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THESIS

THE ROLE AND MISSION OF THE
MILITARY IN A POST-COLONIAL,
DEVELOPING NATION:
A STUDY OF THE MALAYSIAN
ARMED FORCES, 1970-1983

STEPHEN C. BALL

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13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) This thesis looks critically at the role and mission of the armed forces in developing, post-colonial nations in Southeast Asia, specifically, Malaysia. The argument is, essentially, that the military and other coercive institutions should be viewed not so much for their martial characteristics, but more for their social, political, and economic institution-building attributes. This notion has been argued previously, however, whenever Malaysia's post-colonial development was discussed, the role of the military has been down played. This is attributable to the apolitical nature of the Malaysian Armed Forces. I argue, however, that there is a paradigm for development of these nations, Malaysia included, and that in this paradigm the military is not only prominent, but is essential for political stability, social mobility, and economic prosperity.
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**THE ROLE AND MISSION OF THE MILITARY
IN A POST-COLONIAL, DEVELOPING NATION:
A STUDY OF THE MALAYSIAN ARMED FORCES, 1970-1983**

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Cornell University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts



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ABSTRACT

The institution of the armed forces has played a (if not *the*) prominent role in the social, political, and economic development of post-colonial Southeast Asia since World War Two. In fact, in Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Burma, the armed forces still manage, control and/or significantly influence their respective state political and economic bureaucracies. The armed forces in Malaysia, however, did not become the political or economic force that other Southeast Asian militaries did – this difference served as the germ from which this study evolved.

For comparative purposes, the focus of this thesis concerns the militaries of Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia. Each country experienced similar phases of development after attainment of independence. Initially, each country witnessed a dramatic change in leadership precipitated or followed by some sort of national emergency – the attempted coup d'état in Indonesia, Martial Law in the Philippines, and the violent communal riots in Malaysia in May 1969.

Throughout the 1970's each country's military grew in manpower and strength, however only Malaysia's military maintained an apolitical status. This fact is all the more intriguing when one realizes that Malaysia spent a higher percentage of her national budget and maintained a significantly higher

soldiers per citizen ratio than either Indonesia or the Philippines throughout the 70's.

With the backdrop of the Communist insurgency and the May 13th Riots, security and restoration of order became cornerstones of state-building in Malaysia. Within this context the New Economic Policy was drafted and by the late 1970's, Malaysia became a new economic power in ASEAN, Southeast Asia, and the world. Security and restoration of order became the implied and explicit tasks of the Malaysia Armed Forces, and was eventually articulated into the policy of *KESBAN* – an acronym for *keselamatan* (security) and *pembangunan* (development) – or the military's war of national development.

I contend that in Malaysia the military was as integral (if not more so) to national development as were the militaries in Indonesia or the Philippines. This deviates from the traditional notion that Malaysia's social, political, and economic advances occurred without military involvement, while most other Southeast Asian countries advanced under the watchful eye of military generals. It was Malaysia's military, though, that enabled the New Economic Policy to succeed. The military guarded against a reoccurrence of May 1969; defended Malay hegemony, and thus the national leadership; and, within the institutional infrastructure of the military, the military provided a means for social, political, and economic advancement of Malays.

Therefore, the military in Malaysia, as in the other post-colonial nations in Southeast Asia, should be viewed and understood within the context of its role and mission in the overall state-building process and not merely as the coercive arm or protector of the state.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Stephen Carter Ball is a major in the United States Army. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Maine at Orono in History in 1977. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Signal Corps and has served as a platoon leader in the Federal Republic of Germany; was a member of a select study group in Augusta, Georgia; an advisor to Reserve and National Guard units in Utah, Idaho and Montana; and Signal Company Commander in Tacoma, Washington. He graduated from the Defense Language Institute's Basic Indonesian Course in 1989.

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to Allane, Ben, and Jonathan, without whom I would not be in this position today.

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My academic pursuits at Cornell would not have been as successful or nearly as productive if it were not for Olin library, its staff (in particular, John Badgley, curator of the Echols Collection), and the faculty of the Southeast Asia Program. I am especially indebted to Professors Takashi Shiraishi and David K. Wyatt for their timely guidance and accurate critiques; often providing the exact remedy when all seemed lost. I also thank fellow SEAP graduate students, particularly Yang Sam and Kimo Gabriel, for the intellectual stimulation, support and friendship.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

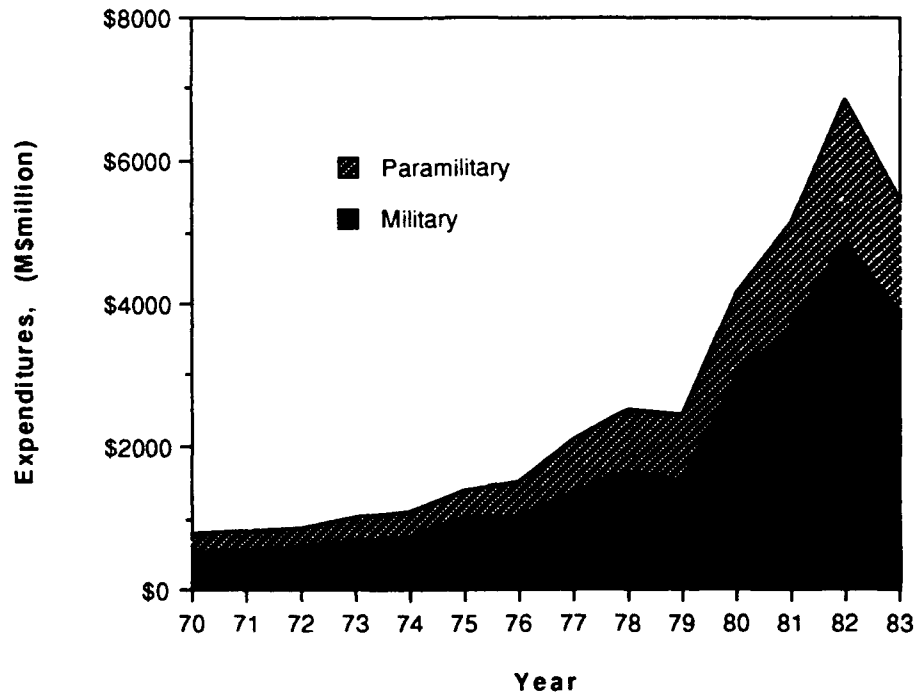
Since 1979 there has been a tremendous military buildup in Malaysia, in terms of size, budgetary expenditure, and defense outlays. This is all the more striking if compared with Indonesia and the Philippines. In Indonesia the military took over power with the rise of Suharto and in the Philippines the military formed the most important power base of the Marcos dictatorship. The military in Malaysia remained obedient and subservient to civilian authority, yet the military buildup in Malaysia far surpassed that in Indonesia and the Philippines. In studies thus far, it is commonly argued that this build-up is the result of the perceived threat, both internal and external, and above all of the fear of racial riots, communist insurgency, and the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. However, Malaysian police alone had more than enough capability to maintain internal law and order, the communist insurgency was dying, and the kind of military buildup that took place in Malaysia in the early 1980's does not indicate that it was indeed to counter the threat posed by the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. This suggests that we must seek to understand the Malaysian military buildup not in terms of perceived threat, but rather in the larger context of the Malaysian state-building in the post-1969 era; i.e., the creating of Malaysia dominated—both politically and economically—by a Malay controlled state apparatus.

Analysis of Malaysian government documents (primarily, national budgets and parliamentary debates) reveals an interesting relationship between its growth and development as an independent nation, and the increase in both size and capabilities of the armed forces—a growth in 'coercive power' that did not necessarily correlate to the threat (primarily from a lingering communist insurgency). The rapid and costly development of the Malaysian Armed Forces, as displayed by budgetary expenditures, (see Graph 1.1) when juxtaposed with the diminished threat of communist insurgency¹ (dropping off significantly by 1977), severe inflation in the mid-70's,² and increased participation in the economy by *bumiputera* demands further insight. Between 1970 and 1983 the strength of the Malaysian armed forces grew from 57,154 men to 136,500 and the annual armed forces expenditures mushroomed from M\$803.2(million) to M\$5,478.2.0—a 239% increase in manpower and a 682% increase in expenditures.³ Under Prime Minister Datuk Hussein Onn, total expenditures on the armed forces more than doubled the accumulative armed forces expenditures of both Prime Ministers Tunku Abdul

¹"Operation Cooperation" Asian Defence Journal, (ADJ), August 1977; pp. 18-21. In a post counter-insurgency operation interview a Malaysia General officer comments, "The beginning of the end of the communist terrorists is around the corner."

²According to a speech given by Tuan v. David in the *Dewan Rakyat* on 18 April 1974, "the burning issue among the people is inflation. The people of this country are almost on the verge of starvation. The 'have-nots' are in great distress and struggling to survive in the midst of spiralling prices. Prices of essential commodities have risen beyond proportion." From Parliamentary Debates, Dewan Rakyat, (PD/DR), IV/2, 18 April 1974, cols. 263-264.

³For 1970 manpower and both expenditure figures, Government of Malaysia, The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government, Kuala Lumpur, 1971 and 1984. The 1983 manpower figure is derived from International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1984-1985, (Praeger Publishers, New York).



Graph 1.1. Malaysian Armed Forces Expenditures, 1970-1983

Source: Malaysia, *The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government*; Data compiled by the author from the annual budgets, 1970 - 1982; Kuala Lumpur, Government Printer. With regards to this study, the term 'paramilitary' refers to the Internal Security elements in Malaysia, primarily the Police Field Force and the Special Branch.

Rahman and Tun Abdul Razak, from 1963-1975.⁴ The most significant increase occurred after a concerted modernization and expansion program was initiated in 1979. The net result was that 1982 expenditures, in absolute dollars, were 282% higher than in 1979.⁵ The growth of Malaysia's Armed Forces in the 70's was, in fact, substantial—both in absolute dollars and manpower.

The rapid growth of the armed forces can be explained by two reasons. First, by the national elections of 1969, Malaysia was determined to sever the quasi-dependent relationship they had enjoyed with Great Britain since independence. One of the results of this policy was that Malaysia had to develop an armed force capable of independently defending her sovereignty. For Malaysia, every conflict since WWII had been led, funded, and, in some part, manned by the British. Furthermore, for nearly every senior officer in the Malaysian Armed Forces, conducting warfare included using English weapons according to Sandhurst principles under the command, many times, of British officers. The task of fielding an independent armed forces, essentially, meant

⁴Expenditures for armed forces includes both military and internal security. Under Tunku Abdul Rahman expenditures, in absolute dollars, were M\$17,879.0 million, while the total expenditures from 1963 to 1969 were M\$8,584.2 million - therefore, in the six years under Datuk Hussein Onn, Malaysia expended over double the amount spent on armed forces during the 13 years, from the birth of the Federation of Malaysia to the sudden death of Tun Abdul Razak. The years prior to the Federation of Malaysia, 1957 - 1962, are not included in this comparison as most of the defence burden, both manpower and dollars, was included within the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement (AMDA) and, therefore, the amount that Malaya spent is negligible. AMDA was signed on 12 October 1957. Chandran Jeshurun argues in his book Malaysian Defence Policy, that "it cannot be denied that the policy of military dependency which was inherent in AMDA" extended the pre-independence relationship between Malaya and England. Independent development of Malaya's state apparatus was stalled by the Emergency and settlement of the Singapore question. It was not until after the birth of the Federation of Malaysia that the development of Malaysia's armed forces truly began. C. Jeshurun, Malaysia Defence Policy: A Study in Parliamentary Attitudes, 1963-1973, (Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1980), p. xxvii.

⁵Malaysia, Anggaran Belanjawan, Kuala Lumpur, 1979; and Malaysia, Anggaran Belanjawan: Program dan Prestasi, Kuala Lumpur, 1980, 1982, and 1983. In real terms the expenditures had doubled.

building a force—i.e., building command and staff officer schools, training centers to teach the ever increasing technical skills required to operate and support new weapons systems, and maintenance facilities with the equipment and manpower needed to keep planes, ship, and tanks operating.

The second reason for the rapid growth of the Malaysian Armed Forces was NEP—the economic plan that became Malaysia's state policy in 1971. The development of all state institutions in Malaysia was significantly effected by the post-election riots of 13 May 1969. The 'reconstruction' policies that followed, under the direction of the the National Operations Council (NOC), were essentially designed to restore order, "correct the economic imbalance", and enact laws to prohibit public challenge of 'sensitive issues' in order to eliminate the possibility of a reoccurrence of 13 May 1969.⁶ The solution for reconstruction after the communal riots became embodied in the New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP became the 'supra-policy' that corrected all the social, political, and economic problems in Malaysia.

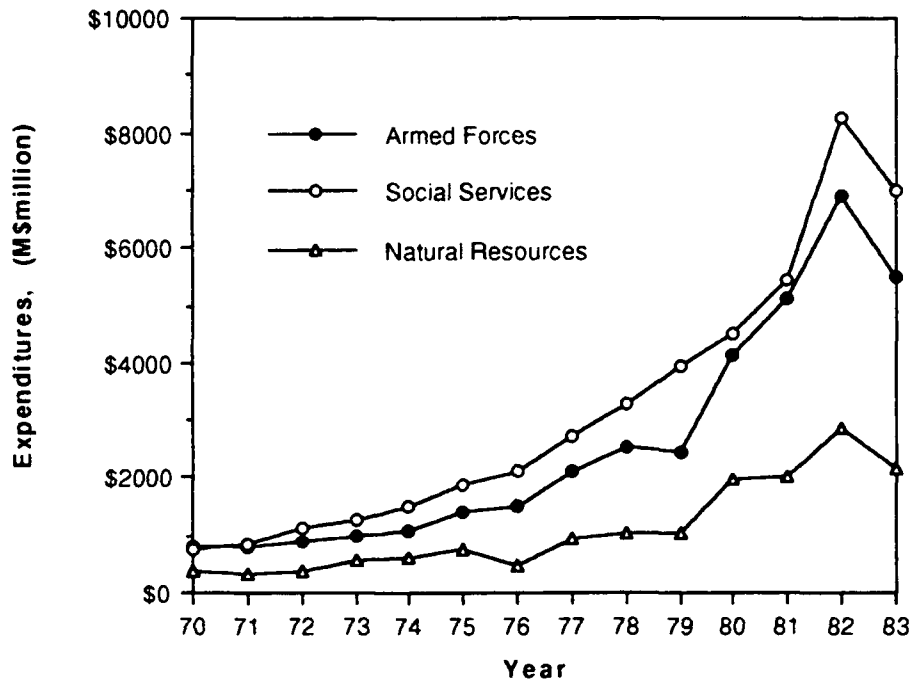
Under the New Economic Policy development will be undertaken in such a manner that in the process of growth and expansion, it makes the maximum contribution to the achievement of national unity.⁷

Every institution benefitted from NEP. The significant growth of the armed forces was in direct correlation with the development of other institutions in the state bureaucracy. Graphs 1.2 depicts the annual expenditures for the Armed Forces, Social Services (which includes the Departments of Health, Education, Housing, Labor and Welfare, and Culture, Youth and Sports), and Natural

⁶K.von Vorys, Democracy Without Consensus: Communalism and Political Stability in Malaysia. (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1975), pp. 386-422. Also see Malaysia, Second Malaysia Plan, 1971-1975, (Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1971), p. 1.

⁷Government of Malaysia, Second Malaysia Plan, 1971-1975, (Kuala Lumpur, 1971), p. 3.

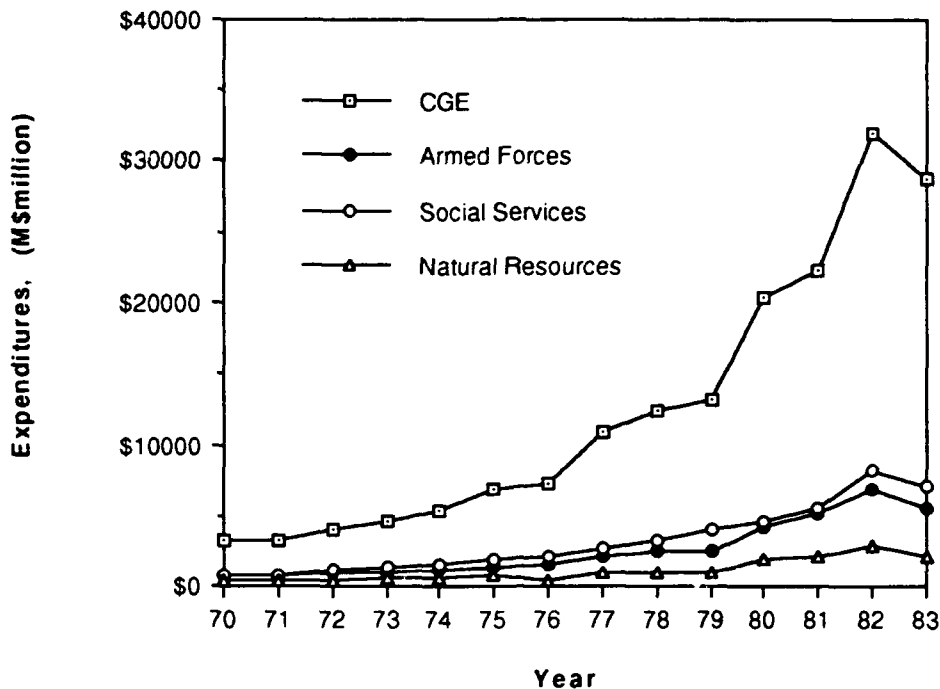
Resources; Graph 1.3 depicts those expenditures compared to the annual Central Government Expenditures (CGE).



Graph 1.2. Annual Expenditures, 1970-1983.

Source: Malaysia, *The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government*, Kuala Lumpur; author compiled data from the annual Expenditures Budgets 1970-1984.

The armed forces expenditures during this period, essentially, maintained the same relationship with the other state institutions. The comparison with the CGE further supports the claim that armed forces expenditures were not extraordinary, but in line with expenditures on the entire state bureaucracy.



Graph 1.3. Annual Expenditures, 1970-1983.

Source: Malaysia, *The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government*, Kuala Lumpur; author compiled data from the annual Expenditures Budgets 1970-1984.

Clearly, there is an association between Armed Forces', other state institutions', and the central government expenditures; where increases of the CGE, generally, match increases throughout the state bureaucracy. The rise is continual throughout the 70's, with the only significant increase occurring after 1976. Malaysia's relative economic boom in the later part of the 70's resulted in significant spending in all government areas, as shown by the rapid increase in CGE after 1979.

The question remains: what explains Malaysia's significant armed forces, in relation to her neighbor states? The military was clearly apolitical and, by 1977, the threat of an insurgency was minimal; therefore, what was the role of the Malaysian Armed Forces? In Indonesia the military was doctrinally bound to a civilian mission with *Dwi Fungsi*, where the armed forces was a "military force" and a "social-political force", thereby involving the military in "ideological, political, social, economic, cultural, and religious" activities.⁸ In the Philippines the military was openly the most powerful institution in the state during martial law under Marcos. The Malaysian Armed Forces were not employed like either of the armed forces in Indonesia or the Philippines.

