor, Henk Ngantung), Riau (Lieutenant Colonel Kaharuddin Nasution). FO 371/152435 DH 1015/15.
72. Ibid.
73. Daniel S. Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957-1959*, Monograph Series, Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, Ithaca, 1966, p. 163.
74. Ju-K'ang T'ien, *The Chinese of Sarawak – A Social Structure*, Monograph on Social Anthropology No. 12, Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, 1953, Map 2, pp. 12-13.
75. The daughter of Riyacudu married the son of Try Sutrisno who, on 6 September 1988, as commander of the Indonesian armed forces, was appointed chairman of Bakorstanas (the agency for the coordination of support for national stability and development). As such, he replaced General L.B. Mardani as head of Kopkamtib, the national security agency, which was dissolved. In March 1993, Sutrisno became vice-president of Indonesia. The *besan* (parents-in-law) relationship between Sutrisno

and Riyacudu was indicative of the latter's political orientation when the New Order was inaugurated.

76. Robinson.
77. See Justus M. van der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia - Its History, Program and Tactics*, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1965, p. 269. Van der Kroef claimed Partindo became 'an informal PKI front'.
78. *Straits Times*, 16 December 1962.
79. Two branches of SUPP near the Sarawak-Brunei border were involved in the revolt. See Edwin Lee, 'Sarawak in the Early Sixties', in Liang Kim Bang and Edwin Lee, *Sarawak in the Early Sixties 1941-1963*, Department of History, University of Singapore, 1964, p. 54.
80. *Borneo Bulletin*, 25 August 1962. Liu was the secretary-general of the Miri branch of SUPP.
81. Leigh, p. 46.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
83. Dato Gribble. Interviewed at Hinton St George, England, 21 July 1991.
84. Section entitled 'Intelligence Background to the Events Leading up to Operation Hammer', in Robinson.
85. Derek Oakley. Interviewed on Hayling Island, UK, 2 June 1991. Captain Oakley (Royal Marines) was the intelligence officer of the commando brigade.
86. Oakley interview.
87. Rex Mortimer, *Indonesian Communism Under Sukarno - Ideology and Politics, 1959-1965*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1974, p. 100.
88. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
89. *Pos Indonesia*, 25 August 1958, cited in Lev, p. 163.
90. Liem Soei Liong. Interviewed in Amsterdam, July 1991.
91. See *Review of Indonesia*, September 1960, p. 8. This monthly PKI publication was suspended soon after by military authorities.
92. Murba was described as Trotskyist (see Ganis Harsono, *Recollections of an Indonesian Diplomat in the Sukarno Era* (edited by C.L.M. Penders and B.B. Hering), University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1977, p. 189), yet one of its more notable members was Adam Malik.
93. When Sukarno was in exile in Flores in the 1930s, his wife, Ibu Inggit, adopted two girls. One became the wife of a leading journalist in Jakarta, and the other (Ratna Djuwani) became the wife of Asmara Hadi, who was thence regarded as, and treated as, Sukarno's 'adopted son'.
94. Oei Tju Tat. Interviewed in Jakarta, 8 August 1990.
95. Tom Anwar. Interviewed in Jakarta, 27 August 1991.
96. Soehario interview. In 1964, Fahsin became ambassador to Mali, Modibo

Keita, president of Mali, supported Sukarno in his quest for recognition from the non-aligned nations for the 'new emerging forces' interpretation of priorities in international relations.

97. Haji Zaimi, PRB official. Interviewed in Kuala Lumpur, 24 July 1990.
98. Azahari interview, 1991. Azahari had visited Java twice already that year.
99. Mortimer, p. 209.
100. *Ibid.*, p. 210.
101. Van der Kroef, p. 269.
102. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi – The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 51.
103. *Ibid.*, p. 109, footnote 46. Mackie considers two earlier references in *Harian Rakyat* (6 and 12 July) and another in *Suhubi Indonesia* (29 May) as inconsequential. Mortimer, p. 209, noted that the PKI 'led the attack on Malaysia as far back as July 1961' without acknowledging the role of Partindo.
104. See the *Straits Times*, 24 January 1962. 'Why Indonesian Communists Condemn Malaysia – an exclusive interview with D.N. Aidit, chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indonesia', by Alex Josey.
105. See James Michim, *No Man Is An Island: A Study of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1986, p. 87. Lee Kuan Yew also directed Josey to Brunei to invite Azahari personally to co-sponsor the Malaysian Socialist Conference held in Kuala Lumpur in January 1962. Azahari interview.
106. Alex Josey, 'Why Indonesian Communists Condemn Malaysia', *North Borneo News and Sabah Times*, 21 February 1962. Josey spoke with Aidit on 17 January 1962, and the interview was first published in the *Straits Times* on 24 January 1962. Josey described Partindo as a 'Marxist nationalist party'.
107. For the text of the resolution in full, see 'Resolutions of Partai Komunis Indonesia', *Malaya/Indonesia Relations*, pp. 42-3, cited in Peter Boyce, *Malaysia and Singapore in International Diplomacy – Documents and Commentaries*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1968, pp. 68-9.
108. See Josey, p. 2.
109. *Ibid.*
110. Madam Supeni. Interviewed in Jakarta, 9 May 1991.
111. Subandrio's role in this incident may throw light onto Sukarno's cancelled state visit to Britain in 1962. Queen Elizabeth personally expressed her disappointment to Sukarno that it was 'the problem of West New Guinea that keeps You away'. Harsono, p. 245. Harsono was then

spokesman for the Department of Foreign Affairs, and in 1964 Deputy Foreign Minister. It is not known whether Subandrio advised Sukarno to cancel the trip. On the other hand, British motives to cancel Sukarno's trip were perhaps even stronger. Had the covert action that ultimately led to confrontation with Indonesia proceeded *after* Sukarno's state visit, the integrity of the British Crown might well have been implicated in MI6 policy, and not inadvertently.

