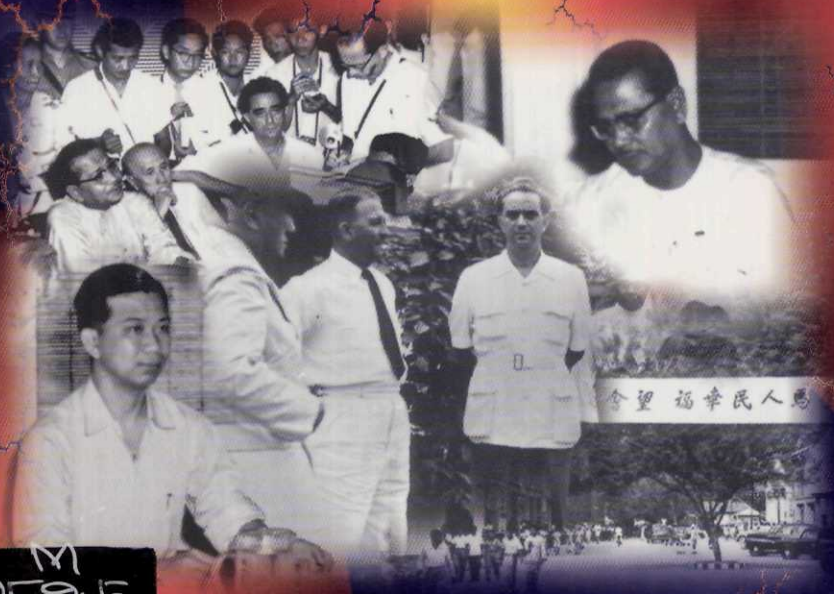
TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN AND HIS ROLE IN THE BALING TALKS

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY



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Prof Madya Dr. Nik Anuar Nik Mahmud

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Prof Madya Dr. Nik Anuar Nik Mahmud

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First Edition 1998

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PREFACE

I am glad to be able to append a preface to this splendid work by Professor Nik Anuar on the subject of the Baling Talks. The book has come out at the right time. Fifty long years have passed since the time when Emergency was declared in our country. But even now our knowledge of that era may be likened to a jigsaw puzzle with missing pieces. I acknowledge that the difficulty of access to both official and private archieves has helped perpetuate the darkness which still obfuscates our understanding of that period.

All the same, a number of books have been written on the Emergency, each approaching the subject from a different angle. The conclusions in each of these may differ, and the same writer may even want to revise earlier approaches. But that is why history all about. It is far being static; it is both alive and vibrant. In this regard, I am glad to be able to say that this book is a welcome departure from earlier writings in that it sheds light on areas hitherto unchronicled in any of the works on the subject. It places the interests of the major players in the particular era of Malayan history in perspective, namely the Tunku, the British and the Communists. As an archivist, I am proud to be able to say that the originally of this book owes itself largely to the use of primary source materials, particularly those extant in the National Archives of Malaysia and the Public Record Office, London.

In the years to come, I am positive that more books will be published on the Emergency, even as records become easily accessible and many of the archives that are buried come to light. I am aware that there are many stones still to be turned, and as the Head of the National Archives of Malaysia I am glad to be able to say that we are committed to our duty to the public and the academia of rendering records more easily accessible for their use in reference and research. That we have readily taken upon purselves the work publishing this book, and of launching it in a grand way at an exhibition on the Emergency is in itself an eloquent testimony of this commitment.

Lastly, I wish to record my appreciation to Prof Nik Anuar for his timely effort, and all those who have been involved in the production and launch of this book. To the readers, may I wish that you will not fail to imbibe the sweet nostalgia for things that are gone as you leaf through the pages of an important epoch in the life of our nation.

DATO' HABIBAH ZON
Director-General
National Archives of Malaysia

19 June 1998

FOREWORD

While working on various aspects of the Malayan Emergency during the 1900s, I became aware of the lack of any studies on the role played by the Malaysian leader, Tunku Abdul Rahman, in particular, to end the Emergency which had been an obstacle to the Federation's advance towards self-government. It was to this end that this monograph is written.

On being elected as the new President of UMNO in 1951, replacing Dato Onn bin Jaafar, the Tunku announced to his supporters his determination to achieve very early self-government in Malaya. However. the Tunku realised that so long as the Communist terrorism remained undefeated, the British Government would not grant self-government to Malaya. In early January 1955, the Tunku made a dramatic call for the granting of an amnesty to the Communist as part of a deal to bring to an end a state of emergency in Malaya. Soon after winning the 1955 Federal Election, the Tunku repeated his readiness to meet Chin Peng, the leader of the Malayan Communist Party, to the annoy of the British colonial authorities. The talk was held in Baling, Kedah on 28 and 29 December 1955. Although the talk was a failure, the Tunku was able to secure from the British an understanding that the continuance of the Emergency was not an obstacle 'in the Federation's advance towards self-government'.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking my colleages Prof Dato' Dr. Nik Hassan Shuhaimi and sdr. Mohd. bin Samsudin for their careful scrutiny of the next and for their valuable suggestions concerning both content and presentation. Thanks are also due to Arkib Negara Malaysia (National Archives of Malaysia) for agreeing to publish this monograph.

Nik Anuar Nik Mahmud
Jabatan Sejarah
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June 1998

1

Tunku Abdul Rahman And His Role In The Baling Amnesty Talks

THE ALLIANCE PROPOSALS

On being elected as the new President of UMNO in 1951, Tunku Abdul Rahman announced to his supporters his determination to achieve very early self-government in Malaya. However, so long as the Communist terrorism remained undefeated, the Tunku believed that the British Government would not grant self-government to Malaya.[1] The Tunku's interpretation was based on the British Government directive to Sir Gerald Templer, on his appointment as the new High Commissioner for Malaya in 1951, which stated that "Her Majesty's Government would not lay aside the responsibility in Malaya until they are satisfied that Communist terrorism has been defeated".[2] The termination of the Emergency was first priority on the Alliance's platform, and it wished to try every means possible of achieving it.

It was to that end that, in early January 1955, the Tunku made a dramatic call for the granting of an amnesty to the Communists as part of a deal to bring to an end a state of emergency in Malaya.[3] The Tunku's proposal envisaged that, since a more truly national form of government was about to be introduced into the Federation, the Communists could no longer assert that they were fighting against British imperialism and would be ready to give up the struggle. His proposal contemplated the granting of amnesty and the stepping-up of the campaign against the Communists if the amnesty was rejected. Dato' Sir Tan Cheng-Lock, President of the *Malayan Chinese Association (M.C.A.)* echoed at once the Tunku's sentiment, and even went further by publicly volunteering to go into the jungle to negotiate with the Communists.[4]

Public reaction to the Tunku's proposal was favourable for it held at the hope that it would lead to an end of militant communism and relieve the country of the heavy financial commitment in waging the emergency campaign. Moreover, its coincidence with the amnesty offered to the *Mau Mau* terrorists in Kenya, which was announced some weeks earlier, stimulated public interest about the prospects of similar amnesty in Malaya.

On 12 January 1955, a meeting of the UMNO-MCA Alliance, was held at Malacca to discuss the Tunku's amnesty proposal.[5] The meeting decided "to ask the Federation Government to offer amnesty terms to Communist terrorists". The Committee decision was that "terrorists accepting the amnesty should be sent back to China or be rehabilitated and allowed to remain to be good citizens".

The Tunku's proposal was looked with askance by the British authorities. The British did not believe that, under circumstances obtaining in January

1955, the offer of an amnesty would be likely to bring in more surrenders than their current policy of encouraging the terrorists to surrender individually on the understanding that they would be fairly and humanely treated.[6]

There was also the major difficulty that any amnesty offer would have at some stage to be given a definite term. In addition there was fear that the ending of the amnesty period would result in a decline in the then flow of surrenders until confidence was again built up in the treatment of surrendered Communists under normal conditions.

In a telegram to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the High Commissioner, Sir Donald MacGillivray, noted that:

This would be unfortunate, particularly as we see nothing in present situation which would support the belief that an offer of amnesty at this juncture would be likely to be successful.[7]

On 11 January 1955, Tunku Abdul Rahman met the Director of Operations, Lt. General Sir Geoffrey Bourne, in connection with the amnesty proposal.[8] The Tunku stated that his objective in making his suggestion was not so much that the Malayan Communist Party (M.C.P.) would accept an offer of amnesty but to convince the people of Malaya that everything possible was being done. After elections he could impose a greater degree of mobilisation than was possible under the present Government. He fully realised that any direct negotiation with the Communists was out of the question. He stressed that it would not be acceptable for the Communists Party to be allowed to operate legally.

The proposal was further discussed on January 17 by the Director of Operations Committee, which comprised not only the Director of Operations and his Service Advisers, but a number of the political leaders. The Alliance was represented by Tunku Abdul Rahman and H.S. Lee.[9] The Tunku was asked by the Committee to clarify his amnesty proposal and the eight-point arrangements for an amnesty as proposed by the UMNO-MCA Alliance meeting at Malacca. After the discussion, it was appreciated by the Tunku and H.S.Lee that an amnesty was not like an armistice, something to be negotiated with the Communists' leaders, but was a standing offer of pardon to each individual terrorist. It was also agreed that the amnesty question should not become a party matter.

Further publicity about the amnesty was also considered to be undesirable as it would adversely affect the conduct of the campaign to encourage the Communists to surrender to government. Furthermore, the Communist leaders themselves, in their clandestine news-letter, condemned the Alliance's proposal as a British intriques, designed to cause dissenssion in the

Malayan Communist Party and to isolate it from public support. The Tunku consented to drop the proposal. Both accordingly welcomed a suggestion that a working party should be set up to examine all the implicatons of an amnesty. The findings were to be recorded for the information of the Director of Operations Committee. The composition of the working party was to be as follows: the principal Staff Officer to the Director of Operations, Secretary for Defence, a representative of the Attorney-General, Tunku Abdul Rahman, H.S.Lee of Malayan Chinese Association and V.M. Menon of Party Negara. After the meeting, the following press release was issued:

The question of an amnesty was very fully discussed in every respect at the Director of Operations Committee today. It was unanimously agreed that a general amnesty should not be offered, but that the present surrender policy, which embodies a very considerable measure of amnesty should continue, and increased efforts should be exerted to bring it to the notice of the rank and file of the terrorists, so that more may be induced to follow the lead of the 1,500 who have already surrendered. It was also agreed that the matter should be kept constantly under review so that policy can be modified if it should appear at any time that break up of the terrorist organization could be hastened by a greater or lesser measure of amnesty.[10]

The rejection by the Federal Government of the Alliance's proposal for an amnesty was strongly supported by the *Manchester Guardian*, a pro-British newspaper. *Manchester Guardian*, in its editorial, commented that an amnesty was appropriate where rebels had lost the desire to continue the struggle with a Government, and in return for an act of oblivion, were willing to become again law-abiding citizen. However, this was not the case in Malaya. The active members of the Malayan Communist Party accepted the amnesty only if they felt that afterwards they would be on a stronger position and not weaker one for their struggle with the goverment. The form of amnesty which was proposed by the Alliance seemed to envisage that the Communist would maintain their party organisation intact and would turn their acts of guerilla welfare to electioneering in a constitutional way.[11]

The Tunku, however, was not giving way lightly to the shelving of the proposal he put forward in January for granting an amnesty to the Communist terrorist. The Alliance restated its views on the question of an amnesty in the case of its Election Manifesto issues in May, 1955. The Manisfesto contained an undertaking to offer a general amnesty to the Communists in the following terms:

... To end the Emergency as soon as possible by offering a general amnesty and, if that fails, to mobilise all our resources and seek all foreign aid to increase the vigour and intensify of the fight against the terrorists.[12]

Tunku Abdul Rahman Chief Minister, Federation of Malaya accompanied by Mr David Marshall and Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan, diseasses procedure with Mr. T. B Voice and Mr A. A Huckle

THE COMMUNISTS' NEGOTIATION OFFER

A month before the election, with the country increasingly gripped with political fever, the Malayan Communist Party took the initiative by putting forward a counter-offer to enter into negotiations for the termination of hostilities. The offer was contained in a letter written in Chinese, copies of which were sent to a number of leading personalities and organisations in the Federation of Malaya and in Singapore. The letter was signed by a representative of the "Malayan Races' Liberation Army" and dated the 1st May, and had been posted at Haadyai in Southern Thailand.[13] None of those letter was sent direct to the High Commissioner or to any of his officers. It asked for safe conduct to enable representatives of the Headquarters of the Communist terrorists to come out to negotiate both a ceasefire and the participation of the Communist Party in the future development of the country. The letter, however, rejected the Alliance's amnesty offer.