Can the armed forces buildup in Malaysia be explained in ethnic terms; or, phrased another way, was there a correlation between the buildup of the armed forces in Malaysia and the ethnic composition of the that force? Enloe makes a good argument that, in essence, the institution of the Armed Forces has always been a haven for Malays and, therefore, the predominance of Malays in the Armed Forces has been accepted.⁹ The "close association between Malays and the military, the institution which comes nearest to embodying state authority," continued throughout the 70's.¹⁰

Finally, what was the mission of the Malaysian Armed Forces, and more importantly, what were the reasons for its tremendous buildup in the 70's? Was the *raison d'être* of the force to protect the state from internal or foreign aggression, or to serve as the 'coercive' arm of the state bureaucracy which

⁸Angkatan Darat 1965: Main book, chap. 3; as cited in H. Crouch, The Army and Politics in Indonesia. (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1978), p. 345.

⁹C. Enloe, "The Issue Saliency of the Military-Ethnic Connection: Some Thoughts on Malaysia", Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Toronto, Canada, March 19-20, 1976; pp. 8-17.

¹⁰*ibid.*, p. 15.

defended, and best projected, *bumiputera* hegemony? These are the issues of this thesis.

Chapter Two

BIRTH OF AN ARMED FORCE, 1933-1968

Let us face the facts, and the facts are that we have at our command an army of less than one division in strength; we have no air force, not even a single plane or a single man; we have no navy, not even a single sailor and we have not even a single sea-going craft. With the revenue at our command we can never be able to build our forces to the strength which we require for the defence of our country.¹¹

One of the most significant and sustaining legacies of British colonial rule in Malay(si)a was the bureaucratic and economic systems emplaced and institutionalized by the colonizer. These systems provided a unique organizational foundation, which would later prove critical in the formation of Malaysia as a sovereign nation. Part and parcel of the British colonial system was the institution of the armed forces.

I have considered the "armed forces" as an aggregate force of military and police (specifically, the Internal Security elements of the police; the Police Field Force and the Special Branch), rather than just the military or police, because both elements have played the critical role of state protector and internal controller, either jointly or independently, in Malay(si)a. The police, or better

¹¹Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman arguing for ratification of the the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement in the Malayan Legislative Council, Kuala Lumpur, Federation of Malaya Government Printer, 2 October 1957, col. 3382; cited in Zakaria bin Haji Ahmad, "Malaysia", Military-Civilian Relations in South-East Asia, ed. by Zakaria b. Haji Ahmad and H. Crouch, (Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1985), p. 126.

Royal Malay Police (RMP), were the initial "coercive" element designed and developed by the British to maintain regime control.

The Police as a Combat Power

The British relied most heavily on the police to coordinate and conduct field operations during the Emergency, 1948-1960. To a great degree, this was a consequence of the long standing relationship the state police had with the British.¹² The end result of this policy, from the perspective of institutional development, was that the police were considered the dominant combat power, rather than the military, in Malaysia throughout the 60's.

After World War II, the British returned to Malaya; however rule was not the same. In an effort to 'restabilize' order after the tumultuous war years, the British published the Malayan Union Scheme in 1946 in an effort to bring all of Malaya (Federated and Unfederated States) under one British Governor. A significant result of the Malayan Union was the reaction it elicited from ethnic Malays. The British scheme specifically did not take into account any special or priority status for the *bumiputera*, as was the case prior to WWII since initially being addressed in the 1874 Treaty of Pangkor.

¹²For a more thorough historical account of early British Colonial police in the Federated Malay States(FMS) see Zakaria bin Haji Ahmad, The Police and Political Development in Malaysia: Change, Continuity and Institution - Building of a "Coercive" Apparatus in a Developing, Ethically Divided Society; Ph.D. dissertation for Massachusetts Institute of Technology, May 1977, pp. 31- 48. Briefly, the development of police units, or institutions, began on a state by state basis in the FMS and spread throughout the colony. The most significant displays of coercive authority were seen when order was swiftly and effectively restored by the colonial/indigenous police units after local rebellions or 'social unrest' in Perak(1875), Selangor and Sungei Ujong(1876), Rembau(1884), the Pahang Rebellion(1891-1894), and Trengganu(1927). Although independently sanctioned and organized, the police served as the primary authority institution throughout the Federated and Unfederated Malay States from the early days of British colonial rule until the Japanese invasion on 10 December 1941. Each state had a police unit which fell under a Police Commissioner; however, more times than not, the separate police commanders would answer directly to the State Residents, the senior British official in each state, thus perpetrating the non-indigenous coercive control over Malay(s)ia.

Soon after the Malayan Union was introduced, a meeting was held by the Malay Association; and the United Malay National Organization (UMNO) was born. The fundamental platform of UMNO was the abolishment of the Malayan Union Scheme. The non-Malay community soon established the All—Malayan Council of Joint Action(AMCJA) which backed the Malayan Union Scheme. Thus begins the contemporary history of political confrontation between Malay and non—Malay. This heightened political period was coincident with increased Communist Party of Malay (CPM) activities. The British were worried about the Communist Party influence in Malaya and felt that the most secure ally against the CPM was UMNO, and therefore relented to modify the Malay Union Scheme in order to keep UMNO in their camp.

The Federation of Malaya was drawn up in May 1947, readdressing the 'special' or preferred status for *bumiputera* issue. The agreement also promised eventual independence to Malaya. The stage was now set for political action by the opposition CPM against the British supported UMNO. CPM, predominantly an ethnic-Chinese organization, drew much of their support from urban and industrial-center based populations. CPM called for labor strikes and a 'peaceful struggle' against the formation of a *bumiputera* Malaya. The CPM were determined to cripple the economy by hitting tin mines and rubber plantations. The network of Chinese in almost every village and hamlet presented a tremendous guerilla warfare problem for the British. Some 300 strikes occurred, and soon the conflict clearly became the Chinese versus the *bumiputera* .

On 18 June 1948 the British declared a State of Emergency. Simultaneous to the declaration of a State of Emergency, the British reorganized the police into a centrally controlled, paramilitary force (1948) with

the primary mission of eradicating the expressed threat of a communist insurgency, levied by the CPM. The most successful campaign carried out by the CPM culminated with the assassination of the British High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney on 6 October 1951.¹³

According to the British, internal security was considered a 'law and order' issue, and as such The Emergency became a 'police action'¹⁴. The refined mission statement for the police, driven by the insurgency threat, resulted in the development of a force designed to carry out combat operations in the areas most densely populated with Communist Terrorists (CT): the jungle / mountainous regions on the northern Malaysia—Thailand border and along the Sarawak—Indonesian border in the Borneo territory. Units first were organized as 'jungle squads' and 'jungle companies'; these would later form the paramilitary Police Field Force (PFF).

The 'jungle squads' (1948-1951), initially called 'flying squads,' were comprised of 15-20 regular police personnel and raised at police district level. The units were commanded by District Police Commanders and their operations were 'restricted' to their respective districts. With the increased tempo of operations after 1951, larger police 'jungle squads' were formed into 'jungle companies.' In total, there would be 21 such 'jungle companies,' each now raised at State level.¹⁵

¹³For an excellent history of the Emergency see Anthony Short, The Communist Insurrection in Malaya, 1948-1960, (Frederick Muller Ltd., London, 1975).

¹⁴Zakaria, The Police and Political Development in Malaysia, op.cit., p. 47.

¹⁵Zara Dian, "Paramilitary Forces: Focus on the Royal Malaysian Police", Asian Defence Journal, (ADJ), March/April 1980, pp. 76-82.

The new counter-insurgency operation, as expressed in the Briggs Plan¹⁶ essentially swept Malaya into the war. Conscription was initiated for the police and military, employment was controlled at the government level, and 'special powers' were promulgated, providing for, among other measures, the institution of curfews and restricted movement of the population.

The Plan maximized the use of police intelligence, to the extent that much of the eventual success of the counter-insurgency operation was attributed to the police intelligence gathering unit, designated 'Special Branch' (SB).¹⁷ The capabilities and ultimate effectiveness of SB became evident when during The Emergency, "this Branch had been able to virtually pin-point every known CT in the jungle"¹⁸ In addition, the combat force of the police organization, the 'jungle companies,' was modified to reflect the larger, more centrally controlled nature of the Briggs Plan. The state-raised 'jungle companies' were consolidated into the Police Field Force (PFF); eventually there were 7 PFF's with 8-12 platoons in each.¹⁹

The Emergency was a police conflict, both, qualitatively, in the design and management of combat as specified in the Briggs Plan and, quantitatively, in the number of casualties suffered during the period. The police casualties

¹⁶See A. Short, The Communist Insurrection in Malaya, 1948-1960, op. cit., . The insurgency continued to flourish in the jungles along the Thailand-Malaysia border after initial police successes were stalled by the CPM. Much of the success of the CPM was attributed to the network of *Min Yuen* (support organizations) that the CPM were exploiting throughout the northwestern, peninsular coast of Malaya. The insurgency developed to such an extent that the British brought in a new Director of Operations in the Emergency, Lieutenant-General Sir Harold Briggs. Briggs' expressed priority targets were the *Min Yuen* and the primary combat forces of the CPM, the Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA). The Briggs' Plan was founded on the use of the police to secure and 'win over' the populated areas in an effort to build up an intelligence network within the villages. The intelligence network would lead to the breakup of the *Min Yuen*, thus depriving the MRLA of their primary means of support and ultimately resulting in the defeat of the MRLA.

¹⁷Zakaria, The Police and Political Development in Malaysia, op.cit., p. 47.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Zara Dian, "Paramilitary Police Forces", op.cit., p. 78.

(1346 killed, 1601 wounded) were double the number of all other Security Forces' casualties; and of the approximately 10,700 CPM casualties, the police were responsible for 5,900.²⁰

From 1961-1969 only minor changes to the PFF organization and mission were initiated. After the Emergency the PFF continued to conduct cross-border operations, garrison (or guard) duty and serve as a 'general public order' reserve, essentially becoming the Police Commissioner's flexible reserve.

The Army

The creation of Malaysian Army can be traced back to 1 March 1933 when 25 recruits were inducted into the British Malaya Regiment at Port Dickson as an experimental unit. The formation of an 'all Malay' military unit was carried out by the British Army essentially to fulfill a "frequently expressed desire" by the sultans and their subjects in the FMS.²¹ Advertisements were placed in the Malay press and a Regimental Selection Board was established to screen the applicants. The initial responses received, for the most part, were from prominent Malay families, providing, what was to be, an excellent foundation for this 'experimental' unit.²²

²⁰Zakaria b. Haji Ahmad, *The Police and Political Development in Malaysia*, op. cit.; pp. 46-47.

²¹D. Ramli, "History of the Malay Regiment, 1933-1942", in *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (JMBRAS)*, Vol. 38, July 1965, pp. 199-243. According to Ramli, the scheme was never deemed 'practical' by the British. The oft raised fear was based on arming and providing military training to indigenous peoples who had displayed a propensity for revolt and feuding against and amongst themselves. The 'experiment' was agreed upon with the intention to determine "how the Malays would react to military discipline and ... if they would be made into really efficient regular soldiers". The predominant feeling was that Malays were 'lackadaisical' and would reject discipline. Selection was restricted to the FMS as they would bear the cost of the experiment, and it was generally accepted that the subjects from the Federated Malay States were somehow more loyal than those from the Unfederated Malay States (UMS). Subsequent to the first enlistment drive, recruitment was opened up to the UMS, however their numbers could not exceed twenty percent of the Regiment.

²²*Ibid.* Recruiting drives were subsequently conducted, where the British recruiting teams were assisted by *kampong* (village) *penghulu* (headman). The first commanding officer of the

Training had gone well and the recruits had taken to the British military system with much more maturity and sincerity than had been anticipated; in fact from 1933—1938, the only reported discipline case was a single desertion.²³ After the five months of training, High Commissioner Sir Shenton Thomas conducted an informal assessment of the 'experiment.' Included within his findings was the recommendation to "expand the force to 150 men," the programmed full compliment of the company.²⁴ The Malay Regiment from this point assumed their own esprit and character with the establishment of regimental colors, dress, and motto: *Ta'at Setia* (Loyal and True). The unit grew to 380 strong by 1935; and by 1938, when combined with their British officers, the unit strength was at 17 British officers, 6 Malay officers, 11 British warrant-officers and 759 other ranks.²⁵

No real changes effected the unit until just prior to the Japanese invasion. In March of 1941, with increased world tension, the regimental strength was expanded to two Battalions, one stationed in Singapore, the other at Port Dickson. On 1 December 1941 the 2nd Battalion was officially formed in Singapore. One week later the Japanese assault began.

unit was Major G. Mcl. S. Bruce of the Lincolnshire Regiment. In addition, the adjutant, Regimental Sergeant Major and Company Sergeant Major were also professional British soldiers. These men arrived at a small training camp several miles outside of Port Dickson in February with the task to train 25 Malay recruits in military tactics, ceremony, and drill and were allotted five months to complete the first evaluation phase of the 'experiment'. All commands were given in English; however, instruction was presented in Bahasa Malay. Major Bruce and his staff were all expected to learn the language and become familiar with the indigenous culture and religion. These tasks were, apparently undertaken with a desire to see the 'experimental' unit succeed.

²³Ibid, p. 208.

²⁴Ibid, p. 209.

²⁵Ibid, p. 211. The first four Malay officers were all original members of the 'experimental' 25 and were from Perak. They received their commissions on 4 November 1936.

The entire campaign ended when Singapore fell on 15 February 1942. Both the 1st and 2nd Battalions fought valiantly. Many received commendations and, in fact, Captain Ibrahim Alla Ditta of Company 'D' received the Military Cross for his gallantry. The Battle of Singapore was an intensely fought campaign from 8—15 February. The best assessment of the Malay Regiment's performance under fire was given by Lieutenant-General A.E. Percival:

When war broke out in the Far East , the Regiment was in [the] process of expansion...In consequence...like many other units of our Imperial Forces, [it] was not fully prepared for the ordeal which it was to face. Nevertheless, these young and untried soldiers acquitted themselves in a way which bore comparison with the very best troops in Malaya. In particular, by their stubborn defence of the Pasir Panjang Ridge at the height of the Battle of Singapore, they set an example of steadfastness and endurance which will become a great tradition in the Regiment and an inspiration for future generations.²⁶

The RMR surrendered on 15 February 1942. Except for the few that escaped, the members of the regiment were interned with the Indian Prisoner of War at the Farrer Park concentration area. After the British officers were separated from the ranks, the survivors of the Royal Malay Regiment numbered eight officers and approximately 600 other ranks. An unspecified number of other ranks were placed into forced labor gangs and sent to work in Indonesia and Siam, however, the "majority were released from prison camps in Singapore at different dates in March [1942]."²⁷ During the Singapore campaign the RMR suffered 159 casualties—six British officers, seven Malay officers, and 146 other ranks.²⁸

²⁶Ibid, p. 243.

²⁷Ibid., p. 241- 42.

²⁸From letter of Brigadier G.T. Denaro, as cited in D. Ramli, "History of the Malay Regiment, 1933-1942", op. cit., p. p. 242.

The Malay Regiment reformed on 5 September 1945, one month after re-occupation with a cadre of veterans of the 8 December 1941-15 February 1942 campaign.

* * *

The Emergency necessitated the formation of the 3rd and 4th Battalions in 1950 followed by the 5th, 6th and 7th in 1954. The Yang di Pertuan Agong (Malay King) conferred the title 'Royal' on the regiment in 1958. Additionally, a multi-racial battalion, the Federation Battalion, was raised in 1952, and became the Federation Regiment in 1960. By the end of the Emergency the ground forces (army) consisted of an artillery battalion (to be known as the Federation Artillery), an Armoured Car Squadron (formed in 1957) which joined with the Federation Regiment to form the Federation Reconnaissance Corps, and the Royal Malay Regiment (RMR).

In addition to the RMR, the Federation Reconnaissance Corps, and the Federation Artillery, Malaysia's ground forces included the Sarawak Rangers. The unit later became the Malaysian Rangers after it was formally incorporated into the army in 1962.

Created in 1862 by Sir James Brooke as an independent force to aid the pacifying tribal chieftains, the force was designated the Sarawak Constabulary. In 1952 the Emergency Operational Staff saw in the Ibans a familiarity and knowledge of the jungle that was not evident with any force on the peninsula. The staff requested support from the Iban tribes in East Malaysia, and Sarawak raised a unit of Iban jungle trackers that was designated the Sarawak Rangers. During the Emergency, the unit performed with excellence.

After the Emergency the rangers returned to Sarawak whereupon the unit was incorporated into the British Army as a colonial force liable for worldwide

service, similar to the Gurkhas. After 1963 and the formation of Malaysia, the Sarawak Rangers were transferred to Malaysia. The unit consisted of the 1st Battalion, comprised of almost entirely of Ibans, the 2nd Battalion, formed under cadre from the RMR and the Federal Reconnaissance Corps, and the 3rd and 4th Battalions, which were formed in 1965 and 1966 with a Malaysia-wide racial composition.²⁹

The Royal Malaysian Navy

The Malay(sian) Navy's history is somewhat shorter and less glorious than the RMR. The navy started as a volunteer unit in 1939, which was designated the 'Malay Section' of the Royal Navy(British). The Malay Section's personnel augmented the British Navy aboard ships in Ceylon, India, and East Africa.

In 1942 the Malay Section had a strength of about 1,400 men. The tumult of the Japanese occupation resulted in the unit being disbanded in 1947 when considered uneconomical by the British Labour Government. The force was reformed in 1948 and became known as the Malayan Naval Force with a strength of 250 men. The unit was bestowed the title Royal Malayan Navy (RMN) in 1952 by the British and transferred to the Federation of Malaya on 31 August 1957, the date of Malayan Independence.³⁰ The new RMN was based in Singapore. The fact that there were few Malay ships (the Flagship *K.D. Hang Tuah*, arrived only in 1964) limited the presence and involvement of the Royal Malay Navy (RMN) through much of the early 1960's.

²⁹See U.S. Government, Area Handbook for Malaysia, 1970; (U. S. Government press, 1970); p. 563.

³⁰"Malaysia"; ADJ; Vol. 1, No. 1; 1971.

The Royal Malaysian Air Force

The Royal Malayan Air Force (RMAF) was inaugurated on 1 June 1953, under British direction, and had a flight training squadron established in Kuala Lumpur by December of that year. In 1956 the RMAF Flight Training School was opened at Alor Star. The initial aircraft was the 'Chipmunk,' a low speed, limited capability training aircraft. French-made 'Alouette III' helicopters were introduced in 1963 with the specific intention of improving jungle warfare operations. High speed aircraft acquisition started in 1963 with the purchase of the first jet, the 'Dart Herald.' Interestingly, the 'Dart Herald' was purchased with planned independent (Malaysian pilot) flight to occur 'sometime later,' however the impending Confrontation with Indonesia necessitated earlier use.³¹

* * *

By 1960 the Malaysian armed forces institution was erected; however, it was clearly a British structure, having been built by the British, using the British model. Importantly though, in addition to the the significant British influence, the counter insurgency war that Malaysia had been embroiled in from 1948 to 1960 served to give the initial, and lasting, form and function to the armed forces.