Sir Andrew Gilchrist, British ambassador in Jakarta (1963), commenting on Sukarno's cancelled visit, said: 'Whatever the reasons publicly assigned, the real explanation was the growing political tension between Britain and Indonesia.' Pers. comm., 31 October 1992.

EPILOGUE

Popular support for Azahari and the PRB was so strong that with the Brunei elections the implementation of the planned federation of Kalimantan Utara would be brought within reach. But a strategic delay of one year was imposed. When the PRB learnt that the elections, due in 1961¹ as stipulated by the recently adopted constitution, would be delayed one year, a large protest rally was organised by the Brunei United Labour Front. This trade-union federation, linked to the PRB, openly advocated the Kalimantan Utara concept. Azahari's wish to avoid violence was illustrated by his compliance with the advice of Denis White, former resident of Brunei, who was installed as high commissioner under the new constitution. White suggested that the timing of the rally, which was to be conducted with torches on the night of 25 July 1961, be changed 'in case there were provocateurs'; Azahari agreed to a mid-morning procession.² White recognised that some PRB members were prepared to resort to violence. Azahari foresaw that with elections the accession to power for the PRB was inevitable, but this could be delayed or overturned by resorting to violence. Despite the delay, the PRB complied peaceably, even though its Kalimantan Utara concept was disadvantaged by the forward momentum of the Malaysia proposal.

Azahari's anticipated victory was confirmed when the elections were held in August 1962. His charismatic appeal tapped nationalist sentiment, ensuring a high percentage of the population voted – more than 90 per cent.³ The PRB won fifty-four of the fifty-five seats. The independent candidate who won the other seat joined the PRB immediately after the election, making the PRB victory complete.

Earlier that year, the sultan (without infringing the 1959 constitution) had appointed Azahari as a member of the Executive Council, thereby officially elevating him to membership of the Legislative Council. In the elections, therefore, Azahari himself was not a candidate. Moreover, as one of the non-elected seventeen members in the Legislative Council, Azahari gained the support of several others.⁴ By this means, even though the constitution allowed for seventeen non-elected

Momogum Organisation of North Borneo, under S. Sundang. Donald Stephens' support for the alliance wavered: as part of the Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee,¹⁷ he was more susceptible to Lee Kuan Yew's influence. After the outbreak of rebellion, Stephens declared:

From reliable sources of information I have also learned that many of the men who led the rebellion in Brunei were either members of the PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia) or PKI-trained men.

In Manila, too, persons who had spoken with and encouraged Azahari in November 1962 adopted similar Cold War glazes after the Brunei revolt. Having just returned from the Philippines, Azahari departed again for Manila as soon as his brother, Osman, brought news of the impending revolt to Azahari in Johore. Azahari gave Osman a message to be conveyed immediately to party leaders in Sarawak and North Borneo to convene in Manila. From there it was intended to head to New York as a delegation. Events overran these plans. Azahari and Zaini arrived in Manila only hours before the beginning of the Brunei rebellion early on 8 December 1962. But for Yassin Affendy and a few PRB officials in the rebellion, which comprised several thousand persons, overflowing the Brunei boundaries into neighbouring regions of both Sarawak and North Borneo, the lack of proper training was immediately evident as soon as British troops arrived.¹⁸ As an intelligence officer summing up the operational performance of '42 Commando', Derek Oakley commented:

The length and bitterness of any Internal Security operation depends entirely on the quality of the enemy. In this case they are not impressive ... the movement had little message, and a hopelessly optimistic aim – a breakaway from the proposed federation with Malaya and the union of Sarawak, Brunei and British North Borneo under one flag, Kalimantan Utara. It had no religious motivation, generated no fanaticism and received apparently little external aid.¹⁹

In Manila, Subandrio's BPI representatives and C. Villareal, the Filipino congressman who, during Azahari's visit in November, had agreed to accompany him to New York, pressed the PRB leader to announce the revolutionary cabinet of Kalimantan Utara. Azahari declared himself prime minister and declared the sultan of Brunei was the constitutional and parliamentary head of state. The Manila *Sunday Times* (9 December 1962) announced the revolt: 'Rebels seize Brunei towns', and 'Rebel premier here, send appeal to UN'.²⁰ A photo was included of

Zaini, Azahari, the Philippine commissioner of reparations, Hermenegildo Atienza, and Nick Osmeña, with the caption, 'Brains of Brunei Revolt'.⁶⁶

That Sunday evening, the US ambassador, William Stevenson, held talks with President Macapagal, causing Philippine assistance for the Brunei rebels to stall. Foreign Minister Pelaez issued a statement several hours later denying any official dealings between the Philippine government and Azahari. Again the Cold War intervened. According to the *Manila Times*:

Diplomatic sources said Stevenson has received American intelligence reports that the Communists might have something to do with the Brunei revolt.⁶⁷

While the statement by Pelaez would have eliminated Azahari's veracity entirely in the eyes of the sultan of Brunei, there was yet a more insidious effect: it compelled Azahari to accept alternative support offered by Subandrio's BPI representative in Manila. Following a meeting in the Indonesian embassy, Azahari (accompanied at all times by Osmeña)⁶⁸ announced at a press conference that he was calling for volunteers. His appeal, a consequence of the embassy meeting, was issued on 13 December and was directly aimed at Partindo.⁶⁹

In the Indonesian response, it was Subandrio's reply that was decisive, not Sukarno's. Three days after the outbreak in Brunei, Sukarno made a first brief reference to the revolt during a banquet speech at the Bogor palace, where he was welcoming Vice-President Kardelj of Yugoslavia. At a farewell dinner party on 15 December for the same state visitor, Sukarno declared that the struggle in Brunei had the sympathy of all Indonesians. The Brunei revolt was, after all, a struggle against British colonialism and was led by Azahari, who had fought alongside Indonesians in 1945, against the same adversary. However, rivalry between Indonesia and Yugoslavia within the non-aligned movement, and the attendant need for Sukarno to be acknowledged as incipient world leader in the Afro-Asian anticolonial struggle, were also factors prompting a statement from Sukarno. His reference was innocuous, below his usual anticolonial calibre.