The imminence of the Federal elections no doubt explained why the M.C.P. decided to choose to make their offer at that particular time. Furthermore, the offer was consistent with the then international Communist policy of turning from armed attack, or the threat of armed attack, to expansion by political means.[14] At the second conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the British Commonwealth held in London in April 1954 a report entitled *Malaya Fights for Freedom* had been submitted by the exiled Lim Hong Bee that favoured, among other things, a provisional coalition People's government formed by all patriotic parties to achieve full national independence.[15] In August 1954 a Malayan delegate to the Council of World Democratic Youth in Peking was quoted as saying that "they are willing to undertake peace talks to bring the Malayan war to an end ..."[16] By November 1954 a guerilla sheet produced in the Kedah/Penang area carried this report together with approval of the Geneva Conference on Indochina as an example of "how disputed can be solved justly by peaceful means". The British in Malaya were specifically urged to follow the French example in Indochina.

The M.C.P.'s proposal was discussed both by the Executive Council and the Director of Operations Committee. At this meeting, which was attended by Tunku Abdul Rahman and the other leaders, an unanimous decision was made to reject the M.C.P.'s proposal. In a statement issued by the Federation Government on 24 June 1955, the Government made it clear that the present surrender terms were a real and continuing measure of amnesty and made adequate provisions for those fighting in the jungle to come out if they wished to end the struggle.[17] The Government believed that the "terrorist leaders" in Malaya had special reasons for wishing to call off the

shooting war. It was thought that the Communists leaders realised that they were slowly and steadily being defeated by the Security Forces and wished to concentrate their main efforts on subversion. For that purpose it was essential to them that the trained cadres should emerge from the jungle and organise subversive activities in the towns. The proposal for amnesty talks put forward by the Alliance in January was unacceptable to the Communist leaders because it did not seem likely to allow then to roam at will in the Federation, but would be faced with the alternative either a long period of detention or of deportation to China. Hence their thoughts appear to have turned to ways and means of calling off the armed struggle and at the same time retaining their liberty of action.

Reactions to this refusal by the Government were very varied. The rejection was supported by the Alliance and Party Negara. The Labour Party of Malaya, however, expressed the view that the rejection was over-hasty and that the offer should have been more fully examined. Of the Chinese newspapers, only the *Nanyang Siang Pau* had questioned the wisdom of Government's rejection. This paper argued that the offer was worthy of closer attention than it had received and that nothing could have been lost by meeting the Communists round a table to test their sincerity.[18] The other Chinese newspapers, particularly those with KMT or Chinese Nationalist background, strongly supported the Government's rejection and described the peace offer as a manoeuvre to bring about the relaxation of military pressure which would facilitate the infiltration.

Having rejected the Communist's proposal, the Director of Operations Committee thought that it was necessary to take a positive step to show that the government was doing everything in its power to end the emergency. The Commitee which discussed the matter at a series of meetings held in June and July decided to offer an amnesty to the Communists.[19] The Committee was of the opinion that such an offer would be a timely counter-move by the Federation Government to offset the propaganda value of the Communists' negotiation proposals and to convince neutral opinion that the Government was not seeking to prolong the shooting war but were prepared to make a positive proposal to end it. Even if the hard core of the leaders would not respond, large numbers of the rank-and-file might take advantage of a formal offer of amnesty to give themselves up and escape from the privations of jungle life thus causing a split between the leaders and the rank-and-life. An all-out campaign such as by leaflets and loudspeakers aircraft was thought to be necessary to bring the offer to the attention of the terrorists.

The Committee also took into consideration the declaration made by the Alliance in their Election Manifesto that if they were successful at the Elections they would declare an amnesty. Since the expectations were that the Alliance would be the major party, it was clearly prudent that some

thoughts should be given in advance to the ways to which an amnesty offer might be made. If the Government opposed the granting of an amnesty it would play into the hands of the Communists for propaganda purposes.

The only objection to granting an amnesty, according to the Committee, was that it would presumably have to be limited in time and that when the time limit had expired the remaining terrorists would feel that the continuous surrrender policy hitherto followed by the Government was terminated. It was therefore likely that following the termination of any period of amnesty there would be a drop in surrenders until confidence could be built up again.

The Director of Operations Committee concluded, however, that the advantages of offering an amnesty outweighted the possible risks and difficulties, and they considered that the offer would carry particular weight if it were made by the new Government soon after the elections.

To that end, the Committee began to draft the wording of the amnesty terms. Malcolm MacDonald, the British Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, suggested that the terms should be designed to appeal to the rank-and-file terrorists who, not being Communists of the hardcore, had been intimidated by the Communists into taking up arms and having done so, had been forced to stay in the jungle.[20] Though those who surrender would not be prosecuted they would be required to demonstrate their loyalty to the Government before they would be allowed to return to their families. It involved neither negotiation with the Communists nor recognition of the Malayan Communist Party. The British Defence Committee of the Cabinet was also involved in the drafting of the terms. The Defence Committee considered that the point to be stressed was that Communists who surrendered would not be shot but that no hope should be held out that they would escape detention.[21] Furthermore, it added that, it was essential that the hard core Communists should be detained for some time because if they were released they would cause further trouble in Malaya and if they were deported they would cause trouble in Southeast Asia. They thought that the amnesty terms should not include any reference to the possibility of helping a Communist who surrender to leave the country. It was suggested that no time limit should be inserted in the offer.

When the Federal Election took place on 27 July 1955, the UMNO-MCA-MIC Alliance won 51 out of the 52 elected seats in the Legislative Council.[22] The High Commissioner for the Federation of Malaya, Sir Donald MacGillivray, appointed Tunku Abdul Rahman as Chief Minister in the Executive Council and accepted the recommendations put forward by Tunku Abdul Rahman for alloting the various portfolios in the Executive Council to other members and supporters of the Alliance. The Director of Operations Committee had also been reconstituted so that its civilian representatives were drawn solely from

the Alliance, as the government party. Thus the Federation Government was now in a position to take a final decision on the question of the terms and timing of the amnesty offer.

In his first public statement, the Tunku promised that his first priority would be "a swift ending" to the war and that he would offer an amnesty at the right time and with the advice of the experts.[23]

The Singapore Government also endorsed the Tunku's decision to offer an amnesty to the Communists on the ground that, if successfful, it would be an important step toward ending the emergency in Malaya and restoring conditions of economic prosperity in which advance in self-government and social welfare should be made.[24]

Further discussion was later held at the Director of Operations Committee on the terms of the amnesty. Tunku Abdul Rahman proposed to make the amnesty offer as attractive as possible and recommended that the Committee should not make specific mention of the word "detention" as suggested by the British Cabinet Defence Commitee.[25] the Tunku feared that the use of the word would adversely affect the rate of surrenders by rank and file Communists. Subsequently, it was agreed that the word "investigation" would be used instead of the word "detention".[26]

28th December 1955
The crowd arrives from Baling

Gunong Paka 29th December 1955
The Police Escort Camp

GOVERNMENT'S DECLARATION OF AMNESTY

On September 8, 1955, the Government of the Federation of Malaya issued a declaration of amnesty to the Communist terrorist.[27] The Government of Singapore issued an identical offer at the same time. Tunku Abdul Rahman, as Chief Minister, now made good the offer of an amnesty but promised there would be no negotiations with the M.C.P. The terms of the amnesty were as follows:

1. Those of you who come in and surrender will not be prosecuted for any offence connected with the Emergency, which you have committed under Communist direction, either before this date or in ignorance of this declaration.

2. You may surrender now and to whom you like including to members of the public.

3. There will no general 'cease fire' but the security forces will be on alert to help those who wish to accept this offer and for this purpose local 'cease fire' will be arranged.

4. The Government will conduct investigations on those who surrender. Those who show that they genuinely intent to be loyal to the Government of Malaya and to give up their Communist activities will be helped to regain their normal position in society and be re-united with their families. As regards the remainder, restrictions will have to be placed on their liberty but if any of them wish to go the China their request will be given due consideration.[28]

Following the declaration, an intensive publicity campaign on a hitherto unprecendented scale was launched by the Government. Alliance Ministers in the Federal Government travelled extensively up and down the country exhorting the people to call upon the Communists to lay down their arms and take advantage of the amnesty. The response from the public was good. Public demonstrations and processions were held in towns and villages.

Despite the campaign, the number of the Communists who surrendered to the authorities was poor. It was evident that the terrorists, having had ample warning of its declaration, conducted intensive anti-amnesty propaganda in their ranks and among the mass organisations, tightened discipline and warned that defection would be severaly punished. Thus, it was not surprising that there was less confidence that the amnesty by itself would bring to an end to the emergency. Some critics in political circles condemned the amnesty "as being too restrictive and little more than a restatement of the surrender terms which have been in force for long period."[29] These critics were advocating for more realistic and liberal approch of direct negotiations with the M.C.P. to work out a settlement of the issue. Leading officials of the

Labour Party had gone further by not excluding the possibility, as part of the settlement, of recognition of the M.C.P. as a political organisation. Within the Alliance itself, there were influential elements both in the M.C.A. and the UMNO which were becoming increasingly impatient and were endeavouring to persuade the Chief Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, that, in spite of all his protestations and the inherent dangers, negotiation with the M.C.P. would produce quick results and thereby smoothen the path to independence.

M.C.P.'S RENEWED OFFER FOR NEGOTIATIONS

The amnesty took a new turn with a renewed offer by the Malayan Communist Party Secretary-General, Chin Peng, to negotiate with the Chief Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman.[30] Tunku Abdul Rahman, Sir Tan Cheng-Lock and other received by post on 24 September 1955 a cyclostyled letter, in Chinese, purporting to come from Central Committee of Malayan Communist Party, posted at Klian Intan, Perak.

The letter criticised the Alliance Government's amnesty offer as "not reasonable and impracticable" and proposed for an immediate negotiations to be conducted directly between the two parties engaged in the fighting to "achieve a cease fire and to solve the question of repealling the Emergency Regulations and of achieving independence by a peaceful means." For that reason, the writer promised to send their representatives to the UMNO-MCA-MIC Alliance Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur to discuss "details for a meeting to be held between Tunku Abdul Rahman and Sir Tan Cheng-Lock with comrade Chin Peng."

On receiving the letter, the Tunku met immediately with the High Commissioner, Sir Donald MacGillivray. During their discussion, the Tunku regarded it as essential that he should reiterate his willingness to meet with Chin Peng, and the intention was merely to clarify the amnesty terms.[31] If not, the Tunku argued, the sincerity of his efforts to end the Emergency and bring peace that might be questioned. The Tunku agreed that a general ceasefire would be contemplated only if it became apparent that the M.C.P. would surrender under the terms of declaration of the amnesty.

While acceeding to the Tunku's request, MacGillivray asked the Tunku to issue an immediate press statement of its reactions to the M.C.P.'s offer to negotiate, since press and public comment upon it was building up and silence might have been interpreted in some quarters as meaning that serious consideration was being given by the Federation Government to acceptance of it. The statement, he believed, did not in any way affect the terms of their declaration of amnesty. However, by implication, it rejected renewed offer to negotiate with the Communists.