* * *

Debate over the type and amount of defence began less than one month after the independence agreement had been signed. Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman called for continued reliance on Commonwealth forces while opposition members of Parliament argued for severing the ties. The Prime Minister negotiated the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement (AMDA) in

³¹Ibid.

September 1957. During the heated debate for ratification of AMDA, Tunku Abdul Rahman stated,

If we had not entered into a defence treaty with Britain we should have signed our death warrant. God alone knows what would happen to our country if we had to 'go it alone' at this very stage of our independence.³²

The issue divided the young government. At one point during the debate, the Prime Minister announced that if AMDA were not ratified he would resign.³³ AMDA was ratified in October 1957, with the only dissent coming from the Pan Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP).

The building of the state apparatus following the Emergency was the premier activity of the Federation of Malaya's leaders. They were divided ideologically as to what direction the federation should take. No longer was there an easily definable national crisis, requiring the support of all citizens; indeed a key issue under debate was how the armed forces should develop, what its mission should be, and what weapons systems should be procured.³⁴

The Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya was Tunku Abdul Rahman, considered the 'father of Malaya'; and his Deputy Prime Minister was Tun Abdul Razak, who also served as the Defence Minister. Tun Razak was a loyal and trusted minister who readily assumed the responsibility for the defence of the new Federation of Malay(si)a from all external and internal

³²Malayan Legislative Council Debates, October 1957, as cited in D. Hawkins, The Defence of Malaysia and Singapore: From AMDA to ANZUK, (The Royal United Services Institute, London, 1972), p. 14.

³³D. Hawkins, The Defence of Malaysia and Singapore, op. cit., p. 14. On 31 August 1957 Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Cassals became the Director of Emergency Operations, however, in accordance with the new defence plan, AMDA, his salary was paid by the Malayan government.

³⁴Chandran Jeshurun, Malaysian Defence Policy: A Study in Parliamentary Attitudes: 1963-1973; (Penerbit Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1980). This entire text is based on parliamentary debates in the *Dewan Rakyat* concerning military policy and decision making.

threats; however it was evident that in the fervor of establishing the new federation, not much thought was directed to the armed forces. During debates after the acquisition of the Borneo states, consisting of Sarawak and Sabah, and Singapore, Tun Razak explained to the *Dewan Rakyat* that "provisions had not been made for the expansion of the armed forces".³⁵ It is evident through parliamentary records that there was general agreement in the concept of providing for the defense of the Federation; arguments persisted, nonetheless, primarily about type, amount, and cost of the defense. Tun Razak's first call for increased defense dollars on 4 December 1962, to fund the expansion of 'indigenous armed forces' in the Borneo States, was met with resistance. In the face of the verbalized threat from the government of the Philippines a compromise to not expend any Federation dollars on defense until 1963 was struck. Despite the agreement, Tun Razak during the 12 December Parliamentary meeting announced that the decision had been made to "accelerate" the expansion plan, and funds had been committed to allow for the increase of the Federation Artillery from one battery (consisting of approximately 4-5 cannons) to a regiment (approximately 12 batteries).³⁶ This demonstrates, in an excellent manner, the realities of Malaysian nation-building politics: all the 'trappings' of a parliamentary democracy were in place; however, when a critical, national-interest decision had to be made, the powers in charge assumed, what could be described as, autocratic control.

³⁵ibid, p. 1.

³⁶ibid, pp. 1-2.

Malaysianization

It was also during this period that the policy of 'Malaysianization' assumed its contemporary form and function. The term was used highly during the waning years of British colonial rule whereby Malays (predominantly *bumiputera*) would assume governmental or administrative positions from the British.³⁷ The sentiment of Malaysianization hit at the heart of the Malay's fundamental desire to prove legitimacy of sovereignty. Assumption of the command and control over those previously directed institutions would be interpreted as a visible indication that this was a 'Malay' nation.

The process of what was then referred to as Malayization for the police started in 1931 with Malays having British supervised command over 20 of the 41 police districts in FMS.³⁸ The positions allotted to the Malays during this period were, according to Zakaria b. Haji Ahmad, actually more honorific than substantive. By 1955 Tunku Rahman set up a committee to look specifically at the Malayization of the police. The finding was that, in fact, the institution of the police was far better off than most other 'Public Service' institutions—since the number of Non-Malays outnumbered Malays in every institution except in the police. Zakaria b. Haji Ahmad found that the police had now assumed the position or label of a "Malay Institution", and was considered a "traditional avenue of employment for the Malay community".³⁹

³⁷See Zakaria b. Haji Ahmad, *The Police and Political Development in Malaysia*, op. cit., pp. 283-305, for a discussion of Malaysianization and more specifically, Malaysianization in the police. The program of Malaysianization was not implemented swiftly or without concern. A committee was established in 1954 to investigate the implications of assuming control too quickly. The recommendation from the committee was to move slowly. It was not until 1956 that a more accelerated approach was assumed.

³⁸Ibid, p. 285.

³⁹Ibid, p. 287.

The Members of Parliament (MP) also saw similar advantages and value with the implementation of Malaysianization into the institution of the military. In December 1963, the Parliamentary record shows, the decision was made to legislate the ethnic identity of the most senior post in the military, the Chief of the Armed Forces Staff. The position would be filled by *bumiputera* as would "all the Infantry Brigade commanders".⁴⁰ Key positions in the RMN and RMAF were more difficult to legislate "because of the comparatively longer period of training and the more technical nature of the duties in these services".⁴¹

* * *

In early 1965 the political rift between Tunku Rahman and Lee Kuan Yew over representation and rule of Singapore had widened. The 1964 campaign and national elections had solidified the rift between Tunku and Lee Kuan Yew and it was evident from that time on, neither man would feel mutual support from the other. Charges of subversive activity leveled at Lee by MP's from Kuala Lumpur were not met with submission by Lee Kuan Yew, as were the frequent press releases issued by Lee Kuan Yew concerning the increasingly evident preferential treatment for *bumiputera* issue. More out of "frustration rather than design" did the separation of Singapore from the Federation occur⁴². On 9 August 1965 Tunku Rahman announced to the Dewan Rakyat that he and Lee Kuan Yew had agreed to the separation of Singapore from the Federation of Malaya.

⁴⁰C.Jeshurun, *op. cit.*, p. 11-12.

⁴¹Parliamentary Debates/Dewan Rakyat, V/33 28 December 1963, cols. 3534-43; as cited in C. Jeshurun, Malaysian Defence Policy; *op. cit.*; p. 12.

⁴²N.McH. Fletcher, "The Separation of Singapore from Malaysia", Cornell University Southeast Asia Program Data Paper: No. 73; July 1969; p. 78.

Opposition member discussions about the defense budget were surprisingly in favor of Tun Razak's planned development policy. MP Lim Kean Siew commented that "we must have a more efficient army"⁴³ in light of the 1966 estimates for armed forces' expenditures; defence was to increase 30.1% over 1965 expenditures while the cost of the armed forces (military and internal security) would consume 7.4% of the Gross National Product (GNP). The Minister of Finance, Tan Siew Sin, felt compelled to comment that 7.4% was "high, even when judged by the standards of industrial countries". He went on to say, "a developing country certainly cannot afford this level of expenditure for any sustained period unless it is prepared to throw economic and social development overboard."⁴⁴

Konfrontasi

The tumultuous years after the August 1957 independence treaty were highlighted by negotiation with the British for the acquisition of Singapore as well as the Borneo states of Sarawak and North Borneo (Sabah). On 16 September 1963 Tunku Abdul Rahman from the Federation of Malaya, Lee Kuan Yew (Singapore's Chief Minister) and the British Government agreed to the formation of the Federation of Malaysia, which included West Malaysia, the Borneo States, and Singapore.

Immediately following the formation of the Federation of Malaysia the President of Indonesia, President Soekarno, announced his refusal to acknowledge the new federation, considering the new federation a

⁴³PD/DR, II/30, 2 December 1965, cols. 4466-70.

⁴⁴PD/DR, II/17, 23 November 1965, cols. 2865.

'neocolonial state,' and severed diplomatic ties with Kuala Lumpur. According to Tunku Rahman,

He [Soekarno] became so obsessed with his own self-importance, and had become power mad, just like Hitler and Mussolini, that the fall of these dictators had not deterred him. His acquisition of all the Dutch territories had given him the idea that he could lay claim on Malaya because we happened to be of almost the same race. His claim on the Dutch colonies was based on political grounds because according to him what belonged to the Dutch must now belong to Indonesia. According to him we are of the same race and we must belong to the larger group of the Malay race.⁴⁵

Fortunately for Malaysia, British forces had been in East Malaysia since December 1962 to put down a revolt in Brunei. The Brunei Revolt broke out on 7 December 1962 largely due to opposition within Brunei to coming under Malaysian suzerainty.⁴⁶ According to Hawkins, "*our* [British] action there was in support of the Sultan of Brunei, *not Malaya*."⁴⁷

The British command had sent the 1st Battalion of the Second Gurkha Rifles, 1st Battalion Queens Own Highlanders, 40th and 42nd Marine Commando, 1st Battalion The Royal Green Jackets, and various support elements to East Malaysia in support of the Brunei revolt mission. The revolt was short lived with the most serious violence occurring on 12 December 1962. One can not help but infer by the vast amount of combat power sent to East Malaysia, that British intelligence had determined there was more of a security threat in East Malaysia than just the revolt on Brunei.

Fighting in Sarawak began on 12 April 1963. The police station at Tebedu, south of Kuching, was attacked and destroyed by a band of

⁴⁵Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Political Awakening, (Pelanduk Publications, Selangor, Malaysia, 1987), p. 79.

⁴⁶D. Hawkins, The Defence of Malaysia and Singapore, op. cit., p. 22.

⁴⁷Ibid. The Hawkins account is written in the first person, which lends to a biased approach; however, the value of the work is derived from understanding the 'British' version.

approximately sixty men. One police officer was killed and weapons were stolen by the raiders, who were described as "Indonesian and Chinese members of CCO [Clandestine Communist Organization, a general phrase used to describe communist organizations in East Malaysia]."⁴⁸ Indonesian Border Terrorists, or IBT's according to Hawkins, were 'positively' identified during another raid in September 1963. These hit and run type raids continued; however, their impact was minimal, contributing to the fact that the level of warfare during *Konfrontasi* did not escalate into a 'real war.'⁴⁹

On 17 September 1963 Kuala Lumpur recalled their diplomatic mission from Jakarta; and on 18 September 1963, two days after the declaration of the new Federation of Malaysia, the central government put Malaysia on "a state of preparedness".⁵⁰ A National Defence Council was established, and on 18 November 1963 the Yang di Pertuan Agong announced a national service registration for all federation citizens between the ages of 21-28.

When analyzing the Parliamentary record there exists no evidence that Soekarno's 'Crush Malaya' policy caused extreme turbulence or fear; this should be viewed as somewhat of an unpredictable response from a relatively new nation after their mere existence had been challenged by a formidable neighbor. This is best evidenced by the fact that aside from registration, neither conscription nor call-up of a single citizen occurred during the entire *Konfrontasi* (Confrontation).

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 23.

⁴⁹H. Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*. (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1978), pp. 70-75. According to Crouch, the intent of the Indonesian Army leadership was specifically not to escalate the level of warfare, so as to exploit the situation for increased monies and armaments without waging war and thus jeopardizing the tenuous political power that the Army was currently enjoying under President Soekarno.

⁵⁰ Ibid, pp. 6-7.

Konfrontasi did however provide a cause and an opportunity to focus on the development of the military. Since the Emergency was essentially treated as a 'police action,' the institution of the police was considered sufficiently developed. This is best displayed in analyzing expenditures for Internal Security and Military from the years 1963-1967 (the end of the *Konfrontasi* was officially ended on 11 August 1966). Below is a comparable expenditures chart for the Malaysian armed forces during *Konfrontasi*:

Table 2.1. Malaysia Armed Forces Expenditures (M\$ million ringgit), (Source: C. Jeshurun in *Malaysian Defence Policy*, op. cit., p. xx, from Financial Statement, 1963-1964 and Economic Report, 1973-1974, 1974-1975, and 1975-1976; the Treasury, Malaysia, Government Printer, Kuala Lumpur.)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Military Expenditure</u>	<u>Internal Security</u>	<u>Total</u>
1963	\$99	\$97	\$196
1964	155	162	317
1965	203	170	373
1966	227	150	377
1967	242	146	388

The critical trend observed during this period is twofold: first, the increase in armed forces expenditures (best appreciated when compared to the increase in total budgetary expenditures, the total budget increase from 1964 to 1965 was 8.8%, while the armed forces increase during the same period was 31%.⁵¹), and second, the shift from a police/internal security -dominated armed forces to a more 'conventional' (and therefore 'Southeast Asian') military structure. From 1963 to 1967, military expenditures grew 144% while

⁵¹C. Jeshurun, *Malaysian Defence Policy*, op. cit. p. 14.

the internal security budget increased by only 49.5%. Understandably much of the cost difference could be explained by new equipment acquisition and construction costs for an admittedly poorly equipped military, evidenced when comparing the total "Development Expenditures" for the military for the years above, the military development cost was M\$459 million ringgit, approximately half the total military budget. The Internal Security development dollars were M\$108 million ringgit, or 15% of the total internal security budget.

Lee Kuan Yew, serving as the Chief Minister of Singapore, commented, "for many years since 1957 Malaya has justly prided itself upon the absence of large armed forces " because "its army was of small dimensions, its air force really more of a civilian nature meant for training pilots, and its navy was really in aid of the Customs to prevent smugglers." He then concluded that those days were "now all over".⁵²

It was apparent, according to Hawkins, that the Malaysian government was not comfortable with accusations that "most of the fighting in Borneo was being done by non-Malaysian forces."⁵³ The contentious issue of *Konfrontasi*, though, was that Malaysia was still a puppet colony; and to have the press imply that Malaysia could not defend herself without British forces was an indictment on the leadership of the young country of Malaysia. "The Tunku protested"; however, according to the Hawkins' account, the indictment was valid.

Considering the seriousness of the threat, the Malayan Government did seem to meet it in a somewhat leisurely fashion. Rightly or wrongly, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Malaysia was

⁵²Parliamentary Debates/Dewan Rakyat (PD/DR), I/34, 12 December 1964, cols. 4391-4398.

⁵³D. Hawkins, *The Defence of Malaysia and Singapore*, op. cit., p. 25. Hawkins continues by saying "In fact, this does seem to have been the case."

content to allow Britain to commit herself fully without herself making the effort which one would have expected in the circumstances.⁵⁴

Konfrontasi ended more out of loss of momentum than as a result of coercive military, economic, or political pressure. On 30 September 1965, President Soekarno's precariously balanced 'Guided Democracy' tumbled, with the army, and ultimately General Suharto, assuming complete power. According to Harold Crouch, "Indonesia's top foreign policy objective after Suharto had taken power in March 1966 was to end the confrontation campaign against Malaysia".⁵⁵ The negotiations started in May, stating that relations would be 'normalized' immediately upon conducting elections in the Borneo States to reaffirm their national identity with Malaysia. The concern was evidently to minimize the "wounded national pride" in Indonesia, since the rhetoric espoused by Pres. Soekarno from the start of *Konfrontasi* defined 'crushing the neo-colonialists' (Malaysia) as a country mission. On 11 August 1966 the Bangkok Agreement was signed, and 'unofficial' diplomatic relations were quickly established with each country. It was not until August 1967 that full diplomatic relations were restored.

Tun Razak stated in December of 1964 that it had been decided to "have a complete air force", in addition, "*for the sake of dignity* and also for the defence of our country" the RMN would have at least a frigate.⁵⁶ Essentially, the years of *Konfrontasi* were the initial development years for the military; it was evident that if Malaysia was going to enjoy security, then the Malaysian military

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 25. According to a United States Intelligence Memorandum, November 1965, the Indonesian Army was waging a very limited war. "During the past two months there has been only one explosion attributed to an Indonesian agent." The minimal effort was due large part to the effective use of the nearly 17,000 British troops. The British and Malaysian forces have killed over 500 of the nearly 700 Indonesian guerillas. Declassified Document Retrospective Collection, No. 001389, 18 November 1965.

⁵⁵H. Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, op. cit., p. 331-332..

⁵⁶PD/DR, I/45, 28 December 1964, cols. 5920-21, italics added by author.

would be the force to provide it. In addition to the purchase of equipment for the active, or regular forces, the Territorial Army (home guard force) was outfitted with enough vehicles, arms and support equipment to bring them up to 30% strength of the regular military.⁵⁷

The Local Defence Corps (LDC) also grew substantially during this period. Predominantly mobilized in East Malaysia, the LDC was a loose organization of small militias "organized in some remote villages to provide counter insurgency support and intelligence."⁵⁸ The line entry in the 1970 Federal Expenditure Budget describes the LDC as a volunteer force trained to "guard key-points, supervised by Permanent Staff from West Malaysia."⁵⁹ The LDC was funded to increase from 5,100 to 24,000 with the intent to put a platoon size element (approximately 25-40 soldiers) in each *kampung*.⁶⁰

Konfrontasi, although never escalating beyond skirmishes and raids, was a pivotal event for Malaysia. After suffering from the indictments and

⁵⁷The Territorial Army (TA) is the only fully organized reserve force in the Malaysian Armed Forces. The TA was a home guard force that was raised during the Japanese occupation. The members were called the *Federated Malay States Volunteer Force (FMSVF)* and their primary mission was to oppose and challenge the Japanese occupation forces. Intended to be a temporary organization, the unit was disbanded after the Japanese surrender. The unit received renewed interest in 1951 as a viable 'player' in the Emergency. General Briggs incorporated the home guard into his scheme of operations. In Emergency Directive No. 13, February 1951 Briggs laid out his use for the unit now labeled Home Guard, in what Briggs termed "administration of Chinese settlements". In October 1951 Emergency Directive No. 17 the Home Guard were divided into Stage I forces (simply watching/observing Chinese village activities), Stage II forces (augmenting the police for security operations), and Stage III forces (arming and assigning Home Guard to independent security missions). During the height of the Emergency there were approximately 250,000 Home Guard. At the close of the Emergency, the Home Guard began to disband; however, instead of completely deactivating the force, the units were organized into reserve Infantry battalions and combat support battalions and grouped into the Territorial Army. In 1962, some of the 'best' units were federalized into combat ready attachments to the Reconnaissance Corps while a majority of the remainder became the Local Defense Corps (LDC). See, A. Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya, 1948-1960*, op. cit.; pp. 293, 411-415.

⁵⁸F. M. Bunge, *Malaysia: A Country Study*, (United States Government Press, Washington, 1985), p. 269.

⁵⁹Malaysia, *The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government*, (Kuala Lumpur), 1970, p. 130.

⁶⁰Chandran Jeshurun, *Malaysian Defence Policy*, op. cit., p. 10.

accusations that Malaysia was somehow less than independent, the leadership in Kuala Lumpur was determined to develop an armed force that could independently defend Malaysia.