Subandrio, on 15 December 1962, issued the first major Indonesian volley in what would become nearly three years of almost ceaseless verbal warfare between Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta.⁷⁰ Responding to accusations by Tunku Abdul Rahman that Indonesia was behind the Brunei revolt, Subandrio declared: 'If the Tunku is determined to use

any occasion to be hostile there is no alternative but to accept the challenge.²⁰ It was significant, however, that Subandrio did not refute the charge. Moreover, Subandrio reminded the Tunku that Malaya and Singapore had provided assistance in 1958 to the rebellion in Sumatra that had attempted to secede from the central government in Jakarta. Whether Malaya did or did not provide assistance is another matter; of more significance was the tit-for-tat format of Subandrio's reply. Not only was Subandrio, in effect, concurring with the accusation of prior involvement, but he was threatening to increase the tempo of hostility and so redress the Tunku's slight on Indonesian integrity. Therefore, given that Subandrio (but not Sukarno) *was* involved prior to the Brunei rebellion, he was now trying to draw Indonesia into confrontation with the British plan for Malaysia, on the pretext of his (and Indonesia's) honour being called into question. On 20 January 1963, Subandrio announced a policy of confrontation:

Now the President has decided that henceforth we shall pursue a policy of confrontation against Malaya. This does not mean that we are going to war. This is not necessary ... I, too, consider it as normal that we have to adopt a policy of confrontation. What is to be regretted is that the confrontation policy has to be adopted against an Asian country, a neighbouring country. We have always been pursuing a confrontation policy against colonialism and imperialism in all its manifestations. It is unfortunate that Malaya, too, has lent itself to become tools of colonialism and imperialism. That is why we are compelled to adopt a policy of confrontation.²¹

The reaction in Singapore came in a single night, on 2 February 1963. On the basis that Lim Chin Siong had been in touch with Azahari a few days before the revolt and presumably knew something was afoot,²² he and 112 political activists – almost the entire left-wing in opposition to Lee Kuan Yew – were arrested:

All of those arrested in Operation Cold Store [as the 1963 arrests were known] were accused of communist or pro-communist activities ... [but] none was ever charged.²³

On 13 February, Malaya followed suit, arresting a dozen of the top left-wing opponents of the proposed federation of Malaysia. Boestaman, a member of parliament, was among those arrested. As a result of the Brunei revolt, therefore, the leading figures in the left-wing political parties in Sarawak, Singapore and Malaya were detained prior to the formation of Malaysia.

Notes

1. Section 27(a) of the 1959 constitution stipulated that elections were to be held within two years.
2. Azahari interview, 1991.
3. *Borneo Bulletin*, 1 September 1962, cited in D.S. Ranjit Singh, *Brunei 1839-1983: The Problems of Political Survival*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1984, p. 170.
4. By not nominating himself in the elections, Azahari maintained the unity of the PRB. His not standing, he explained, alleviated ill-feelings among those party leaders who were not chosen as party candidates. Azahari interview, 1991.
5. During the pre-election period in Brunei, British authorities restricted the PRB from using any catchery for independence relating to Kalimantan Utara, thus limiting the electioneering to 'independence for Brunei'. Azahari interview, 1991.
6. Singh, p. 171.
7. Jaya Latif became Brunei high commissioner in Kuala Lumpur in the 1980s, and Brunei's UN representative in New York in the 1990s.
8. Hamilton Fish Armstrong, 'The Troubled Birth Of Malaysia', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. XLI, no. 4, July 1963, p. 687. One reason why Hamilton Fish Armstrong was 'close to the action' was his lifelong friendship with Allen Dulles. Not only were they educated together, but they were born on the same day.
9. *Borneo Bulletin*, 15 September 1962, cited in Singh, p. 170.
10. Azahari interview, 1991. Elections were held in North Borneo one week after the Brunei revolt. An anti-Indonesian campaign erupted at the same time as British troops put down the rebellion, impelling a pro-Malaysia election result. In August 1963, the governor of North Borneo, Sir William Goode (from Singapore) decided to grant independence for sixteen days before North Borneo became part of Malaysia - a mockery of Azahari's goal of independence. Positions of power (for example, clerk of the Legislative Assembly) were filled according to Goode's preference. See Paul Raffaele, *Harris Salleh of Sabah*, Condon Publishing Co., Hong Kong, 1986, p. 88.
11. The Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee was formed in Singapore in 1961. Its first meeting was at Jesselton on 24 August, the second at Kuching on 18 December, and the third at Kuala Lumpur on 8 January 1962. See J.P. Ongkili, *The Borneo Response to Malaysia 1961-1963*, Donald Moore Press, Singapore, 1967, pp. 43-70, chapter IV, 'Malayan Canvass For Support - August 1961 to August 1962'; Malaysia as a