On September 30, the Tunku made an announcement that he had agreed to meet Chin Peng but only "to clarify to him the recent declaration of amnesty."[32] He would be accompanied by Tan Cheng-Lock. An official who was known to Chin Peng would be nominated as Conducting Officer to meet Chin Peng at a rendezvous in a safe area in which a local ceasefire would be arranged. If Chin Peng wished to attend such a meeting he was to write

privately to Tunku Abdul Rahman, naming the rendezvous, the time and the date for meeting. The Conducting Officer would bring him to the meeting place.

On October 1, when the Tunku was visiting Singapore for discussion with David Marshall, the Chief Minister of Singapore, a press conference took place at which the Tunku, when asked whether he would be going alone with Tan Cheng-Lock to meet Chin Peng, said that he would like David Marshall to come and would be inviting him. David Marshall, when questioned, explained that the invitation had gone from the Communists to Federation Ministers only, but that if the Communists invited him to attend, in view of Singapore's common interest in the problem, he would accept the Tunku's suggestion that he should accompany him.[33] Probably in response to the Tunku's press conference that Chin Peng, on October 4, wrote to David Marshall saying that he would welcome Marshall's presence at the meeting.

Meanwhile, on October 2, Chin Peng wrote to the Tunku suggesting that his liaison officers should meet in North Malaya to exchange on the arrangements for the meeting.

The first encounter between the liaison officers took place on October 17 at Klian Intan in North Perak to arrange details of the meeting between Chin Peng and the Chief Ministers. The Federation Government was represented by I.S. Wylie, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, and Too Joon Hing, the Assistant Minister for Education, and Chin Peng was represented by Chen Tien, the head of the M.C.P's Central Propaganda Department.[34] Chen Tien stated that the Communists proposed that the meeting with Tunku Abdul Rahman should last from two to three weeks and that they expected that the meeting zone would be cleared of Security Forces. Wylie replied that the meeting would not last longer than 48 hours, with a possible extension by 24 hours, and that the Security Forces would not be withdrawn but would be confined to base.

CLARIFICATION OR NEGOTIATIONS?

On 19 October 1955, a meeting was held at the Government House in Singapore to discuss the proposed meeting between the Tunku and Chin Peng, the Secretary-General of the Malayan Communist Party.[35] This meeting was attended by Sir Robert Scott, MacGillivray, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Marshall and Sir R. Black, the Governor of Singapore. During the meeting, Marshall expressed his concern about the outcome of a meeting with Chin Peng. He feared that the meeting would develop into negotiations during which demands would be made by Chin Peng and concessions in some form would be inevitable. He was certain that Chin Peng would demand an immediate ceasefire and the immediate release of all his supporters who were in detention or who might give themselves in under the terms of the amnesty and he would probably call for the repeal of the Emergency Regulations in the Federation and the new security legislation in Singapore and independence in the near future for Malaya. Marshall stressed that the immediate release of all persons in detention would bring serious consequences to Singapore because it would greatly reinforce Communist subversive operations. Marshall maintained that, as people' elected representative associated with the special purpose of the amnesty offer, he might be compelled to make the concession. As an alternative, he might be compelled to resign. Marshall pressed for clarification of policy in the face of the grave possibilities if there were any negotiations at all.

The Tunku appeared firmly wedded to the idea that negotiations were inevitable. He stated that he would not go to meet Chin Peng merely to clarify the terms of the amnesty. He must be able to listen to Chin Peng, to discuss his proposals and then to bring them back to the High Commissioner with his own recommendation as to whether they should or should not be adopted.[36] The five requests which he expected Chin Peng to make were:

1. Recognition of the Malayan Communist Party.
2. An assurance that those surrendering would not be deported.
3. An assurance that those surrendering would be allowed to play a part in the political life of country and would not be detained for more than a very short period.
4. The release of detainees.
5. The repeal of the Emergency Regulations.

The Tunku said that he would reject straightaway the demand for the recognition of the Malayan Communist Party but that he was prepared to discuss the other demands. He recognised that he would not have the authority to agree to anything at the meeting. After hearing what Chin Peng

had to say and after discussion on those points with him he would refer them to the High Commissioner as to whether it should or not be adopted.

MacGillivray emphasised that the Tunku's meeting with Chin Peng was agreed to only on the understanding that it was for the purpose of clarification of the terms of the amnesty and that there would be no negotiations. To this, the Tunku replied that the public realised that the amnesty itself would not bring an end to the emergency and were looking to the meeting to do so. The Tunku pointed out that there was growing public opinion in favour of negotiation and because of that he could not go to the meeting if he were authorised merely to explain the terms of the amnesty.

The Tunku also reminded the High Commissioner that a strong Alliance Government offered the best hope of keeping Communist subversion under control. But that the Government would not remain strong if it could not show that it was making progress towards independence. The Government would also not remain strong if he himself lost his position and had to give way to extremists within UMNO. He would also lose his position if his enemies succeeded in branding him as a "Colonial stooge". Therefore, at the meeting with Chin Peng, it was important that he appeared that he would not be acting entirely on the instructions of the British official with him at the talks.Another reason was his fear that it would tend to raise the level of the meeting to "negotiations". It would also give the Chin Peng too much "face".

Later, during his discussion with Lord Reading, Chairman of the Colonial Party Committee of the Colonial Office, who was in Singapore after attending the Bandung Conference, the Tunku made it clear that he had every intention of using every means in his power to bring the emergency to an end. The Tunku insisted that he had pledged himself in the election-campaign to do so and that, if he failed, he would at once became discredited. On the other hand, success would give the best and probably the only chance of creating a united country. Lord Reading suggested that he had only just been elected with a substantial majority and that it seemed early days to talk of being overthrown. But the Tunku insisted that his position would be fatally undermined by delay. Time was vital, argued the Tunku. People were watching closely to see whether or not he was able to redeem his pledge. His final opinion was that a military solution was no longer possible. He pointed out that the Communists, some 3,000 strong, were comfortably established in villages on the Siamese border, which they were free to cross and recross at will. Their presence increased the prosperity of the villages and was, therefore, welcome. These hide-outs were so remote and inaccessible that they could never be reached by troops. The only way to terminate the emergency was, therefore, negotiations. It was useless for him to meet Chin Peng unless he was in a position to make reasonable concessions. The terms of the amnesty were really no advance on the terms offered two years

ago. He must have a discretion to make a more reasonable offer, if the course of negotiations required it. If he were given a reasonably free hand, he could gain his objective and, once the emergency was at an end he would be free to turn his attention to the rooting out of subversive activities.

Lord Reading, in his memorandum to the Colonial Office, reminded that the Tunku was set upon holding the meeting with Chin Peng, which he compared in importance to those held at Pyongyang, Korea, and if the Tunku was not given the latitude that he wanted, it was fairly certain that he would refuse to pursue the project at all and would then publicly lay the blame for the continuance of the "emergency" upon the imperialistic obstinacy of the British Government, alleging that they were unwilling to see achieved a peace which might result in the speedy relaxation of their grip on the country.

Lord Reading also pointed out that David Marshall disliked and deeply distrusted the Tunku and was violently resentful at having been led into trap as regards his own attendance at the proposed meeting. He was still uncertain whether he would in the end participate, if it took place, since he felt that, if he found himself unable to go all the way with the Tunku, he would be branded as no more than a "stooge" of the British and he would be seriously weakened in his relations with his own people.

Lord Reading considered the Tunku "a very vain man" and it might be that personal vanity was an element in the policy that he was pursuing. But the main impulse, in his view, seemed to come from his desire to clear the ground of obstacles to the achievement of independence in the very near future.

The Tunku's new stance had indeed placed the Malayan Government in a dilemma. In his telegram to the Colonial Secretary, MacGillivray noted that the Federation were faced broadly with two alternatives to insist either (a) that the meeting should be for the sole purpose of explaining the terms of the amnesty, or (b) to agree that the Chief Minister should hear what Chin Peng had to say and to discuss points with him but not to commit the British in any way to agreement on any point.[37]

MacGillivray was of the opinion that if the Federal authorities insisted that the meeting should be for the sole purpose of explaining the terms of the amnesty there was a real risk that the Alliance would use their "secret weapons" of resignation from Councils at all levels and thus represented to the public that the British had refused to allow the Tunku to meet Chin Peng even to hear what he had to say. It was therefore clear that the British did not want to end the emergency, but deliberately wished to keep it alive inorder to deny independence to Malaya. There would then be a strong anti-British campaign by UMNO with consequential diminution of support given to the British in the prosecution of the emergency by the public and possible

loss of morale in the police and Malay regiment.

However, if the British Government agreed with alternative (b), MacGillivray argued that it might be that the British would not be able to agree with the Tunku and that he would resign. The Tunku could then represent to the public that he could have brought emergency to an end on terms acceptable to the public but that the British had frustrated a reasonable solution.

However, before any decision was taken, MacGillivray asked his Senior Advisers, consisting of the Chief Secretary, Attorney-General, Chief of Police and Director of Intelligence, to assess the implication of the alternative courses.[38] The Senior Advisers, in their report, recommended that the meeting should be allowed to proceed and the Government must not make any stand on the issue. However, every attempt should be made to confine the discussions within the terms of the Declaration of amnesty. If they were unable to persuade the Chief Minister to confine himself to a clarification of the amnesty terms, the Tunku should instead be permitted to listen to and discuss points raised by the Communists in addition to the clarification of the amnesty terms. The attention of the Chief Minister should be drawn to the importance of confining any discussion to seeking clarification and explanation of the Communist point of view without indicating his own opinion or committing himself in any way. The British authorities also should not insist on the inclusion of a British Official at the talks. The Chief Minister should, however, be encouraged to take a senior Chinese Minister to the meeting. If, on the return of the Chief Minister from such a meeting agreement could not be reached between him and the High Commissioner on any fundamental point raised at the meeting, the High Commissionor could then make a stand.

On 24 October, 1955, MacGillivray submitted the conclusion of the Senior Adviser's report to the Colonial Secretary for his consideration and sought his permission to allow the meeting to take place and that the British Government should not make a stand on an issue on which public opinion would not be on their side.[39] MacGillivray was convinced that it might be impossible to dissuade Tunku Abdul Rahman from his intention to have discussions with Chin Peng at his forthcoming meeting. If an attempt was made to impose unacceptable conditions on the Chief Minister for his meeting with Chin Peng, he might resign and thus placed himself in the position of being able to accuse the British Government of obstructing a course of action which could be represented a opening up a prospect of bringing an emergency to an end. He felf very strongly that the consequences of such a breach at that time would greatly weaken the British position in Malaya. Moreover, that breach would likely lead to dissension in the ranks of the alliance itself and the emergence of Malay/Chinese antagonisms, to an extent that would jeopardise the chances of establishing

a united Malaya under a strong democratic government. Such a government was the only answer, in the long run, to Communist penetration. MacGillivray argued that:

We feel that for our best is a strong Alliance Government working in harmony with us and that the chance of this would be lost it the Alliance leaders should get it into their heeds that we do not wish the Emergency to end and that we are using the Emergency as an excuse to delay self-Government. Our firm opinion is therefore that the meeting must be allowed to take place and that we should not now make a stand on an issue on which public opinion would not be on our side.[40]

Another way to stiffen the Tunku for the meeting would be for the British Government to make it clear by a public statement that the end of the shooting war was not regarded as a necessary condition precedent to the grant of self-government in Malaya.[41] He pointed out that the Chief Minister and other members of the Alliance Party believed that the British Government would not allow any further progress towards self-government while the emergency lasted. Tunku was determined to achieve very early self-government and Alliance leaders as a whole genuinely believed that if they did they would be submerged by extremists.