The British Withdrawal—Malaysia Becomes a Regional Player

The intense involvement of British forces in East Malaysia contributed to strained relations between Malaysia and England. Reports surfaced that more British soldiers had died in battle than Malaysian—adding to the legitimacy of the indictment that Malaysia did not, or could not, fight her own war.⁶¹ It was evident that not only the Malaysian government leadership, but also the leadership in London suffered from the indictment. Hawkins admits, in retrospect, "In some ways our support may have been a little too enthusiastic."⁶²

In the 7 February 1966 Defence Review, the British Government stated, "First, Britain will not undertake major operations of war except in cooperation with allies. Second, we will not accept an obligation to provide another country with military assistance unless it is prepared to provide us with the facilities we need."⁶³ The sentiment was clearly that England felt that it should not let themselves get involved into another supportive relationship, as was the case during *Konfrontasi*. A Defence Statement one year later summed up the government objective, "Our aim is that Britain should not again have to undertake operations on this scale [i.e. *Konfrontasi*] outside Europe."⁶⁴

Considering the timing of the announcement by British Prime Minister Wilson to withdraw British forces from the Pacific region (originally in February

⁶¹D. Hawkins, The Defence of Malaysia and Singapore, op. cit., p. 26. A report issued to the British Parliament in February 1965, stated that 100 British soldiers lost their lives while 67 Malaysian soldiers died in battle.

⁶²Ibid., p. 26.

⁶³Ibid., 29.

⁶⁴Defence Statement, Command 3203, p. 7, February 1967, as cited in D. Hawkins, The Defence of Malaysia and Singapore, op. cit., p. 29.

1966) to the end of *Konfrontasi*, the indication was that, not only, were the British departing from the region, but also the relationship between England and Malaysia was going to change significantly.

The net result of *Konfrontasi* was that a definite policy decision by Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman was necessary—Malaysia's armed forces must begin to protect and defend national interests. Aside from the obvious economic repercussions as a result of this new independent course, the issue was made more difficult given the Malaysia's Armed Forces reliance on the British for nearly all military training, equipment and doctrine. London indicated their intention to significantly reduce British military presence in Southeast Asia. Tun Razak declared in Parliament that British troops "must leave Sabah and Sarawak" and that the mission of defending and protecting our national interests "will fall completely in our hands".⁶⁵ The national goal, according to Minister of Home Affairs and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tun Dr. Ismail, was "to stand on our own feet" and further, that Malaysia would "continue to step up the Army, Navy and Air Force, even if Confrontation has ended".⁶⁶

The increases in defense were, however, becoming difficult to sell in Parliament. Opposition MP's were voicing concerns over the large Army; Devan Nair, MP for Bungsar, was quoted as saying, "from the expenditures of several developing countries, Marshals and Generals begin to nurse ambitions to take over the direction of the country if finance ministers do not find the wherewithal to keep the country solvent and to keep the army going".⁶⁷ The Minister of Finance, Tan Siew Sin, when presenting his Budget Speech in

⁶⁵PD/DR, III/4, 20 June 1966, cols. 922-923.

⁶⁶Ibid, col. 867.

⁶⁷PD/DR, III/18, 23 January 1967, cols. 2875-2876.

early January 1967, attempted to respond to the fears, by stating that the continued increase in defence was necessary because, even though *Konfrontasi* was over, Malaysia would "still have to provide the minimum requirements for the defense and security of East Malaysia...in view of the withdrawal of Commonwealth forces from this area". It should be noted that Tan Siew Sin, of Chinese decent and also long time confidant to Tunku Rahman, was in the unenviable position of having to balance the political loyalties of serving as cabinet minister, with communal or ethnic loyalties. During this period one can interpret from Parliamentary Debates that Tan Siew Sin was leery of allowing the Armed Forces to become too strong. He is credited with successfully convincing Razak to trim the original request of \$380 million Ringgit; for the 1967 Armed Forces allocation to \$250 million Ringgit; even though this cut was apparently against the expressed recommendations of Razak's military advisors.⁶⁸ The 1967 Armed Forces allocation would be an increase of only 5.3% over the 1966 Budget, which translated into a 13.7% slice of the entire Budget.

The Times (London) joined with the opposition in attacking Tun Razak's defence policy. In a 4 February 1967 article, *The Times* alleged Malaysia was developing "an unnecessarily ambitious programme" as it was "too small a country to be able to defend itself against all kinds of external aggression". The article added that Malaysian officials should recognize "that they can not afford, and do not need, to replace the departing British presence man for man, weapon for weapon". The article closed with the recommendation that "defence emphasis should primarily be on communications for land forces," as "jet

⁶⁸C. Jeshurun, *Malaysian Defence Policy*, op. cit., p. 26.

fighters, though attractive as a status symbol, hardly meet the requirements of the country".⁶⁹ Although straight forward and somewhat accurate, the commentary and advice offered by The Times was received as nothing more than Western colonialist rhetoric and only fueled the resolve of Tun Razak and his backers for a strong representative armed forces. Dr. Mahathir stated in Parliament that the Malaysian Armed Forces were "too heavily based on infantry and less on other elements found in most modern armies"; and he urged for "special strike forces", trained for multi-contingency operations on both land and sea and possessing the ability to be airborne (parachute) infiltrated.⁷⁰ The intent was to field a capable force; however, Malaysia was in a dilemma. Her development plan had to be significantly altered; and equipping, training, and manning a force was expensive. In addition, Malaysia was somewhat unprepared to configure a force without determining who the enemy was, or what type of combat the force should be prepared to fight—small unit, light weapon, jungle operations or conventional, large weaponry combat.

The subject of defense expenditures was becoming the crucial or seminal issue in political circles. Tun Razak claimed The Times article was uncalled for and continued to defend his programmed defense plan as "both essential for the defence of our country and feasible".⁷¹ In fact, Razak claimed his program had received approval from the British, Australia and New Zealand defense experts as 'Plan Dynamo.' Plan Dynamo was originally conceived in 1962, modified in 1964 and, Razak contended, his current plan was not a departure from this previously approved defense program.

⁶⁹The Times, 4 February 1967.

⁷⁰PD/DR, III/28, 3 February 1967; cols. 4196-4197.

⁷¹C. Jeshurun, Malaysian Defence Policy, op. cit., p. 28.

Defense Expenditures as a political issue quickly became neutralized upon formal notification of the pullout of British troops from South, Southeast and East Asia. On 18 July 1967, London announced to the public its intention to recall Commonwealth forces stationed east of the Suez; this would impact approximately 75,000 British soldiers, sailors and airmen. Originally the plan was to pull one half out by 1970-71 and complete the recall by 1975. Six months later, however, on 16 January 1968, Prime Minister Wilson announced that the entire operation would be completed by the end of 1970. Soon after his announcement, the date was readjusted to the end of 1971.⁷²

The impact of this announcement on Southeast Asian nations in general was significant. In an historical context, the announcement coincided with the 1968 Tet Offensive in Vietnam where the North Vietnamese troops displayed a renewed and invigorated stamina. In addition, there were indications that North Korea was threatening to infiltrate South Korea and attempt to assassinate President Park. The combination of an increasingly unstable war in Vietnam and possible Communist attacks in Korea together with the British pulling back their troops created a very unsettling climate for developing nations in the region, specifically in Southeast Asia. Independent defense was now a reality and the performance and readiness of the armed forces could possibly determine these nations' fate.

A new phase was clearly established with the fall of Soekarno and the British announcement to recall their troops east of the Suez. Nearly one month after the formal announcement by London, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed. Malaysia's foreign policy focus had shifted from

⁷²F.M. Stern, "Militias East of Suez: Filling the Power Vacuum", in *Orbis*, Vol. XII, Fall 1968, pp. 887-902.

one of striving to display an independent and legitimate nation to one of development through regional strength.⁷³ The shift is significant for a variety of reasons, however the most obvious is the break from development through extra-regional support to development through the reliance on intra-regional political, economic, and military strength.

The idea that a cohesive organization could benefit the developing Southeast Asian nations had been inconceivable for Malaysia considering Soekarno's 'Crush Malaysia' *Konfrontasi* policy, and the Philippines' continual claims to North Borneo territories, and the recent divorce of Singapore from Malaysia. In addition the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA), a similar regionally-focused organization which had been established in 1960 with Malaya, the Philippines, and Thailand as its members, was disbanded in 1963 when the Philippines re-exerted pressure on Malaya for the North Borneo Territories (resulting in severing diplomatic relations between Malaya and the Philippines). Soon after the breakdown of relations, MAPHILINDO (an acronym for the SEA organization consisting of Malaya, the Philippines, and Indonesia) was born, formed as a result of a diplomatic tête a tête held in Manila between Tunku Rahman and President Macapagal (The Philippines) with President Soekarno serving as the mediator in August 1963. MAPHILINDO quickly dissolved, almost in stillborn fashion, in a little more than one month after the original meeting, with the proclamation of Malaysia, consisting of Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore, Sarawak, and the North Borneo

⁷³ R.O. Tilman, Southeast Asia and the Enemy Beyond: ASEAN Perceptions of External Threats, (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1987). Tilman claims the five member states of ASEAN (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines) had to contend with internal dissent, colonial political models, and pluralistic societies. Although Thailand was peripherally a colonial state, the legacy of colonial administration and institutions was still felt in Bangkok.

Territories, on 16 September 1963. Until ASEAN, it had appeared that regional cooperative agreements were not to exist in SEA.

Although ASEAN by design was an economic organization, the organization assumed a security or defense flavor soon after the signing of the ASEAN Declaration.⁷⁴ Early in the organization's development process Tun Razak reiterated his concern that all SEA countries needed to band together to prevent external intervention or interference and they must fill the vacuum left by the colonialists, now departing, by their collective endeavors.⁷⁵

It is evident that the formation of a regional organization had been the foreign policy direction of Malaysia since the end of *Konfrontasi*, as addressed by the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tun Dr. Ismail in June 1966:

We look forward to a regional association embracing Thailand, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Such a community would not be a military alliance. It would not be an anti-communist alliance. Nor, for that matter, would it be an anti-Western alliance. I do not believe that military blocs and alliances by themselves can provide a lasting solution to the problem of communist expansion. I, myself envisage an organization which would be, first and last, pro-Southeast Asia, pro-development, pro-regional co-operation, and pro-peace.⁷⁶

The combination of the end of *Konfrontasi* and the deterioration of British support and presence in the region was a watershed for Malaysian foreign policy, and more specifically, for their defense and security policy. Malaysian leadership was embarking on a new path; essentially, the umbilical cord had

⁷⁴R.S. Milne and D.K. Mauzy, *Politics and Government in Malaysia*, (University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1980), p. 310. The ASEAN Declaration specified seven 'aims'. The first referred to the acceleration of economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region. The second was to "promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in relationships among countries of the region and adherence of the United Nations Charter". The remaining 'aims' were again dealing with economic, social, and cultural issues.

⁷⁵*Straits Times*, 9 August 1967.

⁷⁶*Straits Times*, 24 June 1966.

been cut with London and, like it or not, the success or failure of Malaysia was to be solely in the hands of Malaysians.

The period between the end of *Konfrontasi* and the 1969 national election could be described as transitional and, at times, confused. The previously espoused, and admittedly inherited, hard-line anti-communist, pro-West focus of their defense policy was shifting to one of neutralism. The Malaysian defense and security policy rhetoric, however, was somewhere between neutral and non-aligned. When Tun Dr. Ismail was questioned in Parliament about the new direction, he commented that "We are not committed to any power bloc and we crystalize our attitude on any issue strictly on its merits and in light of our national interests. In that sense we are not aligned. We never claim to be neutral. We can never be neutral in the choice between right and wrong." However in 1968 Tun Dr. Ismail, who had since retired from ministerial duties for health reasons, proposed his 'Ismail Peace Plan,' calling for the neutralization of SEA:

The time is ... ripe for the countries in the region to declare collectively the neutralization of SEA. To be effective this must be guaranteed by the big powers, including Communist China. Second, it is time that the countries in Southeast Asia signed non-aggression treaties with one another. Now is the time for the countries in SEA to declare a policy of co-existence in the sense that the countries should not interfere in the internal affairs of each other and to accept whatever form of government a country chooses to elect or adopt.⁷⁷

The pre-1969 period was closed out with Tunku Rahman urging that talks begin for a new five power defense arrangement between Malaysia, Singapore, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. This plan would replace the Anglo-Malay(si)an Defence Agreement (AMDA) after the British pulled out

⁷⁷PD/DR, 23 January 1968, cols., 1615-1616; as cited in J.Saravanamuttu, The Dilemma of Independence, op. cit., p. 75.

of the region in 1971. The 'Five Power Defence Arrangement,' finally worked out in 1971, was, as described by Chin Kin Wah, nothing more than "a loose consultative framework that resulted from a communiqué issued at the end of the Five Power Ministerial Meeting on the external defence of Malaysia and Singapore held in London in April 1971." The actual agreement specified that "in the event of any form of armed attack externally organized or supported, or the threat of such attack against Malaysia or Singapore, their governments would immediately consult together for the purpose of deciding what measures should be taken jointly or separately in relation to such attack or threat".⁷⁸

Conclusion

Consider how Malaysia arrived at this point and also the direction they were taking. From an institutional perspective, state building in Malaysia occurred through the development and enhancement of already emplaced, colonial designed institutions. There was not an internal revolution or war for independence, and thus the institutional infrastructure in Malaysia was not shattered, abandoned, or considered an evil legacy of the colonial period requiring it to be completely changed. The benefits of the Malaysian experience are easily recognizable; however, the lack of a violent capture of independence would weigh heavily as a detriment. *Konfrontasi* was but an overt expression of this perceived sentiment, both domestically and outside of Malaysia, that Malaysia was somehow less than completely independent. Early nation building, as manifested in the development of the state bureaucracy,

⁷⁸Chin Kin Wah, "The Five Power Defence Arrangements and AMDA", Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, Occasional Paper No. 23, July, 1974.

was founded, in large part, on the necessity to prove and earn national legitimacy.

Chapter Three

THE TUMULTUOUS PERIOD, 1969-1970

The disturbances of May 1969 mark the darkest period in our national history. By dint of prudent and imaginative policies, we have carefully moved ourselves away from the abyss which then confronted us. [W]e shall be extremely foolish and irresponsible if we forget the lessons of May 13.⁷⁹

The year 1969 ushered in a new phase of political, social, and economic development in Malaysia. The change, or modification, of the development course was not solely a consequence of the violent national election riots that occurred in Kuala Lumpur on 13 May 1969, but the result of a combination of factors.

Post-riot Malaysia could best be described as tumultuous. The Alliance formula for political tranquility was being challenged by a formidable opposition; the non-*bumiputera* political elites were presenting a viable, credible political platform. The years immediately after independence offered little opportunity for the pluralistic political process to take hold, what with mounting a counter-insurgency operation against the MCP followed closely by defending the sovereignty of the Federation of Malaysia against Indonesia's 'Crush Malaysia' policy during *Konfrontasi*. As discussed earlier, *Konfrontasi*

⁷⁹From the opening address by Prime Minister Tun Haji Abdul Razak to the re-convened Parliament on 23 February 1971. Parliamentary Debates on the Constitutional Amendment Bill, 1971, (translated); (Kuala Lumpur, 1972), p. 2.

ended in 1966, followed quickly by the announcement that Great Britain would withdraw her forces.

The Parliamentary Debates during this period indicate an increase in the challenge to authority, that authority being the Alliance and the challenge coming predominantly from urban-based Chinese. The short, post-*Konfrontasi* respite was the breeding ground for the opposition, a time for the the opposition to define their specific platform and amass their respective followings. The opposition grew significantly enough to respectably compete against the Alliance during the 1969 National Elections.⁸⁰

Relief from the focus on national security was short. Although the decision in London to withdraw British forces East of the Suez was consistent with the push to sever ties with Great Britain, it also represented the most significant threat for Malaysia since independence. However independent Malaysia had been, the stationing of British forces on Malaysian soil provided a reasonable guarantee of national security. The dilemma for Malaysia's ruling elite was that, although being (and being seen as) independent was very important, having England's Royal Navy off their coast also allowed them to focus on other, non-defense issues.

After 1967, development of an armed forces became a priority issue in Malaysian politics.

⁸⁰ See Von Vorys, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-246. It could be argued that the increase in opposition was in response to, what could be labeled, pro-bumiputera politics. The best example of this was the National Language Act of 1967. Although written into the original Constitution that in ten years from 31 August 1957 the official language would be Malay, the legislation was seen as primarily another pro-bumiputera initiative.

A Period of Transition

From the perspective of defense and security after *Konfrontasi*, the issue that received the most celebrated interest was the Five Powers defense arrangements.⁸¹ Both Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Razak were anxious to settle the agreement since AMDA, Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement, was to expire in November 1971. There was no signed accord as a result of the Five Powers Conference in Canberra in June 1969. The international community was in somewhat of a tumultuous state - with the war in Indochina raging on and the British pulling out of Southeast Asia - and the situation was exacerbated, for the Malaysians, by communal riots in 1969. Tunku Abdul Rahman returned from Canberra stating that the planned build-up of the armed forces would continue "in view of the British withdrawal and the *uselessness* of the Five Power defence arrangements."⁸² Tun Razak added, in October, that the armed forces would be increased by 12 battalions and a "call up" would be considered, for all men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five years old.

The Five Powers Defence Arrangement was not signed until after the April 1971 conference in London. It was apparent by the language (verbiage) selected that the defense arrangement was less substantive than the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement. For example, the opening paragraph of the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement states, quite clearly:

⁸¹The policy was to maintain silence on any issue that might be in the nation's interest and the law, under the Emergency (Essential Powers) Ordinance (Official Secrets Act) after the May 13th Riots, was specified that there would be no discussions of national intelligence information.

⁸²Guardian (London), 2 August 1969, as in C. Jeshurun, Malaysian Defence Policy, op. cit., p. 38.

The Government of the United Kingdom *undertakes* to afford to the Federation of Malaya such assistance as the Government of Malaya may require for external defence of its territory.⁸³

The communiqué issued at the conclusion of the Five Power Ministerial meeting opened with the following:

Ministers of the Government of Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and the United Kingdom met in London on the 15th and 16th April 1971, in order *to consider* matters of common interest to all five Governments relating to the external defence of Malaysia and Singapore.

The Ministers also declared, in relation to the external defence of Malaysia and Singapore, that in the event of any form of armed attack externally organised or supported or the threat of such attack against Malaysia and Singapore, their Governments would immediately *consult* together for the purpose of deciding what measures should be taken jointly or separately in relation to such attack or threat.⁸⁴

The return, or benefit, for Malaysia from the Five Power arrangement was much less than the security provided by AMDA. Malaysia and Singapore were not interested in a pact or agreement that bound the Commonwealth to SEA, not even for security concerns. Chin Kin Wah makes the point, "Neither of the host powers (Malaysia or Singapore) has misplaced expectations about their national security....For Malaysia, whose espousal of neutralization has meant an increasing public de-emphasis on Five Power defence."⁸⁵ He continues with the observation that "the external threat factor does not appear to feature

⁸³Excerpt from the "Agreement Between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Federation of Malaya on External Defence and Mutual Assistance", Kuala Lumpur, 12 October 1957, as found in Chin Kin Wah, "The Five Power Defence Arrangements and AMDA", Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, Occasional Paper No. 23, July 1974, p. 19.