- bastion against communism became more relevant after the December 1961 resolution by the PKI opposing the planned federation. See D. Stephens, 'Why I am for Malaysia', *North Borneo News and Sabah Times*, 1 February 1962, p. 2.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
 13. Tom Harrison's claim that most of the rebels were Kadayans added to the anti-Indonesian propaganda. See Tom Harrison, *Background to a Revolt - Brunei and the Surrounding Territory*, Light Press, Brunei, September 1963, pp. 20-1. Kadayans were an ethnic group in Brunei said to have originated as a retinue of Javanese who accompanied a royal wedding several centuries earlier. Harrison and his wife (from the wartime French Resistance) joined in skirmishes against the rebels.
 14. Derek Oakley, *The Globe and Laurel*, April-May 1963, p. 81. This was a British army publication.
 15. *Sunday Times*, 9 December 1962.
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
 17. *Manila Times*, 10 December 1962.
 18. Apparently with the aim of separating Osmeña from the deepening political morass, the Philippine government later arranged for him to go to Japan; he died there. Azahari's political secretary, Zaini, opted to defect to the British, and he returned to Brunei via Hong Kong, only to meet with the wrath of the sultan. He was imprisoned for many years before escaping to Kuala Lumpur.
 19. Frederick Bunnell, *The Kennedy Initiatives in Indonesia, 1962-1963*, PhD thesis, Cornell, 1969, p. 235.
 20. *Ibid.*, p. 237.
 21. A.G. Mezerik (ed.), *Malaysia-Indonesia Conflict*, International Review Service, vol. XI, no. 86, 1965, p. 68.
 22. P. Boyce, *Malaysia and Singapore in International Diplomacy - Documents and Commentaries*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, pp. 69-70. Subandrio was addressing the Mahakarta Regiment in Jogjakarta on 20 January 1963. His speech was reported in the *Straits Times* on 26 January 1963.
 23. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi - The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, p. 48. After returning from Manila, Azahari spoke with Lim Chin Siong before going to Johore - where Osman subsequently informed him of the impending revolt. At the time of his arrest (according to Lim Chin Siong), Lee Kuan Yew alleged in parliament that Lim Chin Siong's links with Azahari would have provided prior knowledge of the Brunei revolt.

Lim Chin Siong. Interviewed by G. Poulgrain in Singapore, 31 August 1991.

24. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 10 September 1982, p. 16. As reported in the *Australian*, 17 November 1992, p. 10, one of those arrested, Chia Thye Poh, was still in detention and was 'one of the world's longest serving political prisoners'.

CONCLUSION

Britain and the Netherlands encountered overriding difficulties in regaining a colonial presence in South-East Asia commensurate with their prewar standing. In addition to contending with a revolutionary nationalism that was not confined to former colonial boundaries, the British and the Dutch were beholden to American economic power unsympathetic to recolonisation. The Pacific Ocean, indeed, had become an American lake, compounding Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten's predicament in Indonesia in 1945-46, confronted as he was by an ardent populace with the certitude of *merdeka*.

The British predicament arose after accepting the American invitation at the second Potsdam Conference in July 1945 (following President Roosevelt's death) to restore Dutch colonial authority in Indonesia. The replacement of American troops by British as the occupational force in the Netherlands East Indies ostensibly compromised the anticolonialism of the former president, who demanded trusteeships rather than recolonisation by the former European powers. Seemingly advantageous for Britain, the change meant that Malaya, Singapore and Borneo, with oil, rubber and tin, would be buttressed by a colonial ally - one with whom Britain was perhaps prone to disputation in the past, but European nonetheless. Both Britain and the Netherlands planned to recolonise. This very attempt to extend the historical continuity of the colonial era, after World War II, proved to be an inglorious mistake. American intelligence had foreseen the likelihood of Indonesian nationalist forces opposing recolonisation, and (whether inadvertently or not) had contributed to their consolidation during the period of Japanese occupation. The American offer, which emanated from the chiefs of staff, was knowingly double-edged: the more Britain became embroiled in Indonesia, the less likely it would be able to re-establish colonial rule in Malaya.

British forces in Surabaya at first resorted to raw military power in a battle that lasted three weeks. British military supremacy notwithstanding, no victory could be won by reclaiming Indonesia for the Netherlands by force of arms. Whether British forces stayed to fight

again and suffered more casualties, or withdrew from Indonesia as soon as sufficient Dutch forces could replace them, British relations with the Dutch faced inevitable deterioration. The British soon retreated from the illusory goal of reinstating the Dutch neighbours of old, not only because Indonesian independence seemed a foregone conclusion, but because the political unrest in the archipelago adversely influenced the recolonisation of Malaya, Singapore and Borneo. Colonial authorities there anticipated obstruction by the international lobby in proportion to the regional opposition to the British presence; had the Indonesian and Malayan ethnic, cultural and political ties strengthened into revolutionary bonding, British attempts to recolonise would have met the same fate as those of the Dutch. Consequently, in 1946 British military intelligence took steps to minimise the pro-Indonesian sentiment in Malaya (and the threat of Indonesian anticolonialism spreading to Malaya) because it would disrupt the re-establishment of British colonial authority.

After the battle of Surabaya, Malaya took full priority in the rationale for a British withdrawal from Indonesia, thus avoiding the invidious spectacle that enveloped the Dutch. However, the British government acknowledged that, in the long term, decolonisation was the only option for the postwar British presence in South-East Asia. The question was: how could the inevitable be best achieved so as to maintain the optimum British influence in a post-colonial era?

The tactics employed by British intelligence in 1945-46 angered the Dutch but deflected American anticolonialism from the British presence in South-East Asia. In Malaya, British colonial authorities exploited the changed political variables which came with the Cold War. The Dutch, however, became even more susceptible to American economic pressure when the Indonesian nationalist struggle, after shedding its left-wing influence, secured Washington's full support.