Malcolm MacDonald, the former British Commissioner-General for South East Asia, also agreed with MacGillivray that the Tunku should be allowed to hold talks with Chin Peng but the Tunku must be warned in writing that Her Majesty's Government fully reserved the right to reject proposals going beyond the terms of the amnesty offer.[42] The Tunku should be warned against the dangers of subversion for both Malaya and Singapore. The High Commissioner should also explain to the Tunku orally, as a personal view, that he would no doubt have to listen to whatever the Communists have to say but that he should be careful to avoid committing himself even to a promise to consider a Communists proposal, though he was at liberty to reject outright. MacDonald also believed that it might be of decisive value if the Colonial Secretary should be able to assure the Chief Minister that further progress towards self-government did not depend upon the ending of the shooting war. Sir R. Black, the Governor of Singapore was also of similar opinion.[43] However, he added that if the meeting led to discussion of points outside the amnesty terms, the Chief Ministers must return to discuss with the High Commissioner, Commissioner-General and himself as Governor of Singapore.

On 28 October, the Colonial Policy Committee at the Colonial Office discussed at length the proposed meeting between the Chief Minister and Chin Peng. The Committee advised the Secretary of State, A. Lennox-Boyd, to approve the suggestion made by the High Commissioner to allow the Tunku to hold a meeting with Chin Peng. However, it noted that every effort must be made by the High Commissioner to persuade the Tunku to

confine himself to explanation and clarification of the terms of the amnesty and that it should be pointed out that within those terms of reference there was still considerable room for manouvre and discussion.[44] If, despite this explanation, the Tunku still insisted that he must be prepared to listen to what Chin Peng had to say and to hold discussions with him, he should be allowed to do so. It should, however, be made clear to him that the High Commissioner's consent to the talks had been given on the definite understanding that he was not going to the meeting as a plenipotentiary with a power to agree to anything on behalf of the Federation Government but must confine himself to bring them back for further discussion with the High Commissioner and the Executive Council. The Tunku should be told that the British Government was not prepared to accept any concession on vital issues such as recognition of the Communist Party or the release of "hard-core" Communists to undertake subversive activities in the Federation. The Tunku should also be warned about the danger of allowing the terrorists to figure as heroes after an amnesty and about the danger of subversion for both Malaya and Singapore. The Committee also agreed with the High Commissioner that it would not be advisable for a senior British offical to be present at the talks. The Tunku would no doubt had to be careful to avoid committing himself even to a promise to consider a Communist proposal. He was, however, at liberty to reject outright their demands.

MacGillivray was informed about the Colonial Policy Commitee's recommendation by the Colonial Secretary on the 29th October 1955.[45] Regarding the High Commissioner's suggestion that it might help to stiffen Tunku if he were to make a public statement in Parliament to the effect that the British Government no longer regarded the shooting war as an obstacle on the road to self-government, the Colonial Secretary feared that a statement in those terms if made in Parliament would be misunderstood and imterpreted as a retreat from the position previously held. If it would help, however, in briefing the Tunku for the meeting with Chin Peng, MacGillivray might say that he had been informed by him that, although the shooting war had not yet ended, nternal security conditions had improved to such a degree that the British Government no longer regarded them as an obstacle to further progress on the road to independence. He also was prepared to send the Tunku a personal message timed to reached him shortly before the meeting.

On 1 November 1955, MacGillivray discussed with the members of the Executive Council on the nature and scope of meeting with Chin Peng.[46] MacGillivray explained that there was a considerable field for discussion within the limits of the amnesty. But he warned the Tunku that the discussions with Chin Peng on other matters, such as the repeal of the Emergency Regulations, might amount to their acknowledgement that Chin Peng had a right to a voice in policy-making and would raise the meeting to the level of negotiations on equal terms.

The Tunku reiterted his intention of doing no more than listening to what Chin Peng had to say. He would then report back to the High Commissioner. The Tunku also expressed his appreciation of the importance of not allowing the Communists to appear in the guise of victors but thought that this could be achieved by insisting that all who surrendered should be held for investigation "even if this was only for 3 days". Other Ministers said little on the subject of the meeting with Chin Peng itself, probably for fear of expressing views which might not coincide with those of the Chief Minister. But Dr. Ismail, Minister of Land and Mines, emphasized the importance that the Alliance and the people attached to ending the Emergency at the earliest possible moment. He also brought out the point that the sense of urgency was increased by the fact that the British Government? Ong Yoke Lin, Minister of Transport, went so far as to say that the effect of this condition on many people's minds was to make them feel that Chin Peng hold the key to the situation. Ismail said that he thought the British Government should then take the initiative by indicating that further progress towards self-government was not dependent upon the prior termination of the Emergency.

In view of the discussion in the Executive Council, MacGillivray urged the Secretary of State to issue a public statement that the emergency did not stand in the way of self-government.[47] With regard to the two written communications which were suggested earlier by the Secretary of State that should be made to the Chief Minister, MacGillivray feared that to put all these points to him in writing would create an atmosphere of distrust and would have the reverse of the effect desired. It might impel the Tunku to go beyond the limits set simply in order to avoid being called a "British stooge". The best arrangement might be for him, with the Director of Operations present, to have a final discussion with him just before he goes to the meeting.

MEETING WITH CHEN TIEN

The Tunku appeared to be impatient over the lack of response from the Communists to the amnesty offer and over the delay in holding the proposed high level talks with the Communist leaders. On his arrival from Kuala Lumpur from his visit to Indonesia, Tunku Abdul Rahman was questioned by the press about further measures he would take in arranging discussions with Chin Peng. The Tunku replied that he hoped there would be a letter from the Communist awaiting him in his office. There was, in fact, no such letter. On 15 November, the Tunku announced, in a broadcast over the radio, that he was not prepared to wait indefinitely for Chin Peng to respond to his invitation and that he was bound to infer from the delay a lack of sincerity on the part of the Communists to bring about an end to the hostilities.

Two days later, on the 17th November, Chen Tien, M.C.P.'s Head for Propaganda, and his guide turned up unannounced at Klian Intan in North Perak.[48] His appearance was interpreted by the public as a direct response to the Tunku's warning. Representatives of the press, who had been hanging about for weeks, were the first to meet them. Speaking in fluent English, Chen Tien denounced the amnesty offer as "unreasonable, impracticable and entirely unacceptable."[49] He then handed to the press a statement by Chin Peng in Chinese to the effect that the "masses" were hoping for peace talks at an early date and that, in spite of the activities of a "few influential warmongers and militant people", there was 'no reason to doubt the possibility of holding peace talks and reaching a reasonable agreement". Chin Peng, Chan Tien declared, demanded three conditions for the meeting: first, he wanted concrete assurances for the personal safety of Communist delegates, secondly, he wanted an agenda prepared, thirdly ,he demanded that an International Peace Commission should be invited to supervise any peace agreement which might result from the meeting. Chen Tien then posted a registered letter to the Tunku.

The Tunku's first instinct was to authorise his two representatives to make immediate arrangements for a meeting between himself and Chin Peng about 9 December.[50] The High Commissioner, however, reminded the Tunku that the Chief Minister of Singapore was also concerned, and after telephoning to Marshall, Tunku Abdul Rahman agreed that the meeting with Chin Peng should not take place until after Marshall's return from London since Marshall was unwilling to put off his visit to London in order to meet Chin Peng. MacGillivray also pointed out that Chin Peng's statement mounted to an outright rejection of the amnesty terms and a renewal of the proposal to negotiate on an equal basis. In view of this statement, MacGillivray advised

the Tunku not to make arrangements for a meeting with Chin Peng which might make the public to conclude that the Government had accepted Chin Peng's rejection of the amnesty terms and his proposal for negotiations. The Tunku saw the force of the High Commissioner's argument and instructed Too Joon Hing and I.S. Wylie to make no arrangements with Chen Tien for a meeting between himself and Chin Peng but to inform Chen Tien that the purpose of such a meeting would be to explain the amnesty terms and not to enter into negotiations.

On 18 November, Too Joon Hing and I.S. Wylie met Chen Tien, who reiterated some of the points about arrangements for the meeting with Chin Peng which he raised at their first encounter in October.[51] There was some discussion but no decision reached, and it was agreed that there should be a further encounter between the two sides on the 13th or the 16th December.

In a press statement issued on November 19, the Tunku announced that Too Joon Hing and I.S. Wylie had discussed with Chen Tien administrative arrangements for the meeting with Chin Peng.[52] He also warned Chin Peng in a forceful terms that, if Chin Peng or his representatives ever again issue statements to the press, and indulge in propaganda tactics, he would refuse to meet Chen Ping or anyone else. He went on to say:

I am not going to negotiate with or treat Chin Peng as my equal; I am going to explain the amnesty. I will listen if he proposes something to me, and I will consider it. I represent the Malayan Government, and we have all the resources to fight and beat the Communists. I want peace and I want to end this Emergency. I will end the Emergency in any case, but I don't want any more bloodshed if I can help it.[53]

In view of the ineffectiveness of the amnesty, the High Commissioner advised the Tunku to terminate the amnesty offer. In some localities, MacGillivray pointed out that the M.C.P. had been taking advantage of the amnesty "safe areas" to make contacts and to replenish supplies. This attitude and a Communist attack in force on a new village in the Cameron Highlands led the Government to decide that more forceful action against the Communists was necessary. On 21 November, a joint statement was issued by the Chief Minister and the Director of Operations declaring that, although surrenders would still be accepted under the amnesty, the restrictions which had placed on Security Forces action upon the declaration of the amnesty wuld be lifted and all the safe areas notified under the Amnesty would be cancelled from 1 December 1955.

Meanwhile, on 30 November, the High Commissioner, in his address to the Legislative Council, announced that Her Majesty's Government saw no reason to regard the continuance of the Emergency at its present level as an obstacle in the Federations's advance towards self-government.[54]

MacGillivray believed that the announcement had been very well-received and would be valuable in stiffening public opinion against negotiations. In fact, the Tunku, in reply to an oral question in the Legislative Council, declared that his meeting with Chin Peng "will be neither negotiations nor peace talks". The Tunku reiterated his stand in the Legislative Council debate on 3 December 1955 that:

There would be no negotiations for peace as some people apparently believed. It was only after the offer had been made to explain the amnesty terms that some people had voiced the opinion tha the Alliance Government should further negotiate peace. If we do so, it would be an admission of defeat by the Alliance Government should further negotiate peace. If we do so, it would be an admission of defeat by the Alliance Government and admission that the policy of the Communist Party is right. We are not prepared to admit that the Alliance Government had never been in a stronger position than it was today. Our armed forces are carrying the fight into deep jungle. It was, however, the wish of the Alliance Government that there should be no further loss of life or suffering and that is the reason why we are now making an all-out bid to stop further bloodshed by peaceful means.[55]

In view of the Tunku's stiffening stand against negotiations, MacGillivray decided not to write a personal message to him that his consent to his being allowed to listen to Chin Peng was given on certain definite understandings fearing that it would create an atmosphere of mistrust and would have the reverse fo the effect desired. What he would propose to do was to see the Tunku before he left for the meeting, handed him the letter from the Secretary of State and to wish him good luck.

On 13 December, Chen Tien reappeared at Klian Intan and met the two Government representatives.[56] The meeting took place in a tent on Kroh airstrip, which had been gazetted as a Protected Place for the purpose. The meeting lasted for three hours. The two sides discussed arrangements for the main meeting between the Chief Ministers and Chin Peng. The Government spokesmen proposed that the meeting should be held on the 28th December at Baling in Kedah. There should be a local ceasefire and that the Security Forces in the area should remain inactive. Chen Tien eventually agreed to all those proposals, subject to confirmation by Chin Peng. He referred again to the desirability of preparing an agenda, but was told that the Chief Ministers merely intended to clarify the terms of the Amnesty and listened to what Chin Peng had to say. He was told that the Tunku expected to receive a letter from Chin Peng, confirming that he would meet the Chief Ministers at the time and place proposed. Wylie, however, made it clear to Chen Tien that if Chin Peng did not turn up for a meeting on the 28th of December under the agreed arrangements, then the Amnesty would be terminated, and there would be no further question of a meeting and talks.

The ground floor of the Town Hall, Klian Intan, showing the furniture and mural decorations. The preliminary meetings actually took place in the room immediately above.