⁸⁴Excerpt from the "Communiqué Issued at the Conclusion of the Five Power Ministerial Meeting on the External Defence of Malaysia and Singapore", London, 16 April 1971, as found in Chin Kin Wah, "The Five Power Defence Arrangements and AMDA", Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, Occasional Paper No. 23, July 1974, p. 17.

⁸⁵Chin Kin Wah, "The Five Power Defence Arrangements and AMDA", op. cit., p. 15.

highly on Malaysian priorities. Rather her major security concern is over the insurgency problem, and Five Power intervention in this particular sphere has been ruled out by Malaysia herself."⁸⁶

After the 1971 Five Powers Conference in London , Malaysia was clearly in a new phase of development. Just four years earlier, in 1967, the British were an integral part of the Malaysian complex. The desire to be (and be seen as) independent had been checked by the comfort of having Commonwealth forces on (and by) her side. *Konfrontasi* was handled with minimal disruption to the development process in Malaysia. The early Philippines' claims of Sabah meant little to the average Malaysian citizen.

The tide changed significantly, however, in 1967. It was important to Malaysia for Britain to withdraw from SEA. Malaysia could no longer suffer the liability of being viewed as dependent on Great Britain. The economy, however, was in a temporary slump, and the Philippines reasserted their claim of Sabah. The new Five Power talks, commencing in 1968, were addressing the international security void left with the expiration of AMDA in November 1971. The task, for the ruling Alliance Government, was to develop and strengthen the armed forces and prepare for the 1969 national election.

The Malaysia that came out of that tumult, 1967-1971, was distinctly different than the Malaysia that entered that period. The first, and only, Prime Minister - Tunku Abdul Rahman - was no longer the Prime Minister, and the country was in another State of Emergency. The direction Malaysia took after 1971 set her course for the duration of the 70's. There is little question that the communal issue was significant in Malaysian politics throughout the 70's;

⁸⁶ibid., p. 15, footnote #30.

however, the period would be marked, not by racial unrest, but by rapid development of the state apparatus. The solution to Malaysia's political unrest was articulated in the New Economic Policy, and the implications of this solution were borne out in the 70's.

* * *

The Malaysian leaders were still sensitive to the indictments they had received over their relationship with Great Britain during *Konfrontasi*. Generally, policy and program initiatives in 1968 were to develop a state apparatus that would allow Malaysia to stand, unassisted, as an independent state. Deputy Prime Minister Tun Razak conducted a tour of European countries, including Moscow and Paris, to solicit military aid and 'shop' for contemporary weapons systems. It was no secret, according to the coverage in FEER, that Tun Razak's original intention was to buy armaments and aircraft from the French.⁸⁷ The trip was clearly intended, not merely shop for arms, but to send a signal to London and, specifically, SEA, that Malaysia's dependence on Great Britain was finally coming to an end. In the end, Malaysia did not buy the French *Mirage* jets, but "settled for [10 F-86F] *Sabre* jets" that were given to Malaysia from Australia.⁸⁸

Many members from both sides of the parliament in Kuala Lumpur were anxious to finalize the 'divorce' with their former colonizer. The conditions and timing appeared to be right for Alliance members to make the most of the

⁸⁷FEER, 30 May 1968, p. 472 and 13 June 1968, p. 556. In the competitive arms market rarely does a country announce their intentions without soliciting bids.

⁸⁸C. Jeshurun, op. cit., p. 37.

political gain of complete severance of ties with England; setting the stage for a repeat Alliance 'sweep' in the upcoming 1969 elections.⁸⁹

The political maneuvering and gaming that was anticipated prior to the elections was shaken in mid-1968 by "the security threat in East Malaysia." The Philippines reopened their dispute over portions of the Sabah territory and, according to the two highlighted concerns addressed in the Royal Address given on 6 June 1968, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong considered the Philippines' claim with the British withdrawal of forces as the most serious concern for Malaysia.⁹⁰ In addition, in a Special Appendix to the Royal Address the administration admitted the country was in an "unfavourable financial situation."⁹¹

The Government called for a heightened security posture that translated into "establishment of the Local Defence Corps, the introduction of National Service registration, and revival of vigilante corps."⁹² The sobering realities were that Malaysian defense readiness was poor, the units were vastly undermanned and under-equipped, and if equipped, the weapons were outdated.

The prospect of independently fielding a well trained, properly equipped force in light of the dismal financial situation was made worse by the realization of national elections in less than one year. Even assuming the federal budget could absorb the expense, it would have been politically devastating for the Alliance Government to propose to wage any form of military response against

⁸⁹ As a result of the previous national election held in 1964, the Alliance controlled 89 of the 104 Parliamentary seats and 240 of the 282 State seats in Western Malaysia.

⁹⁰ PD/DR, V/1, 6 June 1968, cols. 25-28.

⁹¹ C. Jeshurun, *op.cit.* p. 33.

⁹² *Ibid.*

the Philippines, given the state of military readiness and the proximity to the national election.

In response, the Alliance Government pushed for a curtailment in defense spending while stepping up the security posture in Eastern Malaysia. The projects to expand the forces were modified, and the purchasing of weapons was nearly halted. The programmed and previously contracted for establishment of a Divisional Headquarters in Western Malaysia was carried out, primarily to provide a command and control center for counterinsurgency operations on the Thailand-Malaysian Border. The RMN was considered operationally complete with the purchase and launching of the frigate *K.D. Hang Jebat* (*K.D.* is the abbreviation for Kapal Diraja, or 'Royal Ship') in 1967. The RMAF was not scheduled to receive any major upgrade during 1968.

Cries rang out from both sides of the Parliament to modernize and expand the force; however, the Alliance's intent was clearly to avoid any situation that might jeopardize their chances in the upcoming elections. At times it sounded as though the cabinet was charged to juggle both sides of the argument against the middle. Tan Siew Sin, the Finance Minister, stated that the curtailment in defense expenditures had been "dictated by the compelling need to ensure that the cost of maintaining our Armed Forces is within our means" then, in the same speech, asserted that "without security there can be no development, either economic or social."⁹³

One week after Tan Siew Sin's speech to the Parliament, Tun Razak addressed the Parliament to discuss the issue of Malaysian defense and security. The accelerated pullout, to be complete by 1971 rather than by 1975

⁹³PD/DR, V/15, 9 January 1969, cols. 2760-76, taken from the account on defence expenditures in C. Jeshurun, op.cit. p. 34.

as originally announced, had disrupted budget planning in 1968, and would continue to impact the 1969 budget estimates. The extent to which the cycle was off course was marginally disclosed during Tun Razak's discussions in parliament; but he still asserted that it was now necessary "to allocate a larger proportion of the available resources to further equip, train, and strengthen our defence capability and our state of preparedness."⁹⁴

The fact of the matter was that Malaysia was in a financial crisis. Even though the Deputy Prime Minister called for more and better defense, the resources were not available. As a result of the financial woes, programmed defense development expenditures for 1969 were estimated at 15% below the 1968 expenditures, and most of these 1969 development monies were already obligated to previous contractual commitments.

Of the available dollars for new development in 1969, Tunku Abdul Rahman indicated his priority was the acquisition of supersonic jets. It was revealed that "negotiations were all but concluded for the purchase of 16 French Dassault *Mirage* jet fighters." The objective was to achieve the critical "air defence capability by building up an interceptor fighter squadron in the RMAF."⁹⁵

According to Chandran Jeshurun, the West was alarmed and critical of the decision by Malaysia to acquire air defense capability through the purchase of supersonic jets. The argument was that jets are sophisticated equipment that require continual training and maintenance. Additionally, when the jets are deployed, their effectiveness is related to the breadth and ability of the command and control staff. In contrast to an air defense network of jets, land-

⁹⁴PD/DR, V/35, 3 February 1969, cols. 5203-14.

⁹⁵C. Jeshurun, op. cit., p. 35.

based systems (primarily the combination of early-warning stations and 'surface-to-air' rockets) can be as effective, with much less support required to maintain and operate. One analyst chided that Malaysia was "at least three to five years away from having the technical expertise to sustain the complex weapons system [supersonic jets] involved." In the same article, the author concluded that "the pursuit of the supersonic arises, in essence, from the Malaysian Government's confusion of the symbols of defence with its substance."⁹⁶ The fault with this analyst's criticism, and the argument in general, is the misunderstanding of what these 'symbols of defense' mean for a developing nation.

The May 13th Riots

The national election of 1969 was different from the other two national elections in two primary respects. First, this was the first political event without external distractions. Prior to and during the 1959 elections, The Emergency had been the singular nation-wide focus; and for the counterinsurgency to be successful, the entire nation was called on to join in the war against the communists. *Konfrontasi* served as the distraction during the 1964 elections.⁹⁷ Second, the 1969 national elections were the first national event with a vocal, politically viable opposition.⁹⁸

⁹⁶The *Financial Times*, 23 January 1969.

⁹⁷It is interesting to note that the threatening nature of these two episodes served to extend and expand Malaysia's reliance on England. The common denominator between The Emergency and *Konfrontasi* was not merely that each was a threat to Malaysian sovereignty, but also that, in both cases, the use of armed forces was necessary and the conduct of the armed forces' operations involved significant participation from Commonwealth forces.

⁹⁸See K. Von Vorys, *op.cit.*, pp. 219-88. Success for the Alliance meant continuance of their pan-communal appeal. The most threatening of the opposition political parties tended to be very communal. The Democratic Action Party (DAP), an offshoot of Lee Kwan Yew's People's Action Party, called for a 'Malaysian Malaysia' while very tactfully articulating "all the salient demands of the communities of Chinese and Indians." Interestingly, according to Von Vorys, at

Initially, the results of the election indicated the pan-communal appeal of the Alliance was waning. The opposition parties were jubilant, as a result of early returns. Victory processions were held, not so much to celebrate their victory, but more to show the Alliance that their hold on the country was not quite as firm as it once was. The response of UMNO members was reactionary, and in the end violence broke out, grounded not on political/ideological differences, but almost entirely on racial, or communal differences. Many people were killed or injured during the ensuing riot.⁹⁹ From the beginning, reports and accounts of the riots indicated the communal nature of the violence; *bumiputeras* had been massacred in the Chinese quarter of Kuala Lumpur, while Chinese youth were brutally killed in Malay sectors of the city. Slogans and chants did not reflect political concerns, but were charged with racial prejudice.¹⁰⁰ Walls were being erected along communal lines during this period providing each racial community with a fortress - a communal fortress

the "core of the DAP program ... was its political demand for a review of the Internal Security Act and a *development of multiracial national defence forces*." The composition of Malaysia's armed forces was a reflection of the national identity and the Chinese and Indians, apparently, wanted to be a part of that identity. The Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PMIP) quite clearly stated that the Alliance had sold out to the *kafirs* (heathens). This was an Islamic Malay country and any program or policy that did not recognize that should be considered a threat. Further more, the PMIP stated, according to the Koran, God says: "Whoever seeks other than Islam as his religion of adoption, therefore will never be received, that in the next world he will be included amongst the lost ones."; therefore, the Alliance's acceptance, or even, promotion of other religions was not just an assault against Malaysia, but an attack on each and every Muslim. In addition to the PMIP and DAP, the most significant opposition parties were the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Partai Rakyat ('People's Party'), and the Partai Gerakan Rakyat (People's Movement Party). In the end, the Alliance attempted to keep a low profile on communally divisive issues.

⁹⁹There are a variety of estimates given for the number of casualties, ranging from "thousands"; found in R.K. Vasil, *Ethnic Politics in Malaysia*, (Radiant Publishers, New Delhi, India, 1980), p. 182, to Tunku Abdul Rahman's assertion that 184 were killed and 356 were injured; as found in K. Von Vorys, op. cit., p. 362.

¹⁰⁰See K. Von Vorys, op. cit., pp. 308-38. Von Vorys' account of the riots is thorough and extensive, providing an excellent description of the riots. An example of the prejudicial nature of the event is evidenced by the type of slogans the Chinese were parading around Kuala Lumpur on the 12th and 13th of May 1969 - *Melayu keluar* (Malays get out), *Semua Melayu kasi habis* (Kill or finish off the Malays), and *Pergi mati-lah* (better go and die).

that supplied, nourished, and defended its members against any real or perceived threat.

Much has been written about the May 13th Riots and it is not the intent of this study to dwell on the specifics of communal violence in Malaysia. However, in order to grasp the essence of contemporary Malaysia, it is important to have an appreciation of the depth and extent to which the riots effected the political, social, and economic conditions in Malaysia - essentially, how the May 13th Riots helped to redefine Malaysia. It could be adequately argued that, for a modern Malaysian, the *semangat* (spirit, consciousness) of being a Malaysian was, and is, in large part, a fallout of the 1969 riots.

The first order of business for the ruling Alliance party was to restore order. According to the account given by K. Von Vorys, in his Democracy Without Consensus, on the morning of 14 May Tun Razak held a meeting with the Cabinet Ministers to discuss the "general situation." Tun Dr. Ismail, still retired, was also invited to attend by the Deputy Prime Minister. Von Vorys asserts that Tun Ismail "argued for the prompt announcement of an emergency government and the vigorous use of the security forces to restore order."¹⁰¹ After the meeting, Tun Ismail, Tun Tan Siew Sin and Tun Sambanthan went to the Residency, home of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. The specifics are not clear on just who decided to do what; however, as a result of the meeting, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong declared a State of Emergency, the follow-on elections in East Malaysia were postponed indefinitely, and parliamentary government was suspended. A National Operations Council (NOC) was established to assume all duties, functions, and responsibilities of the government of Malaysia. The

¹⁰¹K. von Vorys, op. cit., p. 341.

NOC resembled, in mission, function, and makeup, the Operations Council that was in place during the Emergency years, 1948-1960.

Parliamentary democracy was replaced by the NOC, which quickly assumed responsibility for restoration of order.¹⁰² The expressed intent was to restore order, however, it was clear a change in leadership was in progress. Tunku Abdul Rahman, who had been the Prime Minister of Malay(si)a since independence, was seen handing over control of the country to his deputy, Tun Razak. At the announcement of the establishment of the NOC, Tunku Abdul Rahman stated, "I have now set up a National Operations Council with Tun Razak as the Director of Operations." The Tunku quickly added, "Tun Razak will be immediately responsible to me, which means much of his work will be given first priority....I am afraid people might criticize and say that because of our small majority, we are forced to embark on this plan. But this is not so. We have a working majority to carry out administration, but circumstances demand that we take effective and strong measures to deal with the terrorist elements."¹⁰³ In essence the selection of Tun Razak as the Director of the NOC was Tunku Abdul Rahman's abdication of rule over Malaysia.

¹⁰²K. von Vorys, op. cit., pp. 341-60. On 15 May the NOC adopted a censorship policy in order to control the damage (both internally and abroad) brought on by reporting from the foreign press. After the censorship, the NOC reorganized the Information Services under Tun Sambanthan. Finally, all political party publications were banned, and all current issues of Newsweek and Time were seized by the police, while the Special Branch "removed a consignment of British Newspapers (Daily Express, Daily Telegraph, Observer, the Financial Times, and the London Times) from Subong airport for detailed study." It was apparent the Prime Minister felt uneasy with the censorship policy and once "the clear and present danger of renewed violence receded" he recommended to the NOC that the policy be rescinded. In addition to censorship, the NOC assumed control of all television and radio stations in Malaysia in order to conduct their own propagand campaign. Broadcasts were used to display the progress and socio-economic development which the country had experienced in the years since the achievement of independence.

¹⁰³Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra al-Haj, May 13: Before and After, (Utusan Melayu Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1969), pp. 105-109.

The pre-May 13th Federal Cabinet was dissolved and, on 20 May, the new Federal Cabinet was formed with admittedly less power than before. Tunku Abdul Rahman clarified to the press, "During the [Second] Emergency period the Cabinet is playing a secondary role to the National Operations Council."¹⁰⁴ It was evident, the NOC was not merely empowered to resolve the 'Second Emergency', but given the authority to direct the social, political, and economic development for Malaysia.

The NOC was chaired by Tun Razak and the deputy was Tun Dr. Ismail. The other Council members were Tun Tan Siew Sin, Tun Sambanthan, Hamzah bin Dato Abu Samah, Major General Tunku Osman Jiwa (Chief of the Armed Forces), Tan Sri Salleh (Inspector General of the Police), and Tan Sri Ghazali bin Shafie.

According to James Ongkili, the Malaysian statesman from Sabah, the "top military and police officers were brought into the NOC in order to ensure the execution of swift and decisive action."¹⁰⁵ The inclusion of the military and police on the NOC could very well have meant the politicization of the armed forces, but there is no data that supports this notion - the list of political appointments does not include active or retired officers and military development did not appear to receive preferential treatment.

The operational and administrative structure for resolving the Second Emergency was assuming the personality and characteristics of operations during the First Emergency. The fundamental difference, though, was in the definition of the enemy. The enemy during the First Emergency was fairly well

¹⁰⁴Straits Times, 26 July 1969.

¹⁰⁵J. P. Ongkili, Nation-Building in Malaysia, 1946-1974, (Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1985), pp. 215-16.

defined - communist insurgents, primarily of Chinese descent. On the other hand, the enemy of the Second Emergency was not as easy to define. Initially, the enemy was the band of rioters. The culprit of the unrest, however, shifted from rioters to social, political, and economic injustice. The answer to the First Emergency was to follow the Briggs' Plan; the answer to the Second Emergency was to follow the New Economic Policy.

The Malays felt overwhelmingly, that, as a race, they were the 'have nots' in their own country and the Chinese were the 'haves'. After the violence and anger quieted, politicians and scholars spoke and wrote extensively about the injustice and plight of the Malays. Probably the best example is Mahathir bin Mohamad's controversial book, The Malay Dilemma. Written and published within one year of 13 May 1969, Mahathir presents a case that "slowly but surely, they [Malays] are becoming the dispossessed in their own land."¹⁰⁶ The NOC published The May 13 Tragedy, A Report, focussing on the catalysts to the May 13th Riots and, in essence, concluded that the injustice suffered by the Malays manifested itself during the May 13th Riots.¹⁰⁷

Citizens from all the various communities in Malaysia, apparently, demanded more from their government than could be, or was being, delivered.

¹⁰⁶Mahathir bin Mohamad, The Malay Dilemma, (Federal Publications, Kuala Lumpur, 1970), p. 3. The entire work espouses his views on the strengths and weaknesses of *bumiputera*, the rights and requirements of citizenship, and the importance of the Malaysian moral code, which was founded on Islam. According to Mahathir, all three - *bumiputera*, citizenship, and the Malaysian moral code - are necessary for there to be a Malaysia.

¹⁰⁷Government of Malaysia, The May 13 Tragedy, A Report, (National Operations Council, Kuala Lumpur, 1969), pp. 23-24. The Report stated, "The Malays who already felt excluded in the country's economic life, now began to feel a threat to their place in the public services [i.e. political control]. No mention was ever made by non-Malay politicians of the almost closed-door attitude to the Malays by non-Malays in large sections of the private sector in this country....Certain non-Malay racist election speakers constantly worked up non Malay passions against Malay policemen and officers, alleging partial treatment in the enforcement of the law. They contributed directly to the breakdown in respect for the law and authority amongst sections of the non-Malay communities."