By February 1946, the most adept and politically-advanced leaders in Malaya were in the Malay Nationalist Party (MNP), which espoused unification with Indonesia. As long as Malaya lacked a political alternative to the MNP, its pro-Indonesian policies handicapped the re-establishment of colonial authority. The British military administration faced the task of undermining MNP influence without resorting bluntly to the tactics of Surabaya, for this would incur the wrath of anticolonialists worldwide and bring about the consequences of international penalty. An essential step was to rouse the traditionally conservative Malays, whose primary political allegiance was to their respective sultans.

The issue of Chinese citizenship, which was part of the postwar British proposal to form a Malay Union, did not stir indigenous opposition until the sultans themselves were motivated to act. On 26 March 1946, the Colonial Office was informed that the sultans were prepared to repudiate the basis of the union proposal, the MacMichael treaty, to which the sultans were signatories. The United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) was the political party which subsequently mounted indigenous opposition, without the pro-Indonesian trappings of the MNP. There is no doubt that the inspiration to form UMNO included a perceived need to defend the Malay culture from an alien political influence that the historical priorities of the time have depicted as centred solely on the issue of the Chinese and the proposed Malay Union. Yet there was no surer motivation for the sultans to form a political unit, capable of limiting the influence of the MNP and associated Indonesian revolutionaries, than the large-scale massacres of the *kerajaan* in East Sumatra, which started in the first week of March 1946. Those killed were all relatives of the ruling class in Malaya. The slaughter of these *kerajaan* had a significance in the politics of Malaya that has not previously been acknowledged, and neither has the role of British intelligence in East Sumatra in fomenting the events which took place in early March.

This indirect but efficacious method of intervention by British intelligence was employed again during the two decades which constitute the time-frame of this study. The political exigencies of the immediate postwar period, particularly the need to keep the American anticolonial lobby on side, doubtless contributed to the operational method, but, it goes without saying, this was the integral method of a classic intelligence operation. It is pertinent to note three aspects of the East Sumatran operation that displayed factors in common with the Brunei rebellion in 1962, when Britain was on the verge of decolonisation. The first, as mentioned above, was that British intelligence acted as *agent provocateur*; the second, that by deliberately fomenting an armed uprising in response to localised, political conditions, British intelligence achieved a desired result in a seemingly separate area (that is, geographically distinct but politically linked); and the third, in both the East Sumatran and the Brunei incidents, British intelligence utilised the services of insiders (that is, local persons who held high office within the group targeted by the intelligence service, and who helped initiate the respective strategy).

The emergence of the Cold War provided new impetus to Anglo-

American joint intelligence activities, MI6 and the CIA agreeing to divide postwar responsibilities.¹ This cooperation was limited by CIA director, Allen Dulles, because of high-level defections from British intelligence and fears that many Western intelligence services had suffered similar recruitment. Dulles must have narrowed the cordon of trusted individuals and, for joint operations, resorted to those for whom he could personally vouch. For this, Dulles could turn to his prewar experience in the joint Anglo-American group known as British Security Co-ordination (BSC), the group approved by Churchill and Roosevelt to steer US public opinion away from its reluctance to enter World War II. Assuaging this reluctance was part of the political import of the Atlantic Charter. From the perspective of American corporations (such as Standard Oil) whose entry into South-East Asia had been consistently barred by monopolistic, European colonial powers, the Atlantic Charter was tantamount to an 'open door' agreement. Seen in this light, postwar recolonisation seemed to be a renegeing of the charter. During the 1950s, Anglo-American relations were soured by certain events, such as occurred in the Suez in 1956, which were testimony to the decline of the former colonial power in the face of a consolidation of American interest worldwide. While the interchange of intelligence between France and the United States became seriously strained, and was revoked for several years by President Charles de Gaulle,² perhaps only because of the Cold War did MI6 maintain a 'fraternal association' with its American counterpart.

In South-East Asia in the early 1960s, as Britain pursued its planned program of decolonisation, the Anglo-American intelligence group in Sarawak and Brunei was operating under Security Intelligence Far East (SIFE).³ This group acted as *agent provocateur* in Sarawak by supplying weapons to left-wing Chinese. Included in this group were representatives of the CIA and MI6; the primary allegiance of its members, we may surmise, was either to their respective agencies or to a synthesis of interests. The example of how SIFE operated in Sarawak, in flagrant disregard of state law (see Chapter 8), shows this group did not operate within the limitations imposed by accountability to government. At times, the group overruled the governor of Sarawak, suggesting the dominant policy in the saga of British decolonisation in South-East Asia stemmed not from the Colonial Office directly, but from an unidentified amalgam of oil-company executives and British intelligence personnel. The example of the 1958 attempt at 'closer association' of the Borneo territories is pertinent here. It was British intelligence

that added the last-minute, strategic addition to the proposal – regarding the diminution of status of the sultan of Brunei – thereby ensuring the proposal would be rejected by the sultan. Whether the governors of North Borneo and Sarawak and even the commissioner-general of South-East Asia were outranked or outflanked by British intelligence remains unanswered. What is known is that British intelligence consigned the proposal for closer association to the historical wastehheap. In doing so, this strategic intervention avoided the likelihood of Colonial Office policy becoming collateral to the political platform of the Party Rakyat Brunei (PRB) and its leader, A.M. Azahari. At the same time, this intelligence ploy added more credence to the otherwise meagre links between the PRB and the main supporters in Sarawak of closer association, the Chinese. Like the PRB, the Sarawak Chinese held political aspirations of independence which were contrary to Colonial Office planning; the closer the political goals of these two groups, the closer their political fates would be intertwined.