The Town Hall, Klian Intan, where the preliminary meetings between the government envoys and the communist represent gives took place during October, November and December, 1955.

BALING TALKS

The talk took place in the Government English School at Baling on December 28th. It lasted more than eight hours, and was spread over two days. The M.C.P. was represented by Chin Peng, the Secretary-General, Rashid Maidin and Chen Tien, head to the M.C.P's Central Propaganda Department. On the other side were three elected national representatives, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Dato Tan Cheng-Lock and David Marshall.

In his opening remarks, Tunku Abdul Rahman thanked the Communists for the confidence they had shown in coming out to the meeting.[57] He reminded that his task was to explain the amnesty terms but not to stand in judgement over them. He then detailed the political changes which had been taking place in Malaya and explained that his election victory was based on the promise that "colonialism must end and that this country must be given freedom." He then mentioned the High Commissioner's announcement in the Legislative Counsil on 30 November that the British Government no longer considered "the continuation of the Emergency" as "an obstacle to the Federation's advance to self-government". The British Government intended to enter the London talks in January "on that understanding". Since then the UMNO Assembly had passed a very important resolution to the effect that independence for Malaya must be given by the 31 August 1957.

The Tunku then explained to Chin Peng that the objective of his Party was to bring peace to the country. But, in his opinion, there would be no way of bringing about peace other than to offer suitable amnesty terms for the surrender of the Communists. The Tunku reiterated that if the Communists accepted the amnesty "everyone would be pardoned." The Tunku then explained the amnesty terms in full. However, he added that the Government had carried out its part of the terms with regard to local ceasefire, but unfortunately the Communists on their part had continued offensive action. As a result, ceasefire arrangements had been suspended by the Government, although the Security Forces would be on alert to help those who wished to accept the amnesty offer. He understood that they had rejected those amnesty terms and would like to know the reason. The Tunku also reminded Chin Peng that he did not come at the meeting as the spokesman for the British Goverment was "neither as the stooge or running dog of colonialism" but as the servant of the people".

Chin Peng replied that it was because he realised that the Tunku were not "the spokesman of the British Government or the running dog of the British Government" that they were prepared to meet them at the risks of their lives.

Chin Peng explained that he had not come to the meeting to argue questions of ideology but to search for peace "so that the misery of the people can be reduced". Chin Peng pointed out that the M.C.P. rejected the amnesty offer because they did not permit Communists to "enjoy equal status so that they genuinely intended to be loyal to the Government would be "helped to regain their normal position in society." Chin Peng then reflected the past statement by the Tunku that if the M.C.P. stopped the armed struggle, then they could enjoy status so that they could fight for independence by constitutional means. But the amnesty terms did not contain such a point.

To this the Tunku retorted that the amnesty specifically declared that Communists who gave up communism and showed that they genuninely intended to be loyal to the government would be "helped to regain their normal position in society". First, however, the Communists would have to show their loyalty to Malaya. In his view, simply to be anti-British was not sufficient to show that one was loyal to Malaya. The Tunku pointed out that the Malayan people regarded the Communist activities as something entirely foreign to the Malayan way of life. They regarded the Communist Party as belonging to a power outside the country and considered that its members gave allegiance to that foreign country and not Malaya.

During the second session, the discussion revolved on the question of loyalty to Malaya and recognition of the Malayan Communist Party. Chin Peng asked the Tunku to explain the actual meaning of "loyalty to Malaya." The Tunku stated that one of the things the Malayan people expected was that the Communist should give up their Communist activites. Loyalty to Malaya would include acceptance of the position of the Rulers and agreement to uphold their dignity. Dato Sir Tan Cheng-Lock added that if a man wanted to live in Malaya, he should assume the responsibilities and duties of a good citizen. David Marshall defined loyalty as "loyalty to the government of the day, and loyalty to the constitutional processes in bringing about such changes for the welfare of the people."

The talk then turned to the question of the recognition of the Malayan Communist Party. Chin Peng asked the Tunku whether the giving up of Communist activities meant the dissolution of the Malayan Communist Party. The Tunku answered in affirmation. Chin Peng stressed the point that, as a member of the Malayan Communist Party, they were not prepared to be forced by others to give up that ideology, but wished to put their ideology to the people to decide, if that was possible. The Tunku retorted that if the Malayan Communist Party was allowed to take part in free election, the people would choose the Alliance. The Tunku continued that the Communist and Malayan ideologies were not the same. The Malayan people preferred their own way of life, and the Communists must accept the way of life accepted by the majority. Chin Peng admitted that during the last few yea

political progress had been made in Malaya and it was because of that he believed that the time had come when the Communist should come to the meeting with sincerity in the hope that they could solve their problems. However, he reiterated that he could not accept the amnesty conditions as they were then, because those conditions required them to dissolve the Malayan Communist Party. When asked by Chin Peng on what other means the emergency could be ended, the Tunku replied that Chin Peng and the members of the Malayan Communist Party must give up their communist activities and prove themselves loyal to the country.

Chin Peng did not give up. He did not see why since they were Communists they could "declare to the people that we are Communists. We do not wish to join other political parties and then do our scheming or intrigues. That is why we want this question of recognition of the M.C.P. to be solved."

Then Tunku said that he was not asking Communists to give their ideology - "one's ideology is what one believes in" - but their activities were something quite different.

The Tunku reiterated that the Federal Government was not prepared to recognise the Malayan Communist Party because Communist activities had been associated with murder, with atrocities, with acts of violence of every kind. Furthermore, the Malayan Communist Party was composed of very few nationals. Chin Peng then took the point on whether the difference was because most of the members of the Malayan Communist Party in Malaya were Chinese. David Marshall replied that as far as Singapore was concerned that had nothing to do with it. The point was that the Communist were exercising violence. The Tunku added that in Malaya the situation was different because the Malays felt that the Communists owned their allegiance to Communist China.

Chin Peng put one more question before another adjournment. Was it necessary for any decisions made at the meeting to be approved by the British Government? The Tunku replied: "If I decide and Mr. Marshall agrees with me that will be all."

The next session started at 6.30 p.m. and lasted until 8.05 p.m. Chin Peng returned with fresh vigour to the question of recognition of his party. One of several gambits turned on the question of whether his party would be accepted if its members were confined to federal citizens. "No", answered Tunku.

The talk turned to other aspects, such as the detention of surrendered terrorists for purposes of interrogation and investigation. The Tunku explained that investigation would be carried out very speedily. "We want to

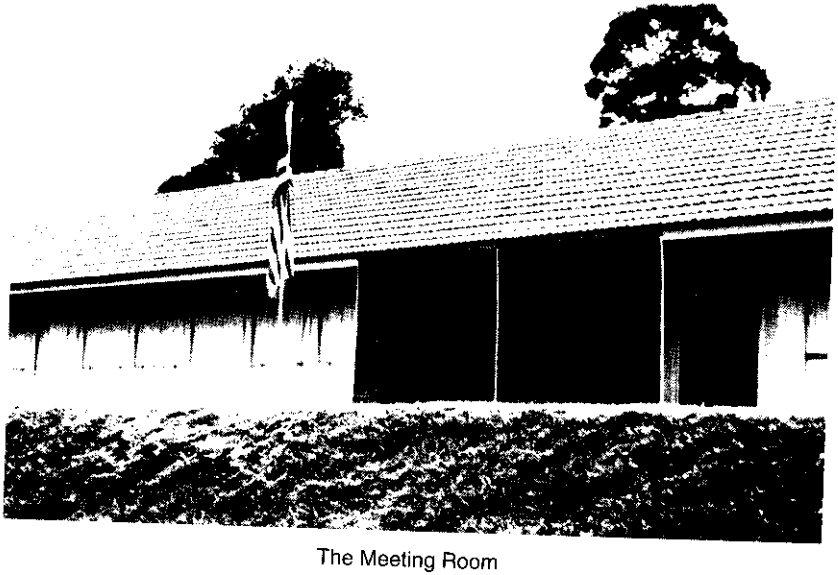
extract a promise from you that you will not carry on your activities; which we say are not loyal to Malaya and are prejudicial to the interests of Malaya and Malayans. We will want you to sign a declaration to that effect".

Chin Peng refused to accept this, declaring that for the "dignity of man" if this principle was insisted upon, then they would have to carry on with the struggle. This brought a question from Marshall, "Forgive me for asking, but what are you struggling for?" for Chin Peng solemnly replied, "It is very simple to just for the dignity of man." Marshall exclaimed that using deed of violence to enforce their views on a population that does want them was hardly compatible with the dignity of man. Chin Peng admitted that their outlook on this question was quite different and he was prepared to argue on it.

It was at this point that the talk really broke down. Chin Peng came back time and again to the points on which the Communists insisted: recognition of the M.C.P, no detention, no investigation and no restriction on their movements after surrender. The Tunku made it clear that after investigations and the removal of restriction on freedom those Communists who remained in Malaya could join recognized political parties and to take part in politics, but they would not be allowed to form a Communist Party under another name. At the end of the session, Marshall pleaded with them to try and consider the question soberly and to remember that there must be some sacrifice on their part. The Chief Ministers informed Chin Peng that they would be prepared to meet again on the following morning.

The delegations met again at 10.30 the next morning, but from the very beginning Chin Peng resolutely rode his cardinal theme of political recognition of his party and freedom for members. For Chin Peng, the purpose of investigation implied surrender and was unacceptable. He considered it as humiliation: "If you demand our surrender we would prefer to fight to the last man". The Tunku replied that some surrender was inevitable. "... if you do not come out to surrender, we would rather not accept you in our society. If you want to have peace in this country, one side must give in either we give in to you or you give in to us." The Tunku stressed that he was not prepared to allow a situation where Malaya might be divided as had happened in the case of Korea and Vietnam. Malaya was too small and he had, therefore, to be frank with them and say that it was they who must surrender. The Chief Ministers, before leaving, then appealed to Chin Peng to think of the general welfare of the people and informed them that if, in the near future, the Communists were prepared to show any change of attitude, they would not consider their pride in coming to meet them again. Within an hour, Chin Peng and his colleagues were whirled back to Klian Intan. The next day he joined his bodyguard and disappeared in the direction of South Thailand.

BALING TOWN
The Malayan Chinese Association slogan reads "All the peoples of Malaya wish the talks will be a complete success."



The Meeting Room

WITHDRAWAL OF AMNESTY OFFER

Following the talks, the Tunku decided to withdraw the amnesty on 8 February 1956, five months after if had been offered. He stated that he would not be willing to meet the Communists again unless they indicated before hand their desire to see him with a view to making "a complete surrender." He said that the Communists had made it clear to him that their ideology and that of himself and his party could not exist side by side. Therefore, the war must be intensified until one or the other gave in... I have every confidence that the people of Malaya will give their fullest support and co-operation to the action I have taken."[58]

Despite the failure of the Baling talks, the M.C.P. made every efforts to resume a resumption of peace talks with the Malayan Government but was to no avail. A few weeks after the Baling talks, Tan Siew Sin received a letter from Chen Tien, requesting a resumption of peace talks and the repeal of the Emergency Regulations. This request was immediately rejected by the Chief Minister and instead, discussions began in the new Emergency Operations Council to intensify the 'People's War' against the guerillas. In July 1957, a few weeks away from independence, the M.C.P. made a desperate attempt for peace talks. The M.C.P. had suggested the following conditions for a negotiated peace; its members should be given privileges enjoyed by citizens: they should have freedom to participate in election and stand as candidates; and there should be a guarantee that political as well as armed members of the M.C.P. would not be punished. The Tunku, however, did not respond to the M.C.P.'s proposal.