Government officials and citizens alike began to question whether, in its current form, Malaysia could stand as a unified, sovereign nation. Probably the most celebrated comment came from the Deputy Chairman of the NOC, Tun Dr. Ismail, in an interview to the Far Eastern Economic Review, when he declared "Democracy is dead in this country."¹⁰⁸

The State Policy is Formed

The NOC created or reorganized government agencies in order to help bring Malaysia out of the State of Emergency. The National Consultative Council (NCC) was established to provide a forum for debate and discussion among representatives from each state, essentially giving the appearance of a Parliament, although the NOC still had unchecked control. Interestingly, the armed forces, as an institution, was kept insulated from the government upheaval and maintained in the same basic organizational structure throughout the period. By 1970, the state apparatus in place under the NOC was prepared to introduce their policy for development in post-May 13 Malaysia - the New Economic Policy (NEP).

The NOC established the Department of National Unity (DNU) "with the assignment to formulate a fresh approach in the solution of our national problems."¹⁰⁹ The DNU joined the already existing Economic Planning Unit (EPU) to devise a program to lead Malaysia out of the state of emergency. On 18 March 1970 the DNU published a paper titled "The New Economic Policy," which von Vorys describes as the "definitive statement on [Malaysia's]

¹⁰⁸FEER, 22 May 1969, Vol. 64, No. 21.

¹⁰⁹K. von Vorys, op. cit., pp. 389-390.

development strategy."¹¹⁰ The DNU paper was in compliance with the 1969 Development Circular, No. 1, which states, "the overriding objective of the Second Malaysia Plan will be the promotion of national unity"; however, to insure there was no misunderstanding of the intent of the New Economic Policy, the DNU included the clarification that "employment and growth are only derived objectives from the overriding objective of national unity."¹¹¹ It was apparent that the New Economic Policy was intended to be more than just an economic plan; the NEP was envisioned as the solution to Malaysia's myriad of social, political, and economic problems. After 1970, the political objective of national unity was interdependent on social and economic development. This 'supra policy', in essence, linked every government action to the spirit and intent of the NEP, which was to eradicate poverty and "correct the economic imbalance."¹¹²

The NEP was enacted into law with the Second Malaysia Plan, 1971-1975. There was little doubt that the Second Malaysia Plan was devised to attack the single most sensitive issue to come out of the May 13th Riots - injustice.

The Plan incorporates a two-pronged New Economic Policy for development. The first prong is to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty, by raising income levels and increasing employment opportunities for all Malaysians, irrespective of race. The second prong aims at accelerating the process of restructuring Malaysian society to correct economic imbalance, so as to reduce and

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 401.

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Malaysia, Second Malaysia Plan, op. cit., para. 2. The paragraph continues with, "the process involves the modernization of rural life, a rapid and balanced growth of urban activities and the creation of a *Malay* commercial and industrial community in all categories and at all levels of operation, so that Malays and other indigenous people will become full partners in all aspects of the economic life of the nation.

eventually, eliminate the identification of race with economic function.¹¹³

Challenges to the government came from Alliance and opposition members. Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, a member of the Executive Committee of UMNO from the state of Kedah who had suffered defeat in the elections, issued a statement to *Utusan Melayu*, the primary Malay newspaper, calling for exclusion of the MCA and the MIC from the Cabinet. When he was reprimanded by the Tunku for stirring up trouble in troubled times, Mahathir responded to the Prime Minister with an letter. In the letter, which later was anonymously reproduced and distributed throughout the *bumiputera* community, Mahathir asserted that the Prime Minister not only did not represent Malays, but that Malays hated their Prime Minister and he should resign.

Mahathir wrote:

Permit me to tell you what the position, the thoughts and the opinions of the people are really....I regret writing this letter, but I have to convey to you the feelings of the Malays. In truth the Malays whether they are UMNO or PMIP supporters really hate you...They said you wanted to be known only as 'the Happy Prime Minister' even though others are suffering...I wish to convey what the people really think, that is that it is high time you resign as our Prime Minister and UMNO leader.¹¹⁴

The call for the Prime Minister's resignation was an illustration of the severity of the crisis; however, realizing that the call came from a leader in the Malay community and was directed at Tunku Abdul Rahman - referred to by many as *Bapa Malaysia* (father of Malaysia) - indicates the crisis was, in deed, potentially devastating for this developing nation.¹¹⁵ Mahathir was expelled

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴*Utusan Melayu*, 17 June 1969; this translation from K.Von Vorys, op. cit., pp. 372-74.

¹¹⁵As a result of the letter, Mahathir was charged with "breach of discipline" by the Executive Committee of UMNO in July of that year. The letter's release forced the issue of whether to support the somewhat radical, yet popular Mahathir, or maintain support behind the

from UMNO, Tunku Abdul Rahman stepped down and Tun Abdul Razak was sworn in as the Prime Minister on 22 September 1970.

The communal riots of 1969 shook Malaysia at its core, and her future would be shaped, in large part, by the lessons and fears of that violent event.

The Role of the Armed Forces

Application and use of the armed forces during the May 13th Riots followed the 'police action' model. According to that model, the riots were deemed a civil disturbance and therefore, the armed or military operations would be controlled by the police. The police commanded the operation and when the military were used, their insertion was managed and directed by the police.

The armed forces were employed initially, in the state of Selangor, specifically in Kuala Lumpur, to counter the most intensive rioting. A 24 hour curfew was imposed almost immediately, on 13 May. Businesses and offices opened for normal business hours on 19 May and by early June, the curfew was confined to only two or three hours per night. By August, the violence or threat of violence, had subsided enough to withdraw the 'security forces' to more discreet areas in Kuala Lumpur.

The remainder of the armed forces, however, maintained their heightened state of alert, preparing to be inserted into a counterinsurgency operation against communist terrorists along the Thailand-Malaysia border. The new Minister of Home Affairs, Tun Dr. Ismail, was in overall control of all forces,

Tunku. When put to a vote in the Executive Council of UMNO, 22 voted for expulsion and 5 dissented.

which amounted to approximately 27,500 regular police, 38,780 army, 3,000 navy, 3,000 air force, and 25 companies of Police Field Force (PFF).¹¹⁶ Ismail's immediate target though, was Chinese secret societies in Kuala Lumpur. On 16 May, three days after the riots began, the new minister launched his assault on secret societies. Thirty-three raids were conducted over the next month resulting in nearly 2,000 arrests, although admittedly only the 'small fry' were the ones arrested.¹¹⁷

Originally, the government selected the allegedly ruthless Sarawak Rangers for employment, a unit manned predominantly with Ibans and patterned after the British-trained Gurkha regiments. The crisis, however, was too serious and potentially debilitating for the occurrence of any action by a government employed agent that would stoke the already raging fire. In a short while the government pulled the Sarawak Rangers and inserted elements of the Royal Malay Regiment (RMR).¹¹⁸

The government's concern over the politically sensitive issue of inserting 'pro-Malay' forces into the racial fray was apparently not significant enough to inhibit use of the RMR, the only solely Malay unit in the armed forces, police or military. C.H. Enloe claims in her article, "The Issue Salience of the Military-Ethnic Connection: Some Thoughts on Malaysia," that the insertion of the RMR during the May 13th Riots did not result in worsening the racial crisis. There are two reasons for this, according to Enloe: first, the government "took prompt

¹¹⁶K. Von Vorys, op. cit., pp. 334-335. The exact numbers for the PFF are not given, however it can be assumed that each company had approximately 150 men, therefore the number would be 3,750.

¹¹⁷ibid., p. 336.

¹¹⁸C.H. Enloe, "Civilian Control of the Military, Implications in the Plural Societies of Guyana and Malaysia", a paper presented at the Interuniversity Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, SUNY-Buffalo, 18-19 October 1974.

action to prevent the issue emergence of any question posed in explicit communal terms, and second, the military and police have always been handled off the political stage."¹¹⁹

Close scrutiny over the employment and behavior of the armed forces was evident in the political elite circles. The NOC attempted to answer or dispel the allegations of wrong doing that were levied against the NOC's post-riot record.

In the NOC Report, the council squarely addressed the armed forces' issue:

If the members of the security forces had in fact been partial on purely racial grounds as alleged by some quarters, considering the dimension of the disturbances and the number of security forces deployed which was in the order of 2,000 Military and 3,600 Police, total casualties amongst the race which was said to be the 'target' would have been enormous.¹²⁰

The reports of collusion and partiality on the part of the predominantly Malay armed forces continued after the NOC study was published. One of the more celebrated criticisms was done by John Slimming, a British expatriate and former member of the Malayan Police Force. Slimming's Malaysia: Death of a Democracy, touched a nerve with the NOC and many in the Malay community when he asserted that much of the blame for the riots should be assumed by UMNO politicians. According to Slimming, "Dato Harun bin Haji Idris, the *Mentri Besar* (Chief Minister) of Selangor together with other local UMNO officials, must be held responsible for encouraging and organizing the UMNO demonstration which started the race riots."¹²¹ Slimming continued with an assault on the Malaysian Armed Forces stating, "There is no doubt

¹¹⁹C.H. Enloe, "The Issue Saliency of the Military-Ethnic Connection.", op. cit., p. 19..

¹²⁰The May 13 Tragedy. A Report, op. cit. It is interesting to note that in the Report, pp. 88-90, the NOC reported that of the 634 killed or injured from May 13 - July 31, 1969 92% were from Selangor, 64% were of Chinese descent, and 24% were Malay. This was undoubtedly, plainly not a 'Malaysia-wide' event and the victims were the Malaysians of Chinese descent.

¹²¹J. Slimming, Malaysia: Death of a Democracy, (John Murray Press, London, 1969), p. 25; as cited in K. von Vorys; op. cit.; p. 367.

whatsoever that Malay soldiers behaved shamefully."¹²² There was evidence to support both the government and the critics' claims; however, access to information tightened up significantly under the NOC rule, resulting in a community of analysts and scholars that were less informed, yet more skeptical.

Conclusion

From the perspective of state building in Malaysia, the May 13th Riots had a great impact; for it was after the riots that the growth and development of the armed forces took off.¹²³ Prior to 1969 development of the armed forces had been a priority. The relationship between the growth of the armed forces and the May 13th Riots was not purely reactionary; the intention to develop had been expressed and the amount of monies spent on the armed forces was not *significantly disproportional from the amount spent on other institutions* throughout the 70's. I characterize the rapid and substantial growth of the armed forces after 1969 primarily along the lines of a policy that was consistent with the twofold mission assumed by that institution: first, to develop a strong enough military that would permit the Federal Government to pursue a self-reliant policy, and second, to develop an institution that projected and defended Malay hegemony.

In the wake of the May 13th Riots it was reasonable to expect an accelerated build-up in the armed forces, if only to support and enforce NOC laws and policies. Chandran Jeshurun mentions "it was common place to hear

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³The author's indicators of predominance are the percentage of annual armed forces expenditures from overall government expenditures, the number of 'men under arms', or soldiers and policemen per thousand population, and the armed forces expenditures per capita .

of considerable increases in the size of the armed forces."¹²⁴ Estimates of the increase ranged from "nine military and paramilitary battalions"¹²⁵ to "ten to thirteen battalions."¹²⁶ The expectation for more military, both in number of soldiers and equipment, came from Malaysian officials and regional observers.

The fact was, however, that there were no expedited increases. Chandran Jeshurun, in his paper "The Growth of the Malaysian Armed Forces, 1963-1973," clearly states "there is little evidence to suggest that the new threats to internal security had accelerated the pace of expansion in the armed forces which had been going on since 1963."¹²⁷ The heightened interest in defense and security had been established in 1967 with the decision in London to pull out of Southeast Asia. The issue was compounded with the resurgent claim by the Philippines for Sabah. The May 13th Riots did not necessarily change or alter the planned development of the Malaysian Armed Forces.

¹²⁴C. Jeshurun, op. cit., p. 38.

¹²⁵FEER, 3 July 1969, p. 58.

¹²⁶FEER, 26 June 1969, p. 690.

¹²⁷C. Jeshurun, "The Growth of the Malaysian Armed Forces", Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, Occasional Paper, No. 35, October 1975, p. 20.

Chapter Four

IN SUPPORT OF DEVELOPMENT, 1970-1983

All development programs drawn up by the government should be viewed as a challenge by the armed forces in terms of its ability to increase its defense efforts in the economic interests of the people.¹²⁸

It is axiomatic that development and security must go hand in hand, as without security there can be no development to improve the standard of living of the people, there can be no long term stability in this country.¹²⁹

The initiatives for neutrality continued with a vengeance after the May 13th Riots. The first effort Malaysia entered into was with their neighbor and former foe—Indonesia. The 1970 Friendship Treaty ("Perjanjian Persahabatan antara Kerajaan Malaysia dan Kerajaan Republik Indonesia") was a non-aggression pact guaranteeing, to some extent, peace. Article 3 of the treaty states:

The two High Contracting Parties undertake that, in case any dispute on matters directly affecting them should arise, they will not resort to the threat or use of force and shall at all times endeavor to settle such a dispute through the usual diplomatic channels in the true spirit of friendship and goodwill between good neighbors.¹³⁰

¹²⁸From a radio broadcast by Prime Minister Dr. Datuk Seri Mahathir bin Mohamad, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, BK 030939, 15 December 1981.

¹²⁹From a speech by Tan Sri Ghazalie Shafie, Minister of Home Affairs, at the seminar on business opportunities in Malaysia, 1981-1985, in Kuala Lumpur on 2 June 1981.

¹³⁰"Perjanjian Persahabatan antara Kerajaan Malaysia dan Kerajaan Republik Indonesia (1970)", in Malaysia Kementerian Pelajaran, Perjanjian Kerajaan Malaysia dengan Kerajaan Asing, (Kuala Lumpur, 1973), as translated by J. Saravanamuttu, The Dilemma of Independence: Two Decades of Malaysia's Foreign Policy, 1957-1977, (Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia, 1983), p. 92.

It became clear, after the 1969 Canberra Five Powers Conference did not result in a signed agreement, that the issue of national security would be answered through a push for 'non-aligned' status. Malaysia did not realize that objective until they attended the Non-Aligned Nations Conference at Lasaka in 1970.¹³¹ J. Saravanamuttu, in his excellent study of Malaysian Foreign Policy, The Dilemma of Independence, contends that attendance at this meeting "marked Malaysia's acceptance as a 'non-aligned' nation."¹³²

During the conference at Lasaka, Tun Razak attempted to gain endorsement for his declaration of the neutralization of SEA, however, the proposal was met with limited support. Two months later, Tun Razak attended a United Nations meeting and, again proposed his concept:

The non-aligned principles to which Malaysia wholeheartedly subscribes...call for...restraint and consideration from the big powers in their actions and decisions which affect smaller countries. In keeping with the latter, the non-aligned countries at Lasaka looked to the neutralisation of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Malaysia for its part has taken this a step further and called for the neutralisation of Southeast Asia—a neutralisation which necessarily requires the endorsement of the U.S., U.S.S.R., and China.¹³³

The concept of neutralization was now the foundation for Malaysia's Foreign Policy. At ASEAN's Foreign Minister's Meeting in Kuala Lumpur the concept gained regional support. At the meeting the ministers ratified the Kuala Lumpur Declaration. The declaration specified: We

do hereby state: (1) That Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand are determined to exert initially necessary efforts to secure the recognition of, and respect for, Southeast Asia as a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside powers; (2) That Southeast Asian

¹³¹The conference was held from 8-10 September; just 12 days prior to Tun Razak assuming Prime Ministership from Tunku Abdul Rahman.

¹³²J. Saravanamuttu, The Dilemma of Independence: Two Decades of Malaysia's Foreign Policy, 1957-1977, op. cit., p. 93.

¹³³Foreign Affairs Malaysia, 1970, no. 3, p. 16.

countries should make concerted efforts to broaden the areas of co-operation which would contribute to their strength, solidarity, and closer relationship.¹³⁴

The Foreign Ministers' approval of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration was indeed a watershed event for, not only ASEAN, but more specifically, Malaysia. For ASEAN, the event marked a shift from being a regional economic organization to a regional organization with an interest in security. ASEAN had been considered an economic association, somewhat like the European Economic Community. The declaration of ZOPFAN (the term used to refer to the declaration; Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality) indicated the concern was not only economic modernization but, in addition, regional security. For Malaysia, The Kuala Lumpur Declaration initiated an era of regional reliance. The Five Powers arrangement was inadequate, the British had left the region, and Malaysia's assurance of continued development was dependent on the region's ability to protect and defend all of SEA. The challenge of state building and the abandonment of SEA by colonial powers was met, for Malaysia, with ZOPFAN.

* * *

The philosophical dilemma for Malaysia was how to push for neutralization while negotiating for security assistance through the Five Powers arrangements. During a state visit to Moscow, in late 1972, Tun Razak articulated his recommendation that Malaysia withdraw from the Five Powers arrangement. The reaction in Malaysia was immediate and, generally, supportive. An editorial in the Utusan Melayu stated:

Malaysia's withdrawal from this agreement is very logical and in line with the concept for which it struggled, which is to be respected by the big powers, and is in accord with changes in the present period.

¹³⁴Extracted from Foreign Affairs Malaysia, 1971, No. 4, p. 58.

Tensions among the big world powers, which particularly threatened small nations up to now, have begun to ease. For this reason it is felt that we no longer need the defence agreement which links us to a big power for this will only invite tensions. From the experience of our nation in World War II, it is evident that defence must be shouldered by the people themselves.¹³⁵

It could be argued that the concept of ZOPFAN was unrealistic for the region, especially given the Indochina War and the horrendous activities of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. From a state building or development perspective it is better to view ZOPFAN as a 'means' rather than an 'end' policy. One analyst offered the following:

The (neutralisation) proposal may not be practical; indeed, may be utopian as many of the critics have argued. Quite realistically, Southeast Asia is not likely to develop into a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality soon. Yet it is important to distinguish between neutralisation as an end or as a goal, and as a means, or more particularly, a theoretical framework of thinking, articulation and formulation of individual and collective policies.¹³⁶

ZOPFAN of 1971 was clearly a regional answer to the security issue. At the ASEAN Ministerial Conference of 1975 the Prime Minister reiterated Malaysia's stand on neutrality, however, ZOPFAN assumed a new form—'self-resilience'. At the conference Tun Razak gave the following address:

The premise of the neutralisation proposal is regional and national resilience. Southeast Asia must stand on its own feet. We—individual countries as well as the region as a whole—must be *self-reliant* if we wish to survive. If a country or a people values its way of life, it must be prepared to defend against any form of external encroachment. If a people is not prepared to fight in the defence of its sovereignty and its values, it will not survive—indeed it does not deserve to survive. *The best defence lies in the people themselves*—in their commitment, their will and capacity. This is the premise of the neutrality system as it applies both to individual countries and to the region as a whole....The key to our future security and stability lies not in outdated and irrelevant attitudes of the cold war, but in

¹³⁵Utusan Melayu, (Kuala Lumpur), 3 October 1972, p. 8.