Six months before the closer-association proposal, the Colonial Office (on the advice of 'Hector' Hales, managing director of British Malayan Petroleum (BMP) had reached a turning point in its relations with Azahari. In August 1957, a decision was made to eliminate Azahari politically. This decision did not wreak its full effect for some five years, when Azahari as leader of the PRB was implicated in the Brunei rebellion by British intelligence, again the *agent provocateur*.

By December 1962, however, the extended operation planned by SIFE went far beyond just British territories, raising the question of the allocation of goals and the allocation of spoils. Indonesia, in area and population by far the largest country in South-East Asia, was not yet in either the British or the American sphere of influence. Kennedy, however, had made a significant advance in befriending Sukarno through resolving the New Guinea sovereignty dispute. So while the American presence in Laos and Vietnam was a reflection of a continuing preoccupation with China, and the British plan for decolonisation anticipated the formation of Malaysia, Indonesia remained a contentious prize – strategically unclaimed in the Cold War, but also a source of rivalry between the two main Western allies. Malaysia and Brunei (which remained separate) were apparently respected by the Americans as British goals. The two Borneo territories, Sarawak and North Borneo, were conjoined into Malaysia by the political pressure that *Konfrontasi* generated in the first half of 1963. In achieving this, there was some cooperation between Anglo-American intelligence (namely SIFE). This

continued, moreover, by British obstructionism in the 1963 Alapilindo talks – during which Sukarno tried in vain to extricate himself from the political, economic and military commitment of continued opposition to Malaysia – so that Indonesia was 'locked in' to *Konfrontasi*. The rivalry between American and British intelligence services was temporarily subsumed in the larger scenario of securing the downfall of President Sukarno.

The British disliked Sukarno because of his proclivity to export revolution, or at least, inspire colonial unrest. During the early 1950s, Sukarno's anticolonialism resulted in a trade war with Singapore and Penang, the effect of which caused financial hardship in the Malay populace and led to some resentment of the continuing British presence. Sukarno's promotion of China during the Bandung Conference, his insistence on international non-alignment for Indonesia, and his tendency to condone the re-emergence of the PKI, left no doubt in the mind of US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, that Sukarno and his policies were reprehensible. President Kennedy transformed this negativism by supporting Sukarno's leadership, his nationalism and (in 1962) even his chauvinism. The reconciliation that underlay Kennedy's solution to the protracted crisis over Netherlands New Guinea was part of a strategy to reduce communist influence in Indonesia. A large-scale US aid program was intended to 'secure Indonesia', a country Kennedy's advisers estimated to be potentially one of the richest in the world. Of the dramatic change in emphasis of US foreign policy initiated by Kennedy in South-East Asia, Indonesia – with the largest communist party outside the Eastern bloc – was anticipated to be of sufficient magnitude to ensure President Kennedy was returned for a second term in the White House.

At the same time as Kennedy's program was getting under way, however, Britain was in the throes of decolonisation and was approaching the culmination of a decade of planning to form the Federation of Malaysia. Since Kennedy's first year in office, MI6 planning for Malaysia had enjoyed the support of select CIA assistance. This continued despite the product of this intelligence cooperation being contrary to presidential policy formulated as part of the solution to the New Guinea crisis. Anglo-American intelligence did not alter its operational direction simply to suit Kennedy, his pro-Sukarno stance or his aspirations for re-election.

The plan for the Federation of Malaysia evolved within the Colonial Office after it was first mooted in 1953; that is, the British territories

in Borneo were to join individually with the Federation of Malaya and Singapore. Brunei, because of its known oil reserves, became the centre of British machinations to retain influence despite overt plans for decolonisation. Any neo-colonial stratagem in Brunei ineluctably involved a choice between two political figures, the sultan of Brunei and A.M. Azahari, a charismatic and popular leader who advocated constitutional democratic reform. Azahari's persistence with the plan for unification of the Borneo states, Kalimantan Utara, was like a thorn in the side of the British Lion. His charisma had galvanised the support of the people of Brunei and after the first elections, held in 1962, the PRB were allocated all sixteen seats for elected representatives in the parliament. These, combined with Azahari's influence in the remaining seventeen seats for unelected officials, gave him unprecedented potential to accomplish his political aims by democratic means.

Unlike the proposal for closer association put forward by British colonial authorities, Azahari intended to place the sultan as the constitutional head of state. By this means, Kalimantan Utara would reclaim some of the former realm of the once-great Brunei sultanate. Brunei and Sarawak seemed bent on attaining independence, and both had the internal political organisation to achieve this goal *before* participating in the planned Federation of Malaysia. Mackie has cited Azahari's support for an address in the Brunei Legislative Council by the sultan, 'accepting Malaysia in principle', but dismisses it with the comment that it was 'a remarkable volte-face, if it can be taken at face value'.¹ Azahari had never varied from his stance that:

self-determination for the Borneo territories must precede federation ... [which] should be based on the consent of the people, not on the fiat of the colonial rulers.'

The British feared that independence would lead to an abrogation of any commitment to join Malaysia. Furthermore, Azahari's loyalty to the sultan, which was a union of political and religious beliefs, concerned BMP; if the compliance of the sultan was replaced by the recalcitrance of a parliament headed by Azahari, BMP did not expect to gain the same unrestricted access to Brunei oil. This issue was vital. Although BMP issued public disclaimers in the late 1950s on the lack of new oil discoveries around Brunei, several oil-company employees explained – twenty-five years after the event – that the bountiful offshore South West Ampa oilfield was located several years *before* being officially 'discovered'. Unrestricted access entailed keeping the sultan

and Azahari politically separated. Because of the way Azahari was implicated and blamed for initiating the Brunei rebellion, British intelligence succeeded in turning the sultan away from the concept of Kalimantan Utara, and Brunei subsequently became an isolated oil enclave under British protection. American oil interests were later admitted, but only comparatively infertile prospects were located.