On 31 August 1957 Malaya achieved her Independence with Tunku Abdul Rahman as the Prime Minister. With the achievement of independence, there was a marked increase in the M.C.P.'s peace proposals and in November 1957, after a direct proposal from Chin Peng, Tunku Abdul Rahman agreed to a preliminary meeting. The border town of Kroh was chosen as a site for possible talks. However, Chin Peng, did not accept the principle of surrender. As a result, the talks failed to take place. Since then the M.C.P. strength began to decline. The Malayan Government increased its military activities to suppress the M.C.P. and by 1960 they were forced to retire to the border with its dwindling strength. Finally on 31 July 1960, the Malayan Government declared the ending of the twelve-year emergency. There continued to be minor incidents, but the communists were no more a threat. They in fact had lost their reason for insurrection, Malaya had achieved independence and was no more under British control.

NOTES

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3 *Malay Mail*, 6 January 1955.
4 *Ibid*, 9 January 1955.
5 Federation of Malaya to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 19 January 1955, CO1030/22.
6 Federation of Malaya: Detention, Deportation adn Rehabilitation Policy in High Commissioner to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 25 May 1955. FO371/116939.
7 Federation of Malaya to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 13 January 1955, CO1022/22.
8 *Ibid.*
9 Federation of Malaya to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 19 January 1955, CO1020/22.
10 Federation of Malaya to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 17 January 1955, CO1030/22.
11 *Manchester Guardian*, 9 February 1955.
12 See, *The Road to Independence, An Alliance Platform for the Federal Elections,* Alliance National Council, Kuala Lumpur, 1955.
13 *Malaya: Negotiation offer by the Malayan Communist Terrorist*, Commonwealth Relations Office, 22 July 1955, FO371/116940.
14 See, *Captured Malayan Communist Party Documents,* Southeast Asia Department, Foreign Office, 27 November 1953, FZ1016/9/G, CO1030/232.
15 Anthony Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya, 1948-1960*, Frederick Miller Limited, London, 1975, p. 459.
16 *Ibid.*
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19 The Question of Offering an Amnesty to the Communists in Malaya, FED 12/360/05, FO371/116940.
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21 Extract from COS(55) 617 Meeting held on 26 July 1955 on Malaya, FO371/116940.
22 Zainal Abidin b. Abd. Wahid (Peny). *Sejarah Malaysia Sepintas Lalu*, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur, 1972. p. 172.

23 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 19 August 1955, FO371/116940.

24 MacDonald to Foreign Office, 21 May 1955, FO371/116940.

25 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State fro the Colonies, 19 August 1955, FO371/116940.

26 *Ibid.*

27 See, *Memorandum from the Chief Minister and Minister for Internal and Security*, No. 386/17/56, 30 April 1956. CO1030/30.

28 *Ibid.*

29 HIgh Commissioner, Malaya to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 10 October, 1955, CO1020/245.

30 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 29 September 1955, FO371/116941.

31 MacGillvray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 30 September 1955, FO371/116941.

32 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 30 September 1955, FO371/116941.

33 MALAYA: Monthly Emergency and Political Report 15th October to 15th November 1955. CO1030/247.

34 *Ibid.*

35 Singapore to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 17 October 1955, FO371/116941.

36 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 24 October 1955, FO371/116941.

37 *Ibid.*

38 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 24 October 1955, D1091/69A, FO371/116941.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

41 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 25 October 1955, FO371/116941.

42 Commissioner-General for the U.K. in Southeast Asia to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 23 October 1955, CO1030/27.

43 Sir R. Black to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 29 October 1955, FO371/116941.

44 The Secretary of State for the Colonies to High Commissioner, Malaya, 29 October 1955, FO371/116941.

45 *Ibid.*

46 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 18 November 1955, FO371/116941.

47 *Ibid.*

48 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 18 November 1955, FO371/116941.

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50 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 18 1955, FO371/116941.

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58 MacGillivray to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 15 March 1956, CO1030/22.

2

Selected Documents

DOCUMENT I:

Translation of a letter from Ng Heng, Representive of the Supreme Command MCP

In accordance with the orders of the Supreme Command Headquarters regarding the problem of ending the war and achieving independence in Malaya by negotiation, I issue the following statement:-

The one and only object of our struggle is a peaceful, democratic and independent Malaya. If only this is possible, we are willing always to strive by peaceful means, to achieve the aforesaid objective. It goes without saying that the achievement of independence in Malaya through peaceful means would be beneficial not only to the Malayan people but to the British Government and the British people as well.

However, it must be pointed out that up till now, the British Government, under various pretexts, is still continuing its colonial rule. It has maintained an indifferent attitude over the resolutions of the Afro-Asian Conference regarding the rights and self-determination of the people, and matters concerning the peoples of protected territories. At present, there is a common basic characteristic in the constitutional system prevailing in Singapore and the defence, foreign affairs and finance. The British Governor or High Commissioner has the power to veto the laws passed by the Legislative Council. Foreign troops have the right to be stationed throughout the whole of Malaya. Moreover, they have the right to establish and to enlarge military bases in various parts of Malaya, which are only used for the benefit of foreign countries. If this state of affairs is not rectified, Malaya will never achieve independence and democratic freedom, and the rights of the people will not be reliably safeguarded. Hence, there is a possibility that, in the interests of foreign countries, Malaya may be dragged into a war of Asians killing Asians - the people will have to pay the grevious price of a war, which they have no right to question, and which does not further personal interests. These facts cannot be concealed by the partial election, or the full election in the future, of members of the Legislative Council.

In order to strive for peace and to achieve independence in Malaya, it is imperative that, firstly, the war must be ended, the Emergency Regulations must be abolished and the democratic freedom and rights of the people must be safe-guarded, to enable a general national election to be carried out in a peaceful and democratic atmosphere.
All the various political parties, guilds and associations, and the people of

various communites and walks of life of Malaya, who are sincerely and truthfully striving for independence, regardless of the various strata to which they belong, their stand in respect of independence or their demeanour in the past, can and should be united together to vigorously strive for the achievement of their common objective of ending the war and achieving independence in Malaya, by peaceful means.

Hence, we are of the opinion that the representatives of various political parties, guilds, associations and communities should endeavour to hold a round table conference at an early date, to discuss thoroughly the problems of ending the war and achieving peace and independence in Malaya with the object of reaching unanimous agreement, conforming with the actual state of affairs of Malaya. Such an agreement will definitely expedite the ending of the war, and the achievement of peace and independence of Malaya - it will be a major contribution towards a policy conforming with the personal benefits of the various strata of people throughout the country.

We would manifest a positive and co-operative disposition towards this conference. It is without doubt that, due to various races having their own special problems, and various differences in political outlook, there certainly will be many discrepancies and disagreements in the opinions of persons attending this conference. But, as all will have the same objective, should all manifest an attitude of mutual understanding and respect for each other, and seek out the views common to all, and permit differences of outlook to be discussed in a democratic spirit, a unanimous agreement on major important problems will definitely be reached at the conference. In this respect, the success of the Afro-Asian Conference and the successful negotiation between the Governments of China and Indonesia on the question of dual nationality have set good examples for the peoples of Malaya.

The amnesty proposal put up by the Alliance leaders of the UMNO, MCA and MIC is not satisfactory to us. In order to end this warfare early, and to show our sincerity in this matter, we are willing to compromise by holding negotiations on the basis of this proposal with the British Government and come to a reasonable agreement. At the same time, we are willing to have discussions with the UMNO, MCA and MIC and any other political parties which support the ending of the present warfare by negotiation.

We must point out that any attempt to intrigue and force people to surrender is completely unreasonable and illusive. The present situation is this: It is almost seven years now since the Emergency started, and in spite of the thousands of methods adopted by the British Government to liquidate us, it has failed to do so, and neither has it defeated us in war, because we are supported by the great masses of people, and hence we will never be

defeated in this war. With regard to this points, Mr. Lyttelton, the former Secretary for Colonial Affairs had to use the term "possible" in his speech to British Rubber Manufacturers' Association on 24th March last year. "It is possible that we will never achieve complete victory". The complete victory which he referred to is similar to the victory in Europe and the victory over Japan.We confidently believe that the situation within and without Malaya is daily favouring the independence of Malaya, and that the time-factor is favourable towards the people of Malaya and is unfavourable to the colonial rulers who insist on continuing colonial rule.

With regard to the holding of meetings in the jungle, especially in making arrangements for the first meeting, as this would cause difficulty and inconvenience to both parties, we are willing to send our representative to Kuala Lumpur to make arrangements for the meeting, provided that the British Government will guarantee us the safe conduct of our representative to Kuala Lumpur to make arrangements for the meeting, as this would cause difficulty and inconvenience to both parties, we are willing to send our representative to Kuala Lumpur to make arrangements for the meeting, provided that the British Government will guarantee us the safe conduct of our representative. If the British Government agrees to direct negotiation or allows the responsible political parties to have discussions with us, you can inform me at any time through the radio or through the Press. On receipt of your notice, I will start on my journey (to Kuala Lumpur) immediately.

On our side, the door to negotiation in the past, present and future is always open. We are now making one big step forward. For this reason, whether negotiations materialise or not solely depends on the attitude of the British Government.

Signed: Ng Heng
Representative of the Supreme Command
Headquarters of the Malayan Racial Liberation Army.
Dated: 1.5. 1955

Source : Arkib Negara Malaysia

DOCUMENT II

Statement by the Government of the Federation of Malaya on the M.C.P's negotiation offer

1. The Government's attention has been drawn to a letter received by representives of certain interests in the Federation purporting to come from Supreme Command Headquarters of the Communist terroristas.

2. The full text of the letter is attached [see Document 1].

3. As will be seen, the letter makes certain proposals for negotiating an end to Communist terrorism in the Federation. The Government has no doubt that these proposals come from the leaders of Communist terrorism. It has considered them and, on the unanimous advice of the Director of Operations Committee, issues the following statement:-

4. The letter claims that the terrorists have not been defeated. The facts are that they have suffered severe defeat in Pahang, and their organisation has been split in two and no longer has control over its various branches. Defections from their ranks are occurring almost daily throughout the Federation. They realize full well that, weakened in numbers and spirit, they cannot gain their object by the continuation of terrorist methods and of their so-called armed struggle.

5. Consequently, by sending this letter they hope to change their tactics by exploiting the natural desire of the people for peace and to persuade them to relax the fight against Commmunism. It is a typical Communist "peace offensive". The ultimate aim of Communism remains unchanged. It is to overthrow as early as possible whatever established Government my be in power and to substitute for it a Communist regime. We all know that this is not the way to freedom. The Communists view with distaste the forthcoming elections and the move to self-government by elected representation. It seems they want now, before the recognised national political parties have contested the elections, to suspend temporarily the Communist armed struggle and to revert to other forms of subversion, whilst keeping themselves free to renew their terrorism when it suits them. This letter is therefore a last-minute attempt to spread confusion and uncertainty amongst the political parties. They who have fought and committed countless atrocities against the people of Malaya without regard to race or creed, now pose as the purveyors of peace.

6. We have seen these sudden shifts in Communist policy before and we shall not be misled by this one. We have not forgotten the chaos the Communists attempted to bring about between 1945 and 1948.

7. Knowing the true purpose of the Communist offer and these motives which underlie it, the Government rejects it absolutely and has no intention of negotiating with the Communist terrorists.

8. If the Communists genuinely wish to end the Emergency they can do this today. Liberal terms of surrender are already offered to them and are known to all, as is being demonstrated by many who are taking advantage of them. They are aware that no one who has voluntarily surrendered since July 1949 has been tried on a capital charge but that they have been fairly dealt with and well-treated. Furthermore, as stated on the 17th January, Government keeps the surrender policy under constant review so that it can be modified at any time if it should appear that a greater or lesser measure of amnesty would hasten the end of terrorism.

9. While reaffirming its desire for peace, the Government will not accept the Cinnybust type of peace. The responsibility of the Government is to ensure that conditions exist in Malaya which will enable its people to move forward towards independence without the fear of Communist domination in any form.

24th June, 1955.

Source : Arkib Negara Malaysia

DOCUMENT III

THE BALING MEETING: NARATIVE OF EVENTS

24th December 1955

0900 hours	Work began to prepare the Meeting site and Combined Headquarters was formed.