¹³⁶S. Chee, "Malaysia's Changing Foreign Policy", in *Trends in Malaysia. II*, ed. by Yong Mun Cheong, (Singapore University Press, Singapore, 1974), p. 49.

imaginative and constructive response to the new realities of today.¹³⁷

Inertia was on Tun Razak's side; Malaysia would solve her sticky defense and security problem with neutralization and, more specifically, ZOPFAN and self-resilience.

Malaysia's pursuit of a foreign policy of ZOPFAN and 'self-resilience' was consistent with the supra policy of development. R.L. Rau, in his paper "Major Issues in the Security Policies of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore", cites the Kuala Lumpur Declaration as the formal shift in foreign policy, from independent development and security to regional development and security.¹³⁸ I think his theory is partially correct, yet, incomplete. The most obvious result of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration was, indeed, the shift to a regional scope, however, the net results of both ZOPFAN and 'self-resilience' was a less threatening region, and that was the type of environment that would allow Malaysia to continue to focus on her internal concerns. Self-resilience, as a foreign policy, was a means to 'neutralize' external issues and, thus, concentrate on the internal ones. In addition, the new foreign policy also met a security objective. Clearly, one of Malaysia's objectives in pursuing the policy of Self-Resilience was to enlist as many ASEAN countries as possible; to essentially, establish a sub-association, within ASEAN, of 'self-resilient' countries. The result, from a threat perspective, was a decisively less threatening region. From a defense perspective, the policy lent itself to focusing on the internal security issue. The most egregious threat to Malaysian

¹³⁷Opening remarks by Tun Abdul Razak for the Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, 13 May 1975, in J. Saravanamuttu, The Dilemma of Independence, op. cit., p. 97.

¹³⁸R.L. Rau, "Major Issues in the Security Policies of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore", a paper presented at the 14th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Asian Conference, Association for Asian Studies, Athens, Georgia, 23-25 January 1975.

sovereignty since the May 13th Riots had been the resurgent communist insurgency, and, realizing the regional threat had diminished significantly with the Second Indochina War ending, the most practical and responsive method to defend Malaysia's sovereignty was expressed in the policy of 'self-resilience'.

Barisan Nasional

The success of Tun Razak and the second Malaysia Plan was borne out in the 1974 national elections. The coalition government, no longer called the Alliance, won a staggering 135 of the 154 seats challenged in the Malaysian Parliament. The new coalition, *Barisan Nasional* (National Front), was an expanded version of the Alliance. Where the Alliance consisted of three political parties (UMNO, MCA, and MIC), by 1974 the *Barisan Nasional* consisted of eight political parties.

According to Harold Crouch, in his article "From Alliance to Barisan Nasional", Prime Minister Tun Razak "believed that political stability required the reconstituting of the political system in order to restore the 'consociational' idea in a new form."¹³⁹ 'Political stability' had been the primary order of business for the government since the May 13th Riots, and the use of the term indicates that the desire to not have a re-occurrence of the communal riots of 1969 was still a top priority for the Prime Minister and the government.

Political stability, in Malaysia, had been mandated through continuance of the State of Emergency and the enactment of constitutional amendments in

¹³⁹H. Crouch, "From Alliance to Barisan Nasional", in Malaysian Politics and the 1978 Election, ed. H. Crouch, Lee Kam Hing, and M. Ong, (Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1980), p. 6. The term 'consociational' was given to describe the early Alliance method of compromise among the three communal, or ethnic groups in that coalition.

1971. The National Parliament was reconvened in 1971, with the passage of seven Constitutional Amendments designed to guarantee political stability.¹⁴⁰

The most significant amendment to control public dissent, and thus, contribute to political stability, was the Sedition Act, Article Ten; which empowers Parliament to pass laws to restrict the freedom of speech in the interest of security or public order if such speech tends to question the provisions relating to citizenship, the National Language [Act], the special position of the Malays, and the sovereignty of the Rulers.¹⁴¹

Additionally, political stability was controlled with the Internal Security Act, which had been in effect since the declaration of State of Emergency on 13 May 1969 and allowed for the arrest of any suspect without trial.

The opposition in 1974 consisted of three political parties. For the opposition, the effect of such a broad based coalition, under *Barisan Nasional*, was that those parties not in the coalition tended to have strong, even radical, anti-government platforms. The net result, though, was a landslide victory for the *Barisan Nasional*.¹⁴² After the 1974 elections, for the first time in Malaysia's political history, the ruling coalition controlled every state in the Federation.

Clearly, the mandate for Tun Razak was to continue with the state policy of development, as manifested in the NEP and carried out according to the

¹⁴⁰Prime Minister Tun Razak's opening address in Parliament clarifies the justification for the amendments in, "We have two broad objectives in mind. Firstly, these amendments are intended to remove certain sensitive issues from the realm of public discussion so as to ensure the smooth and continuing function of parliamentary democracy in this country. Secondly, they are intended to redress the racial imbalance in certain sectors of the nation's life in so far as this imbalance can be rectified by legislation." PD/DR, Edition published as Parliamentary Debates on the Constitutional Amendment Bill, 1971, 23 February to 3 March 1971, p. 3.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁴²See Chandrasekaran Pillay, "The 1974 General Elections in Malaysia", Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, Occasional Paper No. 25, November 1974. The important result was that "for the first time since 1959, the coalition in control of the Federal Government is also in charge of each and every state in the Federation." In fact of the 13 State Assemblies, the *Barisan Nasional* had 100% control in four and 85% or better control in seven others. In the States Assemblies of Perak and Sarawak, *Barisan Nasional* controlled 73% and 62% respectively.

Second Malaysia Plan. This is evidenced in the maintenance of development expenditures after expiration of the Second Malaysia Plan. Monies identified for 'Development', rather than 'Operating', under the Second Malaysia Plan consumed 41.6% of the entire budget. Under the Third Malaysia Plan, 1976-1980, 'Development' was to consume 46.9%.¹⁴³

The policy initiatives of Tun Razak remained fairly stable along those prescribed lines until 1973. For developing countries, the 'energy crisis' of 1973 was potentially devastating; the oil shortage effected every sector of economic growth—import, export, industry, agriculture, et. al. In light of the 'energy crisis', though, Malaysia still experienced economic growth. The primary reason for the relative 'boom' was Malaysia's inclusion into OPEC's (Oil Producing Export Countries) 'ten most favoured nations' category, which exempted Malaysia from oil cutbacks.¹⁴⁴

According to J. Saravanamuttu, Malaysia had maintained a low profile in the Islamic circles until attending the 1969 Islamic Summit Conference. The conference was held to protest the burning of the Al-Aqua Mosque by an Israeli. Malaysia attended subsequent annual conferences; however, the government still played a tentative hand in worldwide Islamic politics.

The protection offered Malaysia during the 'energy crisis' was substantial, in light of the economic catastrophe, and the effect to Malaysian development was twofold. The most immediate effect was the bond established between Malaysia and the member countries of OPEC, after 1973. The bond was founded on Islam—Malaysia's state religion. This was still a very contentious

¹⁴³Based on information from Bank Negara Malaysia, Bank Negara Malaysia: Quarterly Economic Bulletin, (Kuala Lumpur), March-June 1983, pp. 60-64; as cited in F. M. Bunge, Malaysia: A Country Study, op. cit., p. 304.

¹⁴⁴J. Saravanamuttu, op. cit., p. 125.

topic in Malaysia, as it was viewed from an ethnic perspective, rather than secular. Nonetheless, the support provided during the 'energy crisis' had benefitted all of Malaysia.

Malaysia sponsored the 1974 Islamic Summit Conference in Kuala Lumpur and thus began their fervent association with the worldwide Islamic community. Tun Razak's address at the conference indicates the importance Malaysia associated with their new found relationship.

Since the historic First Islamic Summit in Rabat in 1969, we can find satisfaction in the knowledge that we have laid a strong foundation for mutual co-operation.... Today, as our Arab brothers embark on the road of negotiations to seek peace and justice, we in this Conference must, more than ever, remain solid and united. We must not allow ourselves to become complacent by the current mode of expectancy or to be confused by the machinations of Zionism. Our unity through this organization must be clearly demonstrated so that the world will know that we will not weaken and we will not be divided.¹⁴⁵

Malaysia's new bond reaped a myriad of other benefits for Malaysia. For instance, by 1975, the Malaysian Government had signed six separate agreements—in the areas of cultural, technical, scientific, and economic exchange—with Middle East Islamic countries.¹⁴⁶

The second effect, as a result of the protection, was Malaysia's shift from an inter-regional focus, to an extra-regional focus. The policy direction that Tun Razak headed after 1973 impacted every sector of Malaysian development. On 2 June 1974, Tun Razak conducted a state visit to the People's Republic of China. This is remarkable considering that China was viewed as a premier communist country and ardent supporter of the insurgency which was raging on in the jungles of Malaysia. The Prime Minister established full diplomatic

¹⁴⁵Foreign Affairs Malaysia, Vol. 7, 1974, pp. 65-67. Tun Razak's opening remarks to the Fifth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held on 21 June 1974.

¹⁴⁶J. Saravanamuttu, op. cit., p. 125.

relations with China during his visit with Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Chou En-lai. The visit was additionally intended to gain assurances of 'non-interference' in Malaysia's internal problem—the communist insurgency; however, that assurance was not specifically acknowledged during the visit. The net result, though, was that Malaysia had established themselves as a regional leader on the international front. This is evidenced in Tun Razak's proud statement; given upon his return from China:

The prestige of Malaysia has never been higher than it is today. The success of our foreign policy is internationally recognised.¹⁴⁷

Malaysia was the first ASEAN nation to establish full diplomatic relations with China. It was apparent, by the end of 1974, that Tun Razak's interest and focus were broader than merely regional.

I contend that these two effects—solidification of the Islamic bond and extra-regional focus—although very important, do not indicate a departure from Malaysia's supra policy of development, but rather support the momentum that the NEP started in 1970.

Tun Razak died, unexpectedly, in London as a result of "acute leukemia" on 14 January 1976. Datuk Hussein Onn, the deputy Prime Minister, was sworn in as the Prime Minister on 15 January 1976.

A New Era of Development

Datuk Hussein Onn, son of Datuk Onn bin Jaafar—the father of UMNO, was an experienced and able politician. Although he was seen by some observers as frail—some even hinted that he would retire in 1975 due to poor health—he proved to be a strong and forthright prime minister. The concern of

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 103.

many was whether Datuk Hussein Onn was capable of guiding Malaysia as well as his predecessors. He lacked "the fervent and personal base of support within the Malay community that Tun Razak enjoyed," wrote one historian.¹⁴⁸

It did not take long, however, for Prime Minister Datuk Hussein Onn to assume control and continue in Tun Razak's basic policy direction, that being, essentially, a policy grounded on neutralization, ZOPFAN, and self-resilience. Within two weeks of assumption of the office of prime minister, Datuk Hussein Onn conducted state visits to Singapore, Jakarta, and Bangkok. In the same vein as Tun Razak's policy of recognition of China, Datuk Hussein Onn negotiated ambassador level recognition of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (and subsequently the unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam), Democratic Kampuchea, and the People's Democratic Republic of Laos. All of this was completed by the end of 1976.¹⁴⁹ FEER reported that President Marcos was "making definite steps" to drop the 14 year old claim for Sabah. The initial indication was that Datuk Hussein Onn was a very competent and capable follower of Tun Razak.

The most significant foreign policy action, according to J. Saravanamuttu, was the signing of the Declaration of Concord and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation at the ASEAN summit in Bali in February 1976. These were important for several reasons. First, the two accords indicate a continuance of

¹⁴⁸S.S. Bedlington, *Malaysia and Singapore: the Building of New States*, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1978), p. 156. Upon being sworn in as prime minister, Datuk Hussein Onn assumed the task of unifying UMNO. UMNO, the predominant party in *Barisan Nasional*, suffered from the split of ultranationalists, called 'ultras', from the main stream members, or moderates. The rift was, in essence, an extension of the sentiment surrounding the expulsion of Mahathir from the party in 1969. Mahathir and his faction - the 'ultras' - were opposed to less radical moderates.

¹⁴⁹J. Saravanamuttu, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

Tun Razak's basic thrust for neutralization, ZOPFAN, and self-resilience.

Included below is an excerpt from the Declaration of Concord.

Resolving to eliminate subversive threats to stability through national and ASEAN resilience, resolving to individually and collectively pursue actively the early establishment of a zone of peace, freedom, and neutrality.¹⁵⁰

The Declaration of Concord was a re-avowal of the 1971 Kuala Lumpur Declaration, which, essentially, meant a reaffirmation of their belief in ZOPFAN. No specific actions were required of the member countries other than a commitment to the tenets of ZOPFAN.

Secondly, the treaties illustrate that Datuk Hussein was prepared to assume a leadership role in the region. The Treaty of Amity and Co-operation was a Datuk Hussein Onn initiative calling on each member country to actively manage and control their destiny:

"That the signatories should refrain from the use of threat or force and that disputes should at all times be settled through friendly negotiations.

"That the signatories should exhaust the regional pacific settlement machinery before resorting to UN Charter procedures.

"That the signatories should endeavour to co-operate in all fields for the promotion of regional resilience, based on the principles of self-confidence, self-resilience, mutual respect, co-operation and solidarity.

"That the treaty be open for accession by other states in Southeast Asia."¹⁵¹

The above excerpt clearly articulates Datuk Hussein's belief in regional determination. "Malaysia lobbied strongest for the amity treaty", according to J.

¹⁵⁰Excerpt of the 1976 ASEAN Declaration of Concord, as in J. Saravanamuttu's The Dilemma of Independence, op. cit., p. 142.

¹⁵¹Excerpt of the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation, as in J. Saravanamuttu's The Dilemma of Independence, op. cit., p. 143.

Saravanamuttu¹⁵², seeing in this treaty a method to expand the benefit from their ASEAN membership, which had hitherto been primarily an economic association—albeit, an association that espoused neutrality, but still an economic association. The signatories of the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation actively bound their countries to actions of non-aggression—as evidenced by the following; "*refrain from the use of threat*", "*settled through friendly negotiations*", and "*endeavour to co-operate*".

The Insurgency

With the onset of destabilization, as a result of the May 13th Riots, came a resurgent communist insurgency. The insurgency of the 70's was different than that of the Emergency, 1948-1960—different in form and intensity. The core of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was essentially the same as in the earlier insurgency; Chin Peng was the leader and most of the senior cadre, as well as approximately 400 insurgents, were older Emergency veterans.

According to Lau Teik Soon's article, "The Security Situation on the Malaysian—Thailand Border", the two primary elements involved on the border were Thai Muslims, under command of the National Liberation Front of Pattani Republic (NLFPR), and the MCP.¹⁵³ The objective of the NLFPR was the "attainment of either an independent Islamic Republic or integration with Malaysia".¹⁵⁴ The objective of the MCP was—as it was during the Emergency—the overthrow of parliamentary democracy in Malaysia, and to replace it with a communist government.

¹⁵²J. Saravanamuttu, op. cit., p. 142.

¹⁵³Lau Teik Soon, "The Security Situation on the Malaysian - Thailand Border", in the Asia Research Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 2, June 1971.

¹⁵⁴Ibid.

The often conflicting relationship between these two independently oriented movements with the governments of Thailand and Malaysia extended and blurred each country's counter-insurgency effort. In the early 70's, the counter-insurgency operations of both Malaysia and Thailand were concerned solely with their respective enemies. Neither effort was associated or interdependent; and thus, the counter-insurgency operations of the Thai and Malaysian Security Forces were much more inclined to clash, rather than to assist each other.

The situation was aggravated by Thailand's use of MCP guerillas in their counter-NLFPR operation. 'Thai officials', according to Lau Teik Soon, signed a mutual, non-interference agreement with MCP officials. The agreement provided that as long as Thai Security Forces were not attacked by MCP members and the MCP did not assist the NLFPR movement, then Thai Security Forces would not interfere with MCP activities.¹⁵⁵ The Thailand—Malaysia border problem was exacerbated by the fact that Thailand, during this time, had another significant counter-insurgency effort on going on their North-East front. It was quite evident that the Southern front did not demand priority attention in Bangkok. The non-interference agreement and the lack of priority concern in Bangkok contributed to a relatively independent, regional commander approach to Thai operations along the Thailand—Malaysia border. It is evident that the nature of the counter insurgency for Malaysia was complicated by much more than armed conflict.

In 1971, the threat posed by the insurgency was significant enough to cause Prime Minister Tun Razak to reactivate the Security Council. The

¹⁵⁵ibid.

Security Council, which had been the coordinating agency for counter-insurgency operations during the Emergency¹⁵⁶, consisted of representatives from the military, police, and the government. The council was charged to oversee the joint (i.e., police and military) counter insurgency operations, implement development projects and conduct the psychological operations (psyops) campaign against locations of known communist activity.

Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Ismail, offered his analysis during a speech to the Commissioners and Chief Officers of the Royal Malaysian Police, on 23 July 1971:

The serious communist threat to national security obviously was not an attempt to take over the administration, but was an attempt to thwart the Second Malaysia Plan.¹⁵⁷

The threat was not as much to national sovereignty, or, more specifically, possible insurrection of the Parliamentary Democracy, as to national development. This important distinction typifies the Malaysian policymakers' response to national defense and growth of the national armed forces—the most cherished, and therefore, most protected, possession was not citizens' rights or liberties, but national development. Development transcended all of the apparent flaws in Malaysia's social, political, or economic being. Protection of national development simply meant protection of the state.

Prime Minister Tun Razak, in an interview with Far Eastern Economic Review, used the term 'New Emergency' to refer to the growing insurgency.¹⁵⁸ The term was appropriate, considering the state of near-war readiness that Malaysia was in—activation of the Security Council and deployment of

¹⁵⁶Headquarters, Department of the Army, Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies, Department of the Army Pamphlet, No. 550-104, 1 December 1965, p. 234.

¹⁵⁷Utusan Melayu, Kuala Lumpur, 23 July 1971, p. 1.

¹⁵⁸FEER, 27 January 1971, pp. 7-8.

Malaysian Security Forces in both the jungles along the border of Thailand and Malaysia and in Sarawak. In June 1971, Tun Razak announced the discovery of a communist terrorist or guerilla training camp in Chemor, one of the 'hot spots' during the first Emergency.¹⁵⁹

The insurgency in Malaysia was not only re-vitalized by the May 13th Riots, but also by the subsequent successes of communist movements in Indochina. The momentum appeared to be on the Communist Party members' side, but, internal rifts among Malaysian communist party members stalled the insurgency. Intelligence sightings, according to a Reuters News Agency article on 22 May 1971, revealed that there were two groups of guerillas—operating in the Northeast portion of the Thailand—Malaysian border the guerillas were predominantly Malay, while in the Western area of the border, the guerillas were predominantly Chinese. In addition, "according to informed sources" there were approximately 1200 total guerillas on peninsular Malaysia, the leader was still Chin Peng and the Deputy Commander was Abdul Rashid Mydin.¹⁶⁰

By mid-1971, it was apparent the communist insurgency was a legitimate emergency—security forces along the border area were conducting security checks, restricting movement of citizens, and had initiated a curfew in the border villages.¹⁶¹ By November of that year, General Tan Sri Ibrahim, Chief of the Armed Forces Staff, reported that guerilla activities were increasing and the

¹⁵⁹Berita Harian, Singapore, 21 June 1971, as reported in the Asia Research Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 2, June 1971.