So wary were colonial officials of the rapport between the sultan and Azahari that, in the contingency planning (March 1959) for British troops to quell any future internal disturbance, no proviso was included for their entry to be only at the sultan's discretion. In the Brunei constitution, defence and internal security were regarded as one and the same. The Colonial Office bypassed the wish of the sultan, who wanted to deal with subversive elements himself, and provision was made for British troops to enter Brunei 'without waiting approval of the Sultan'. At the time of the Brunei rebellion, Mackie has stated that the sultan requested British troops to intervene – an important factor in isolating Azahari even further – yet according to the *Straits Times* the request came from W.J. Parks, the aide-de-camp to the high commissioner, Sir Dennis White, who was then on sick leave in London.⁸

As well as securing Brunei oil, the rebellion helped to secure the formation of the Federation of Malaysia. In the allocation of goals and spoils, this was still in the British arena, even though it required some American assistance – first, regarding the Sarawak Chinese; and second, regarding the Philippine claim to North Borneo, which proved particularly useful in goading Indonesia into a confrontationist mode. The agreement that Azahari secured in Manila in November 1962 – that the Philippines was willing to forgo the claim to North Borneo – was interpreted by Azahari as implicit support for his intended presentation of his Kalimantan Utara proposal at the United Nations. Yet even before Azahari had returned to Brunei, this promised support from the Philippines was utilised by the PRB leader who promoted rebellion, H.M. Salleh, as an indication that an armed rebellion, with Kalimantan Utara as the goal, would have Philippine support. Mackie's claim that the Brunei revolt encouraged the Philippines government in its prosecution of the claim does not take into account the importance of the claim, or the waiver of the claim, in the prosecution of the rebellion. Indonesian opposition to the planned formation of Malaysia came about through the heavy-handed British response in Sarawak to the Brunei rebellion, and the subsequent exodus of left-wing Chinese from Sarawak to neighbouring Indonesia. The preliminary activity

of CIA representative, William Andreas Brown, from Singapore, was crucial in this phase. It should be stressed again that the role of certain CIA representatives in the covert preparation for *Konfrontasi* directly contravened the policy of President Kennedy. For the same reason that BMP refused to support Azahari's program of democratic reform, American oil interests (from which CIA director, Allen Dulles, was never far removed) would not countenance Kennedy's support for Sukarno. The participation of British intelligence in the Anglo-American SIFE, was therefore working in conjunction with a CIA renegade element against the policy of President Kennedy.

By 1962, the communist party in Indonesia was the largest outside the so-called Sino-Soviet bloc, which was riven with ideological division; and, in late 1962, rivalry between Moscow and Peking extended to vying for influence with the PKI. While this rivalry was an important aspect of *Konfrontasi*, however, it is not explored in this study. Suffice to say that Moscow's promoting the PKI's accession to power through the electoral process, as opposed to Peking's willingness to support independence struggles such as in Kalimantan Utara, led to a different approach by each to *Konfrontasi* once it had started, and provided Western intelligence the opportunity to widen the rift in the Sino-Soviet bloc.

In Indonesia, Anglo-American rivalry resumed prior to the disintegration of the Sukarno era and the consequent allocation of spoils. American interests envisaged the future leaders of Indonesia would come from the army, whereas the British had sought influence among the Indonesian civilian politicians.

As mentioned above, in a comparison of the 1946 incident in East Sumatra and the 1962 Brunei rebellion, this aspect of British strategy was an important part of MI6 operations – utilising the service of high-ranking persons in the opposition's camp. Perhaps the most notable example of this was the British agent Lai Tek, who absconded as leader of the Malayan Communist Party shortly before the Emergency in Malaya. In the genesis of *Konfrontasi*, the role of Foreign Minister Subandrio defies full explanation. This study has shown that, for about three years before *Konfrontasi* began, in creating the politically volatile conditions in Borneo-Kalimantan preceding confrontation, Subandrio contributed as much as British intelligence. But the evidence has not been sufficient to ascertain whether this involved a degree of complicity. To reiterate some of the incidents where Subandrio's role overlapped the long-term interests of British intelligence:

1. Azahari's first return trip to Jakarta in 1959 could not have proceeded without the approval of British intelligence in Singapore and of Subandrio in Jakarta.
2. Following Tunku Abdul Rahman's announcement in 1961 regarding the planned federation, communication (in the form of a letter) proposing talks between the heads of state in Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta was misplaced. Subandrio held responsibility for this, and also for Sukarno's consequent anger about not having been invited for private consultation in Kuala Lumpur. Mackie commented:

Indonestans have subsequently alleged that their government was not adequately consulted on the plans to create Malaysia, but there seems to be no basis for the complaint. Lord Selkirk visited Djakarta in August 1961 for talks with Dr Subandrio.¹¹

In Hindley's assessment of the motives of confrontation, this factor was given prominence:

Hostility to Malaysia was certainly roused by the failure of Britain and Malaya to consult fully with Indonesia on the fate of an area within Indonesia's 'natural' sphere of concern.¹²