28th December 1955

0900 hours	The Chief Ministers of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore left KULIM with an escort from 15/19 Hussars. They were followed by Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan and further cars carrying their private secretaries.
0950 hours	The conducting officer, Mr. J.L.H. Davis, with an escort from 2 Police Field Force, met two Communist messengers, identified as Chen Tian and Lee Chin Hee at the agreed contact point. They informed him that Chin Peng was on his way with his bodyguard but might not reach the contact point until approximately 1200 hours.
1032 hours	A further Communist messenger approach the contact point with the information that Chin Peng was approaching and might arrive about 1040 hours. On this information the Conducting Officer moved forward to the edge of GUNONG PAKU to meet Chin Peng.
1044 hours	The Chief Ministers, Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan and their secretaries reached BALING and were conducted to the District Officer's residence. On being informed that Chin Peng would be late at the contact point the Chief Ministers decided to hold a short, informal press conference in the guard text at the entrance to the Protected Place.
	Subsequently the Chief Ministers decided that the

Meeting should begin at 1415 hours. Meanwhile they were shown the Meeting Room and an adjustment of seating was made to accommodate their private secretaries in the Meeting Room. The Chief Ministers then visited the accommodation allotted to the Communists and expressed satisfaction with the arrangements made. The Chief Minister's party then launced in the District Officer's residence.

1104 hours — An unidentified number of Communists were seen approaching the contact point.

1116 hours — Chin Peng, Chen Tian, Abdul Rashid and three other Communists left by car, under police escort, from the contact point for BALING. The three other Communists were subsequently identified as Lee Chin Hee, Tan Kwee Cheng and Sanip.

1230 hours — Chin Peng's party arrived at BALING and were conducted by Mr. Davis to the house allotted to them. They expressed satisfaction with their accommodation and feeding arrangements but asked for a set of under-clothing each, a tin of tobacco and a tin of cigarettes to be bought for them, for which they offered to pay. Because there was not time for them to cook rice they asked for bread, which was supplied.

Meanwhile arrangements had been satisfactorily concluded on GUNONG PAKU for the Communist bodyguard to make camp and receive the rations prepared for them. All details were agreed except that they refused to have a telephone line laid between their camp and the Police escort; however a further contact was agreed for 29th December and a password arranged.

1420 hours — The Chief Ministers and Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan were conducted to the Meeting Room. Chin Peng, Chen Tian and Abdul Rashid were then brought in by Mr. Davis and formerly introduced. The Press photographers were then allowed to enter the Meeting Room. On their withdrawal the interpreters, stenographers and private secretaries entered the room and were introduced.

1430 hours	The First Session of the Meeting commenced.
1530 hours	A break was made to enable a new team of stenographers to take over. Coffee was served but the Communist were served, at their request, with orange squash and soda.
	The Second Session of the Meeting then Immediately commenced.
1745 hours	The Meeting adjourned until 1830 hours and the Chief Minister's party were served with tea in the District Officer's residence.
	A press statement, prepared during this adjourment was issued at 1925 hours.
1830 hours	The Meeting reassembled and the Third Session commenced at 1840 hours.
1900 hours approx	The Communists having become suspicious of the microphones of the recording apparatus were allowed to see the recording room. They appeared satisfied.
2005 hours	The Meeting adjourned until 1000 hours 29th December (this time was subsequently changed to 1030 hours). The Chief Minister's party left shortly afterwards for KULIM, escorted by 15/19 Hussars.
	Work began on the transcript of the first day's Meeting.
	A press statement, prepared at the conclusion of the Third Session, was issued at 2255 hours.
<u>29th December 1955</u>	
0700 hours	An Army Staff Officer left by car for KULIM bearing the transcript of the first day's Meeting. Copies were handed the Chief Ministers, Federation of Malaya and Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan. Further copies were taken to the RAF Station BUTTERWORTH and flown down to KUALA LUMPUR for HE, the High Commisioner, the Federation of Malaya; the Direc-

	tor of Operations and his Principal Staff Officer. Mr. David Marshall's copy was flown on to SINGAPORE for delivery to HE, the Governor.
0830 hours	The Chief Minister's party, with their escorts, left KULIM for BALING.
0945 hours	At Chin Peng's request two messengers (Lee Chin Hee and Tan Kwee Cheng) were returned. under Police escort, to the contact point and subsequently rejoined the Communist bodyguard.
1018 hours	The Chief Minister's party arrived at BALING.
1050 hours	The Fourth Session of the Meeting commenced, preceded by another session of Press photography.
1150 hours	A joint document, in the handwriting of Mr. David Marshall, amended by Chen Tian, was sent out from the Meeting and a press statement incorporating this document was issued at 1200 hours.
1248 hours	The Meeting concluded. A further press statement was then prepared and was issued at 1355 hours.
1405 hours	Having lunched at the District Officer's residence the Chief Minister drove to the Press Centre in BALING Town and held a brief press conference.
1400 hours	Chin Peng's party left BALING under police escort, for the contact point.
1425 hours	The Chief Minister's party left the Press Centre in BALING, under escort of 15/19 Hussars, for KROH airstrip where they amplaned, at 1500 hours, in two Beavers, for KUALA LUMPUR.
1521 hours	Chin Peng's party arrived at the contact point but decided to remain with the 2 Police Field Force escort overnight.
1550 hours	Two Communist messengers arrived at 2 Police Field Force escort camp and returned to the jungle to prepare for Chin Peng's reception next morning.

30th December 1955

0830 hours	An Army Staff Officer left BALING padang by helicopter for KUALA LUMPUR to deliver the transcript of the second day's meeting.
1000 hours	Two Communist messengers arrived at 2 Police Field Force escort camp.
1000 hours	Chin Peng's party left 2 Police Field Force escort camp to rejoin his bodyguard and begin withdrawal to his headquarters.
1400 hours	Combined HQ at the Meeting site closed down and detachments started to withdraw. The BALING site was finally vacated at first light on 31st December 1955.

Source : Arkib Negara Malaysia

28th December 1955
The journey from Klian Intan to Baling

10.44 a.m , 28th December 1955.
The Chief Ministers arrive

The crowd on the approach to the Protected Place

DOCUMENT IV

THE BALING MEETING: RECORD OF THE MEETING

FIRST DAY

T: Will you please explain that I will talk in English. Are they agreeable?

C. Yes.

T. Do they want me to open the talk first, or would they like to?

C. I think it is better for the Federation Chief Minister to talk first.

T. In the first place, I want to thank them for the confidence they have shown in coming out to meet me. They must remember that I am not standing here in judgement over them. I am here to talk to them, to explain to them. With me are the Chief Minister of Singapore, Mr. David Marshall, and Sir Cheng Lock Tan, who is a political leader and my colleague.

They have been in the jungle fighting for what they call independence and a lot of things have taken place in the politics of this country - a lot of changes have taken place. The first important change is that there have been free elections in the country. The results of the free elections are: Mr. David Marshall has been elected the Chief Minister of Singapore by the Labour Party; and Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan and I joined together to contest the elections and we won. This is just repeating what you already know. Our victory was based on one big promise we made to the people; that one big promise made to the people was responsible for our victory and perhaps our victory is without parallel in any free election in the world. That one big promise which we made was that colonialism must end and that this country must be given freedom - that was the promise we made.

Then at the last Federal elections the High Commissioner made an important announcement; he said that self-government will be given to Malaya despite the Emergency. That assurance he gave on behalf of the British Government. In view of that assurance the UMNO Assembly which was recently held - it finished the day before yesterday - passed a very important resolution to the effect that independence for Malaya

must be given by the 31st August 1957, and I have no doubt in my mind whatsoever that we shall possible, achieve this aim and that there will be no conditions attached to that independence. The words "if possible" were included as a result of an amendment to the resolution that I introduced myself and the resolution now reads "if possible by 31 August 1957". My only reason for introducing this amendment was to allow for a smooth handover. We have asked for the appointment of an Independent Commission - a commission whose members will be appointed from outside this country - to try to work out a constitution for this country. This Independent Commission must take time, because the work before it is rather involved and difficult. There are in this country people who are immigrants, people who are lived here for generations and people who are the indigenous people of this country, all these types of people are living together in this country today. Therefore, it must take time to prepare a constitution that will be agreeable to them all.

There is also another important matter which people ought to consider - that is the position of the Malay Rulers. I said in the course of my speech that the Alliance - UMNO, MCA, MIC - are strong enough to be able to demand immediate independence. The only reason why we have not done so is, as I have explained, that there are so many important matters arising out of this independence that it is necessary to take time. I am leaving on the 1st January, 1956 for England, to take part in round-table talks with the British Government. I have no doubt that the talks will produce results and will be successful.

Before my Party came into power - they must have heard it as it was in the papers - I said that I wanted to bring peace to this country and I really meant it. But in my opinion there is no way of bringing about peace other than to offer suitable terms for the surrender of the Communist Party against whom the Government is fighting today. Chin Peng must know their position in respect of this Government. They have been, in the view of the Federation Government, fighting the lawful authority - that is, the Government of the Federation of Malaya. That is the position. For that reason there have been laws passed whereby any communist captured could be sentenced to death and so on, because the Government regarded the insurgents as having committed treason against the Government. So, therefore, these Special Regulations were passed to deal with the disturbances in this country. According to these Emergency Regulations - you know the important ones - those captured could be sentenced to death, those in sympathy with the insurgents are to be detained for an indefinite period and it is not likely that they will be released until the Emergency ends. Also while the Emergency last the Emergency will last.

I, and my colleague, on my right and on my left - and the rest of the people of Malaya want to see the end of the trouble so that we can declare independence and make the country peaceful, happy and prosperous. Malaya included Singapore for this purpose; that is why, as you know, Mr. Marshall is here to take part in the talk; and Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan, my partner and colleague and founder of the Alliance, is here for the same reason. In view of the disturbances in this country, the atrocities being committed, in view of the laws that are in existence to deal with these disturbances I cannot do more that to say that if they accept the amnesty everyone will be pardoned - that is the main theme of the Amnesty. Instead of prosecuting anybody who surrenders under the terms of the Amnesty we promise him safety, and that promise, as I have said, I guarantee with my own life. You may consider the terms not too liberal, but it is up to you to tell me what part of the terms you think unreasonable, or hard and strict, so that my partners and I will be able to consider them. You will see that according to these terms those who come in and surrender will not be prosecuted for any offences connected with the Emergency - any offence committed under Communist direction either before the date of the declaration of this Amnesty or in ignorance of the existence of this Amnesty. You may surrender how and to whom you like including members of the public. There will be no general cease-fire, but the Security Forces will be on the alert to help those who wish to accept this offer, and for this purpose local cease-fire will be arranged. We carried out this part of our promise and ordered cease-fire on all fronts. Unfortunately they on their part continued offensive action, a recent example is the Khea Farm outrage. As a result the cease-fire arrangement was suspended on our side.

And then in the fifth paragraph of the Amnesty Declaration it says that the Government will conduct an investigation on those who surrender. Naturally such an investigation is necessary - in all wars where there has been peace you have got to conduct an investigation on those who surrender - but those who show that they genuinely intend to be loyal to the Government of Malaya and to give up their Communist activities will be helped to regain their normal position in society and will be given the opportunity to be united with their families. It is intended to place restrictions on their liberty for some period. On the other hand, if any of them wish to go back to China or in fact to whatsoever countries they belong - their request will be given due consideration.

I understand they have rejected these terms. For what reason I would be glad to hear from them. Perhaps my colleague and friend Mr David Marshall, might care to address them? Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan, would you like to add anything? Has what I said has been all right?

M. Well, as far as I am concerned, it has been a campaign of hate that has corroded our civic life, a campaign of violence, brutality and atrocities that has achieved nothing except misery of the people. We understand that there are some genuine nationalist in the movement. I distinguish between nationalists and those who seek to make us a colony of a foreign ideology. To those nationalist I say they must find out, become convinced that the constitutional peaceful methods the rest of the country have been pursuing are the methods along which their welfare lies, and that violence can only breed violence and misery. They themselves must have seen that they are out of step completely in this age, when people talk of co-existence and non-violence. To those nationalist I say:

"You are welcome back to the healthy stream of constitutional progress with your fellow citizens. We will forgive your past delusions and errors, if you yourselves are now conscious that along that path only misery for the people lies, and are prepared to come in and live in peace with the rest of the population."