3. Through the intelligence service run by Subandrio, the BPI, assistance was arranged for members of the PRB to travel to Indonesia to obtain military training. By December 1962, however, this assistance program had not come to fruition, although it had become an 'open secret', to the extent of being the subject of press reports, and assuredly led to even more tense relations between Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur from early 1962.
4. The role of Subandrio's BPI in Manila led to Azahari's coming to Jakarta in 1963. Azahari had hoped to address the UN in New York, but US authorities would not even permit his journey from Manila to commence once Britain withdrew his passport.
5. Marshalling the collective Indonesian psyche once again to embark on a policy of confrontation was also largely the work of Subandrio,¹³ although there were other political luminaries who had the same end but not the same motivation. One such person was Chairul Saleh, who organised mass rallies in Jakarta to promote solidarity with Kalimantan Utara only two weeks after the Brunei revolt. Chairul Saleh was formerly the chairman of the political section of Tan Malaka's *Persatuan Perjuangan*.¹⁴

When Subandrio and Sukarno met with Azahari in January 1963, the Brunei leader asked that they *not* be provoked by Tunku Abdul Rahman's statements. Azahari pleaded his case using the Tunku's moustache as a metaphor of neo-colonialism, and he asked Subandrio and Sukarno to look behind the moustache to see who was really prompting the censure of Indonesia. Subandrio replied: 'But if not by *konfrontasi*, how can we help you?'¹¹

The evidence that would align Subandrio with British interests, although condemnatory in some aspects, is still without suitable explanation and as such is inconclusive. If Subandrio's covert actions regarding the PRB were in concurrence with British intelligence, the most likely motive for their overlapping would be in their respective actions to stem the growth of communism in Sarawak in the early 1960s. As stated by Robert Curtis:

The heavily Chinese area of Pontianak in West Borneo has far more economic and social contact with the Chinese over the border in Sarawak and across the sea in Singapore than with the immigrant Javanese population of Bandjermassin in South Borneo.¹²

The density of the Chinese population in West Kalimantan was exceptional for Indonesia and, given the anti-Chinese policy that Subandrio pursued, potentially disruptive if Sarawak became an independent, Chinese-dominated state. Perhaps joint action – similar to that carried out by British and Indonesian troops in 1966 – was intended by Subandrio to dissipate the Chinese population centres in the Sarawak–West Kalimantan region. The precise role of Dr Subandrio in the genesis of *Konfrontasi* remains enigmatic, however. It should be stressed, though, that Subandrio, not Sukarno, was the prime mover in confrontation with Malaysia, although in the Foreign Office at this time, explicit comparisons were made between Sukarno and Hitler.¹³ Similar comparisons were made in the CIA briefing for President Kennedy before Sukarno's visit in 1961:

President Sukarno also makes no effort to dissimulate his true ideological predilections. Like Hitler, he is an open book, there to be read. Those who refuse to draw the proper conclusions may not be victims of Sukarno's charm, but victims of self-delusion.¹⁴

In backing Sukarno, Kennedy rebuffed these slurs created by the intelligence community, but in doing so unwittingly challenged them in a South-East Asian scenario in which they were already well advanced and he was but a political novice.

Azahari, too, was politically maligned and personally vilified as leader of the Brunei rebellion. His concept of democracy reflected the will of the people but was tragically at odds with the political aims of British intelligence, the Colonial Office hierarchy and BMP officials. British intelligence prompted the rebellion when Brunei was on the verge of democratic transition – with Azahari waiting in the vestibule of power. Azahari's popular support and the inevitability of his assuming power under the sultan as constitutional monarch, despite the constitution prepared by the Colonial Office, which was designed specifically to prevent such an occurrence, made the rebellion a political necessity for BMP. For the Colonial Office and British intelligence, the rebellion was a political opportunity creating the impetus for Malaysia to be formed – and in Indonesia, ultimately, a political impasse.

Notes

1. Tom Mangold, *Cold Warrior – James Jesus Mangold: the CIA's Master Spy Hunter*, Simon & Schuster, Sydney, 1991, p. 43.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 112. De Gaulle took this step in 1964.
3. Roy Henry, former head of Special Branch, Sarawak and Brunei. Interviewed in London, 15 August 1991.
4. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi – The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 117.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
6. CO 1030 526 36/775/01.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
8. *Strait Times*, 15 December 1962. The page-one headline was 'Sultan Speaks'. Subandrio also was on the front page with the declaration: 'Indonesia will get angry if accused too much.'
9. Mackie, p. 111.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 104.
11. Donald Hindley, 'Indonesia's Confrontation With Malaysia: A Search For Motives', *Asian Survey*, vol. 4, June 1964, p. 906.
12. In August 1991, an attempt to arrange an interview with Subandrio during one of his home-respites from prison (where he has been since 1967) proved unsuccessful.
13. Helen Jarvis, (ed.), *From Jail To Jail*, vol. 3, Ohio University Center for International Studies, Southeast Asia Monograph No. 83, Athens, 1991, p. 81.
14. Azahari interview, 1991.

15. Robert Curtis, 'Malaysia and Indonesia', *New Left Review*, no. 28, November-December 1964, p. 7.
16. Sir Harold Caccia of the Foreign Office, to Australian Department of External Affairs, 15 January 1963, CS file C3736, CRS A4940/1, AA, cited in Peter Edwards with Gregory Pemberton, *Crisis and Commitments – The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts: 1948-1965* (the Official History), Allen & Unwin with the Australian War Memorial, Commonwealth of Australia, 1992, p. 258.
17. Frederick Bunnell, 'Attachment A – Subject: President Sukarno – Key to the Indonesian Situation,' in 'The Central Intelligence Agency – Deputy Directorate for Plans 1961 Secret Memorandum on Indonesia: A Study in the Politics of Policy Formation in the Kennedy Administration', *Indonesia*, no. 22, October 1976, p. 162.

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