The Federation has suffered a great deal more than Singapore from these communist brutalities. But Singapore has suffered as well. I ask for an end to this campaign of hate and violence, and for all good men to join together in the formation of a democratic nation. If that spirit can be accepted, all else is detail and should be easily worked out.

T: There is another matter which I would like to add, that I do not come here as the spokesman for the British Government, neither am I the stooge or running dog of colonialism. I am the servant of the people and I represent the people who have elected me to power, and I do genuinely seek peace for this country, Mr. Marshall and I wish to make it clear that you are free to say what you like, we will not mind.

C: First and foremost, I wish to say that it is precisely because we realise that you are not the spokesman of the British Government and are not the running dog of the British Government, the stooge of the British Government, that we have come out to meet you at the risk of our lives. I am not exaggerating when I say that we came out at the risk of our lives, because the present situation shows that the British armed forces are still in a superior position even though the cease-fire agreement will stand for ten days after the meeting. The British armed forces possess more modern equipments and therefore are still in the superior position.

I am not coming here to argue question of ideology, but if questions of peace are to be discussed, we are fully prepared to do so. Peace is the common demand of all people. We also hope that peace will be realised

early so that the misery of the people can be reduced. War is war. War will certainly bring misery to the people and will also bring hatred. If I remember correctly, Mr. Nehru made a speech when he passed through Penang at the end of the last year. In that speech he said that violence will only bring about misery and bring about horrors. We agreed with him on this point. Even though the war was still going on at that time, we paid very much attention to his speech.

It seems to me that it is not necessary to discuss now who is responsible for the present war in Malaya and who is to be held responsible for the miseries that have been brought about. The reason why we reject the Amnesty offer is very simple, because the conditions offered in this Amnesty Declaration differ little from the existing surrender terms, but we are prepared to discuss this question. In the Amnesty terms the principle is to disregard past behavior and this shows a concialiatory spirit with which we agree. It is because of this that we have said in the past that we are prepared to discuss ways and means to end the present war on the principle of this concialiatory spirit. We also recognise the efforts made by the Tunku and Dato Sir Cheng Lock Tan to bring the war to an end, and we have mentioned this in our statements before.

T: Well, I did say that in the course of my various speeches that I want you to come out, so that we could fight together for independence for Malaya by constitutional means and I intended that sentiments to be conveyed here under paragraph (5) which says:

"Those who show that they genuinely intend to be loyal to the Government of Malaya and give up their Communist activities will be helped to regain their normal position in society." That is the point. Once they have regained their normal position in society, there will no be difference between us, or between anybody. We will be the same. But first you have got to convince us that you will be loyal to Malaya. To be just anti-British does not suffice to indicate that one is loyal to Malaya. Therefore as I said just now, you have to prove that this is the country to which you really owe allegiance; that this is the country in which you wish to live and in which you wish to die and for this country you are prepared to die like we are - that is the point. The position is this: that today the people in Malaya, one and all, regard the communist activities as something entirely foreign to the Malayan way of life. They regard the communist party as belonging to a power outside this country and consider its members give allegiance to that foreign country and not to Malaya. Therefore, it is necessary for you to prove and to convience the people that it is not so, that your duty, your loyalty, your love, your everything belong to this country. That is the position; that is why I said in this letter "those who show that they genuinely intend to be loyal to the Govern-

ment of Malaya and to give up their communist activities will be helped to regain their normal position in society". Once you have joined this society, taken your place in society, as I said before, there is no difference between you, I or anybody else.

You said just now that the Amnesty terms are no different from the surrender terms. There is this difference - the pardon which we promise those who surrender. Before the Amnesty they were liable to be prosecuted, that is not so under the Amnesty as this gives absolute pardon for any crime which may have been committed in ignorance of the Amnesty. There is also this difference. The surrender terms were made by the Government of Malaya, the Amnesty was made by the representatives of the people. It was unfortunate, however, that the first leaflet flown into the jungle bore the signature of General Bourne. This was done because originally we wanted to convince the communists that General Bourne, who is in charge of operations, had agreed with me in offering the Amnesty showing that it did not come from me alone but had been supported by the Director of Operations. I did sign afterwards. If you like to ask or talk about these terms you should do so and we will be prepared to listen.

(Note: Meeting broke off for ten minutes for refreshments and so on)

Press photographers' session before the meeting

The Communist side at the meeting Rashid Maidin, Chin Peng, Chen Tien

2nd SESSION

T. Shall we continue? Dato would you like to say something?

D. As the M.C.P. consists mostly of Chinese, it is the Chinese community who have suffered most in the last eight years of the Emergency and therefore as Chinese we particularly wish that there will be peace and an end to this war. We hope at this meeting to put forward propositions which will end the Emergency. There is no hope of the M.C.P. winning. Why waste money unnecessarily on the Emergency, there is no point in that. The vast majority of the people of this country are not in favour of the communists because they are not working for a prosperous Malaya and communism sets class against class and causes disorder. The other reason is that communism is distasteful because it causes violence. What we want in this country is peaceful co-operation and co-existence for us all and this can be obtained if you will come out of the jungle and become peaceful citizens and be loyal to this country. We want this Emergency to end so that there will be peace in Malaya. Communism is like a disease sucking out the blood of Malaya and will cause the ruin of the country.

T. I read with interest the manifesto of the Communist Party which was delivered to me through Mr.Too Joon Hing and I find that it is quite good. That is what everybody is aiming at today - peaceful government and administration of this country.

D. On the basis of that manifesto there is no quarrel between the M.C.P. and the people, the continuance of the Emergency is a sheer waste.

T. You mention in the manifesto fundamental freedoms - freedom of speech, freedom of movement, human rights. We have accepted that too and we are carrying all that out. As to the Malay language being the national language of the Federation, we are carrying out that too and we are also glad that other nationalities are being encouraged to study the language. As regards the opening up of land that is being done. Government is permitting the opening up of virgin land to enable people to cultivate it. All these things are being done. I read through the manifesto and I can't see very much difference between theirs and ours.

Now talking about the Amnesty, what have you to say?

C. May I have two points cleared? One is about "loyalty to Malaya". May I know the actual meaning of "loyalty to Malaya"?

T. Well, one of the things the Malayan people expect is that while you live in Malaya you must give up your communist activities - activities such as are being carried out today. The Chief Minister, Singapore, regards all the subversive activities in Singapore as very detrimental to Malaya, such as the strikes and so on that are taking place in Singapore. When strikes are legal we allow that, but strikes for something that is illegal that is different. Strikes are being carried out today by people who declare them for no other reason except out of sheer spite.

There is another matter which is accepted by the communists:- that they don't like bosses. One cannot help being born into a class, one cannot help being born rich, one cannot help being born lucky in business and making money, but I admit that people born rich or who have made money in business, should have part of their money distributed for the welfare of the country. We are doing this by income tax and other taxation and all the taxation realised is used for the building of schools, etc. This system is better than that advocated by the Communists. They may not like the institution of Rulers in a government, but to us they do no harm. They are decorations of the country and they do help to keep steady the different elements in their States. The majority of the population in this country are Malays and they have no difficulty in recognising the Rulers as the Heads of their religion in their States. The Alliance is prepared to uphold the prestige of the Rulers as Heads of their States. They will become constitutional Rulers in that they will be more like figure heads. Their position will be such that they will not get mixed up in politics or in the administration. They will be debarred from direct administration or control over political matters, for which the Government with its elected members is responsible. Let me say that in the manifesto which I read just now, it says nothing about the Rulers. The Rulers of Malaya are not rich; they have not amassed wealth like the Indian Rajas. They are paid just enough allowance to live and maintain their dignity. Nevertheless to Malays, they are very important. They are the guardians of our religion, they are guardians of our customs and adat; they are a constant reminder as to how we should behave. Therefore, one of the ingredients of loyalty is that we should uphold the dignity of the Rulers.

D. If a man wants to live in Malaya he should assume that responsibilities and duties of a good citizen.

M. It seems to me that this is a rather sterile discussion. We are really here to find out to what extent we can achieve an end to the violence which

they themselves admit has led to misery for the people. The people want peace and prosperity for the whole of Malaya. As to the question of loyalty, as I understand it, loyalty is respect for the people's welfare, respect for the individual personality, harmony and harmonious relations between the races and effort to achieve the common good by constitutional means, loyalty to the Government of the day and loyalty to the constitutional processes in bringing about such changes which we sincerely believe are for the welfare of the people. Not hatred or violence, they are not part of democracy. Absolute dedication to the welfare of the country not seeking to make it a province of another foreign idealogy, but absolute dedication to this country itself and to the people.

Having said that, may I suggest that we discuss in detail the Amnesty terms themselves. They have started off by saying, that they did not want to discuss ideology, nor is it my intention to discuss ideology. I am discussing merely the methods by which they seek to achieve their ideology and am trying to point out that their methods can only bring about misery. I am glad to see that they admit it. So let us get away from ideology and consider the actual position.

We believe, the Singapore Government believes and join wholeheartedly with Tunku Abdul Rahman in believing that the Amnesty terms are honourable. They give an opportunity to the dedicated nationalists to come back to the main stream of healthy public life and to assist us in promoting a great nation. Malaya has a tremendous international status if we can keep racial harmony and democratic processes. Now within that context and in the light of term 5, just what is it the Amnesty seeks? Firstly, put down their bullets and firearms and come back and seek harmonious relations, away from hatred.

C. I still wish to clear certain points. May I know whether the giving up of communist activities means the dissolution of the M.C.P.?

T. Yes, more or less. Giving up communist activities means they have to dissolve the Communist Party.

C. On the Government side, may I know whether there are any constructive suggestions?

T. I have no other suggestion except to say that they come out and take their place in society.

M. I agree with that. I have defended a lot of Communists and I recognise their courage, their sincerity and their dedication. But what I abhor is that

this courage, this strength of human energy which they have, should be utilised for the evil ends of hatred and violence, creating disorder, chaos, bitterness, misery. I say, we are on the threshold of nationhood and I join the Tunku wholeheartedly in saying that I sincerely believe that we are on the point of achieving independence. We need all decent men who are true Malayans to put their shoulders to the wheel of our common aim for a far more glorious future that we can ever conceive, because this is not only a rich territory, it is in a magnificent position to join East and West - and they can do their share as human beings n this process. Their activities have indeed been a setback to our economic development. Let us have an end to this. You say you are right. Very well, I think you are wrong. But the point is, you must see that today your way is definitely wrong, you are out of step and you are merely delaying the progress of the people. Put down your arms, hand them in and accept these terms.

Now I would again stress that you are wrong as far as Singapore is concerned. Communism has been associated so strongly with brutality, with violence with hatred, that it is anathema and we cannot recognise the Communist Party as such, but if in the days to come, as part of the people, you seek to form your party at some future date - whether you call it Communist or otherwise - that will be for the Government of the day to consider. But let me say now for the people of Singapore and in respect of the Government of Singapore, we will not recognise the Communist Party at present, because it has been far too long associated with the activities that all humanity abhours.

M. Now, what have you got to say?

C. Mr. Marshall, if I make too hasty a statement, I hope you will pardon me.

M. Please, I have been indulging in them myself. Go right ahead.

C. The Singapore Government is a popularly elected Government. If the Singapore Government will follow the wishes of the electorate, if the Government of Singapore has control over internal security problems, if the Singapore Government has absolute power, then the question of recognising the M.C.P. is not of importance at all, because that question will be decided by the electorate. On the point of recognition of the M.C.P. I believe that not all the electorate, not the majority of the electorate are on the side of Government.

(Translator explains about translation difficulties)

M. You can answer him that in a democracy, the people speak through