¹⁶⁰Reuters News Agency, 22 May 1971, as reported in Asia Research Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1, May 1971. This type of reporting, through 'informed sources', is the primary source of data available, as the Malaysian policy of strict censorship of material dealing with state security issues, prohibited release of, or access to, any military or police records concerning counter insurgency.

¹⁶¹Lau Teik Soon, op. cit. The Malaysian Security Forces consisted of the 24th Battalion of the RMR as the backbone unit, supported by "thousands of PFF" and elements from the RMAF.

Security Forces had stepped up counter insurgency operations and civic action projects.¹⁶² In December, during a Parliamentary Session, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Haji Mohamed Ya'acob reported that, on the peninsula, the MCP force had grown to 1,330 armed guerillas.¹⁶³

The insurgency intensified through 1975 to a level comparable with the first Emergency. Between October 1973 and April 1974, five Malaysian-Chinese Special Branch agents had been killed, and in mid-1974 the Inspector General of the Police, Tan Sri Abdul Rahman bin Hashim was assassinated.¹⁶⁴ In the following year, the War Memorial in Kuala Lumpur was destroyed, the PFF Headquarters was bombed with rockets and grenades, and the number of police and military soldiers killed was increasing.¹⁶⁵

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong announced that the Essential (Security Cases) Regulations, 1975 "shall have application throughout Malaysia."¹⁶⁶ Almost immediately, Malaysia assumed 'Emergency' readiness. The acting Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, during a radio broadcast, warned the people to "be prepared to sacrifice their lives and property in defence of the country's integrity and sovereignty against [the] communist threat." He continued with the announcement that the decision had already been made to

¹⁶²SWT, 10 November 1971. Civic Action (CA) included government assistance with village construction projects, providing medical assistance, building irrigation systems, and etc. CA was an important ingredient in the Briggs' concept of counter insurgency, essentially, to 'win the hearts and minds' of the villagers to show possible converts to the insurgency that the Government could and would provide more than the guerillas.

¹⁶³Berita Harian, Malaysia, 9 December 1971.

¹⁶⁴FEER, 17 June 1974, pp. 14-16.

¹⁶⁵According to an editorial in the New Straits Times, 22 September 1975, "The Communist Terrorist Counter", more than 40 members of the security forces had been killed so far in 1975, comparable with the 47 KIA's in 1956 during the Emergency. Additionally, in 1956, 307 guerillas were killed and in 1957 240 - in 1975 there were only 10 guerillas killed and 25 captured. "We are clearly suffering the casualties of 1956 and 1957 without inflicting the casualties of 1956 and 1957."

¹⁶⁶New Straits Times, 9 October 1975, and JPRS # 66071.

"increase the strength of the Police Field Force [in order] to deal with the communist threat" and, additionally, all members of the security forces would be equipped with modern and sophisticated weapons.¹⁶⁷

The heightened level of the insurgency was, in large part, directly related to the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975. The success of North Vietnam served to fuel the communist insurgency in Malaysia. In a Voice of the Malayan Revolution (VOMR) broadcast on 9 May 1975, the fall of Saigon is hailed as an indication that communist revolutionaries "will be victorious."¹⁶⁸

The VOMR broadcast also alluded to a split in the MCP, identifying the insurgents as 'Marxist—Leninist' revolutionaries. Subsequent reports confirmed that there were, in fact, three separate factions of the MCP. The split was not over ideological differences, but rather over method and commitment to the ideals and objectives of the insurgency.

Richard Stubbs, in his article, "Peninsular Malaysia: The New Emergency", states that "since 1970 the communists in Malaysia have been divided into three factions."¹⁶⁹ Confirmation of that fact was difficult, however, and confirmation was not established until 1975, when reports indicated that the three groups operating out of Peninsular Malaysia were (1) the Malayan Communist Party led by Chin Peng, (2) the MCP (Revolutionary Faction) made up of members of the the Eighth Regiment of the MCP army, and (3) the MCP (Marxist—Leninist) consisting, primarily, of members of the 12th Regiment.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷JPRS #64882, Radio broadcast, Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service, 1400 Hours, GMT, 17 October 1975.

¹⁶⁸Voice of the Malayan Revolution radio transmission, 1217 Hours, GMT, 12 May 1975.

¹⁶⁹R. Stubbs, "Peninsular Malaysia: The New Emergency", in Pacific Affairs, Vol. 50, No. 2, 1977, (University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., Canada), pp. 250.

¹⁷⁰Ibid. According to Stubbs, early in 1970 "to eliminate any possible threat of infiltration and subversion" the MCP ordered the execution of all new members over the age of 12 years. This created unrest and shortly after the edict, the Eighth Regiment split and established their own

During this peak period, the estimated numbers of insurgents varied between 1,580 in 1974 to 2,654 guerillas in 1976.¹⁷¹ The main group, the MCP, was the largest and the MCP (M-L) had the least number of guerillas, however, it was the MCP (M-L) that rendered the most sensational damage of the insurgency. The MCP(M-L)'s focus on urban areas provided more visibility to their activities, as evidenced on 22 October 1974 when the group announced their existence by spreading banners and distributing leaflets throughout the cities on the peninsular.¹⁷²

The communist insurgency during the early 70's appeared more formidable than the insurgency during the first Emergency. Realizing that the 70's insurgency benefitted from the destabilized, racially torn nature of Malaysia, gained experience from the first Emergency, and acquired hope from the success of the communists in Indochina, the task of eradicating the growing communist insurgency seemed insuperable.

In addition to the curfew and increased presence of security forces in the villages, the government instituted *Rukun Tetangga* (Principle of Neighborhood). Under *Rukun Tetangga* every "able bodied man between the ages of 18-55" was required to register for Home Guard, a civil patrol type force.¹⁷³

Central Committee. The MCP (M-L) apparently considered "the most suitable road to power" was to concentrate the insurgency in urban centers.

¹⁷¹Tan Sri Ghazalie, Minister of Home Affairs, announced that the original Malayan Communist Party "had about 970 members, the Revolutionary Faction 260 members, and the Marxist - Leninist Faction 150 members, all armed and uniformed. This did not include about 200 terrorists who were operating throughout Peninsular Malaysia." See *Malaysian Digest*, (Malaysia), 20 November 1974. While in *FEER*, 8 October 1976, pp. 22-23 "states that as of August 8, 1976 there were 1,777 Thais, 875 Malaysians and 2 Japanese in the MCP."

¹⁷²R. Stubbs, op. cit., p. 251.

¹⁷³*Straits Times*, (Singapore), 25 July 1975. This type of registration also provided an excellent data base for the Special Branch intelligence gatherers.

The internal rivalry among the three factions began to effect the insurgency by 1975. In fact, analyses depicting a diminishing threat emerged in mid-1975, soon after the government had stepped up the counter insurgency effort. Joseph Lelyveld, in his article "Other Asian Nations Have Insurgents at Work", commenting on communist activity in Asia, states:

Insurgent terrorism has been on the rise in Malaysia, but the Communists there are divided now into three factions numbering, in all, no more than 1,600 men, most of whom operate on sanctuaries in the jungle of Southern Thailand. Moreover, the insurgents are nearly all drawn from the Chinese minority and have never made any headway among rural Malays.¹⁷⁴

In the same vein, C.L. Salzberger wrote, in his article "What Kind of Dominoes?", "The incidence of guerilla violence in Malaysia has increased—but not drastically."¹⁷⁵ The analyses, identifying a lessening threat as well as fewer reports of incidents, indicated that the insurgency was beginning to feel the wear from internal rivalry and a lack of a unified, coordinated effort.

A serious blow to the insurgency came with the surrender of 481 (of the reported 700 man guerilla force) of the North Kalimantan Communist Party (NKCP) on 4 March 1974. This is considered, by some analysts, to mark the end of the organized communist insurgency on Sarawak.¹⁷⁶ Interestingly, the elimination of the insurgency threat in Sarawak caused concern that the security forces on the peninsula were not employed as effectively as they should be. The argument was fueled in the Parliament with comments, like that of Datuk Stephen Yong Kuet Tze (Padawan), referring to the counter insurgency on Sarawak.

¹⁷⁴J. Lelyveld, "Other Asian Nations Have Insurgents at Work", New York Times, 11 May 1975, p. 3E.

¹⁷⁵C.L. Salzberger, "What Kind of Dominoes", New York Times, 14 May 1975, p. 39.

¹⁷⁶See article, "Counter Insurgency", in ADJ, April 1975, No. 2, pp. 21-32.

I am sure all brother Malaysians in other states rejoice with us in Sarawak on the advent of Sri Aman laying down of arms by over five hundred communist guerillas....However, it must be recognized that [the] insurgency, such as we in Sarawak [were] facing, could not be solved by military means alone. It is a political war and the solution lies in political offenses such as psychologically rallying the masses on the grass root level to the side of the government.¹⁷⁷

Tan Sri Ghazalie, the Minister of Home Affairs, replied to the accusation of incorrect, or ineffective use of force on the peninsula, by stating that the problem was not the same, the communists were different and added that "it is not so", when questioned about the communist movement on the peninsula growing strong.¹⁷⁸ The affirmation by Tan Sri Ghazalie that the insurgency was not growing stronger, in light of the strict censorship on insurgency operations, lends weight to the analyses that, by 1975, the threat posed by the insurgency was diminishing.

It was not until 1977 that the Malaysian Security Forces confessed that the insurgency was not as threatening as it was earlier. During a joint Thai-Malaysian operation, called "Operation Cooperation", there were 2,057 'charted', or located, communist insurgents, of which 1,024 were of Thai origin and 853 of Malaysian origin.¹⁷⁹ The expressed intention of the operation was to pinpoint and disrupt the guerillas, not search and destroy. Brigadier General Hassan Salleh, commander of the Malaysian forces, stated, "In operations like these, body counts are not important." He ended the interview with the following, "The beginning of the end of the Communist Terrorists is around the corner."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷PD/DR, IV/2, 18 April 1974, cols. 272-273.

¹⁷⁸Ibid, Cols. 273-275.

¹⁷⁹ADJ, August 1977, No. 4, p. 18.

¹⁸⁰Ibid.

The numbers of armed insurgents did not appear to have increased significantly from Tan Sri Ghazalie's approximation in 1974 (1,580) to the 'charted' approximation in 1977 (2,057). The indication was that the movement was not growing, and, according to the military assessment, the momentum was no longer with the insurgents by 1977. Cheah Boon Kheng attributes the shift in momentum to the successful infiltration of the MCP by Special Branch agents between 1970 and 1974.¹⁸¹ Nayan Chanda, in the 1977 article, "South Asia is Never Quite Free of Insurgencies", sums up the threat succinctly:

The occasional ambushes and assassinations committed by the 3,000 guerillas under the three factions of the CPM (i.e. MCP) are more of a nuisance than a threat.¹⁸²

The analysis, that the insurgency was waning, was not held by all. The Asia Research Bulletin published an article, "Thai General's Curious Assessment of Security Situation of Thai/Malaysian Border", in which the ARB staff reporter argues that Major General Yuthasak Klongthrujrok's analysis that the counter insurgency would require five years "to silence the communists along the 560 Km Thai-Malaysian border", is exaggerated and the result of personal interests. The staff reporter writes, "It is necessary to question the authenticity of the reported strategy. A weakness that all men in command of armed forces seem to share is the self-serving tendency to exaggerate potential danger. The hoped for effect is to intimidate those who hold the political and treasury strings so that the commanders can expand their own empires."¹⁸³ I find it interesting that although this "self-serving tendency" was

¹⁸¹This analysis was provided by Professor Cheah Boon Kheng during a lecture, at Cornell University, in Spring 1990, about the demise and ultimate laying down of arms of the MCP on 30 November 1989.

¹⁸²Nayan Chanda, "South Asia is never Quite Free of Insurgencies", in New York Times, 27 March 1977, section 4, p. 3.

¹⁸³ARB, 31 May 1977, Report 6, pp. 323-324.

depicted as an almost universal characteristic of military commanders, there is no compelling evidence that that tendency existed in the Malaysian Armed Forces.

The status of the threat did not change significantly after 1977. In fact, during the Senior ASEAN Officials Seminar (KISTA IV) in early 1978, in the speech "The Communist Threat in Southeast Asia", the Malaysian insurgency is completely omitted.¹⁸⁴ The Yang di-Pertuan Agong, in his annual speech to the Parliament in 1978, announced "I offer my humble gratitude to Allah, Lord of the Universe, because the security situation in the country has improved and, as always under control."¹⁸⁵

In 1979 the insurgency fell off even more and by early 1980 the army had been pulled off the Thailand/Malaysia Border, leaving the counter insurgency campaign to the PFF. In 1981, according to an article in the Asian Defence Journal titled "Red Threat is Nearly Wiped Out", the insurgency was significantly hurt by the surrender of Chong Kuen, the second highest ranking official in the CPM, to Malaysian Security Forces. It is evident that, by 1981, the insurgency was controlled, if not defeated.

The Modernization and Expansion Program

Under the tenure of Prime Minister Hussein Onn, the strength of the military grew from 62,300 soldiers to 102, 350 and expenditures on the armed

¹⁸⁴ADJ, No. 1, February 1978, pp. 54-83. The speech is given General Saiyud Kerdphol. The only reference to the Malaysian insurgency is in the detailed quantitative summary provided in the article. According to the article, the Southern Thailand region has a population density of 95 persons per square kilometer while the density of communist guerillas is 1/10 persons per square kilometer, or 2.054 total guerillas.

¹⁸⁵PD/DR, V/IV, 17 April 1978, cols. 13-14.

forces grew from M\$2118.1 million to M\$6879.9 million.¹⁸⁶ The 64% increase in manpower and the 225% increase in absolute expenditures would indicate that under Prime Minister Hussein Onn the build up of the military had become a priority; this is partially true.

There was a modernization and expansion effort from 1979 to mid 1982, when "adverse economic conditions in the nation had led to budgetary retrenchment."¹⁸⁷ The expansion, for the armed forces, however, had out-distanced the ability of training facilities to provide adequate support for the number of soldiers entering the services. As a result, the Malaysian senior staff curtailed their expansion prior to the end of the program. According to the United States Government country study on Malaysia, Malaysia: A Country Study, (1985), Malaysian Army leadership stated that "the quality of officers and other personnel turned out by the training centers during the 1979 to 1981 period was adversely affected by the rapid expansion of forces."¹⁸⁸

The increase in armed forces received extensive attention in the Parliament. The opposition challenged the Minister of Defence, Datuk Mokhtar Hashim, to justify the increase in armed forces expenditures. The allocation, according to Datuk Mokhtar Hashim, was "necessary [in order] to beef up the armed forces in view of the recent developments in the region."¹⁸⁹ This statement would indicate that the increase was specifically required in order to defend Malaysia from an imminent threat , however, this is not the case.

¹⁸⁶United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers. (U.S. Government Press, Washington D.C.); vols, 1968-1977, 1970-1979, and 1986.

¹⁸⁷F.M. Bunge, Malaysia: A Country Study, op. cit., p. 261.

¹⁸⁸Ibid., p. 268.

¹⁸⁹ADJ, September/October 1979, No. 5.

The communist insurgency was all but defeated. The threat of an invasion by Vietnam was a contentious point within the Hussein government. Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, the Minister of Home Affairs, in a speech titled "Security and Southeast Asia", on 10 November 1979, stated that "there appears no sign of Vietnam planning to do so [invade Thailand] since such an adventure would widen her front and lengthen her communications line. She could hardly manage it even now with Laos and Kampuchea under the wings."¹⁹⁰ Prime Minister Hussein Onn, in an interview conducted in mid-1980, defended the policy to expand and modernize and chided Malaysians for "unnecessarily harping on policy issues that have already been determined for our nation,"¹⁹¹ while Deputy Prime Minister Mahathir indicated, that according to his analysis, Vietnamese activities in Kampuchea posed no threat to Malaysia.¹⁹² Further, the Deputy Prime Minister stated, when Swedish investors confronted him with the issue of whether or not Malaysia was safe for foreign investment, that he did not think Vietnam would attack Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, or the Philippines. He added that it would be very difficult for the Vietnamese to stimulate the people within these countries to overthrow their present governments "as the population did not want communist rule and these countries were now in a position to defend themselves."¹⁹³

Without arguing the legitimacy of the Vietnamese threat, the fact is that the expansion of the armed forces was not extra-ordinary to the expansion effected on the rest of the state bureaucracy. Comparing the annual expenditures from

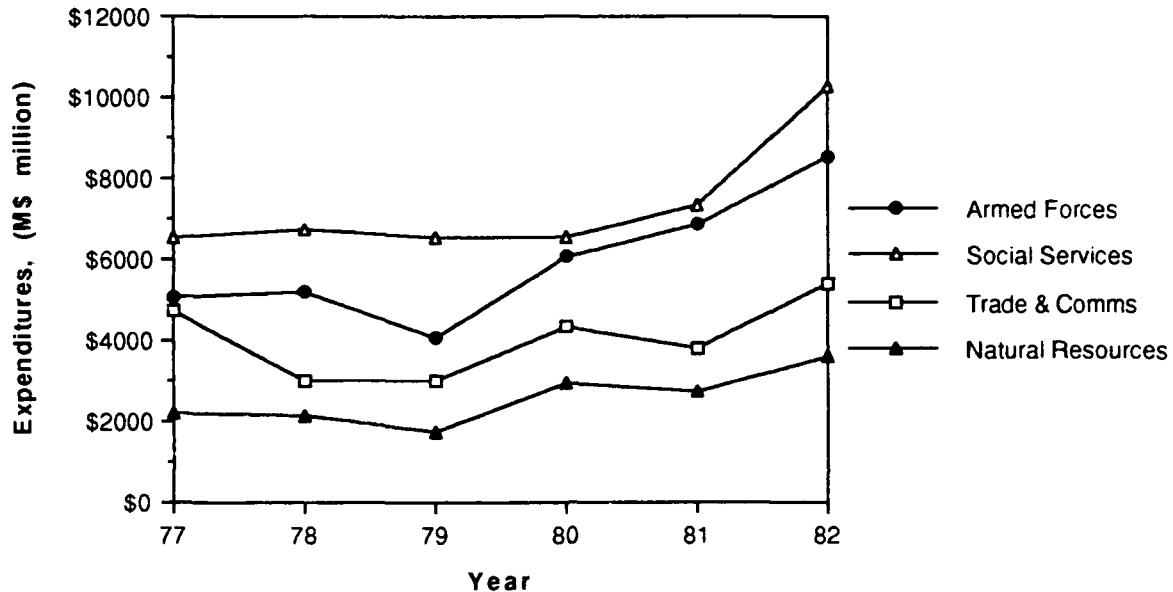
¹⁹⁰From a manuscript of selected speeches by M. Ghazali Shafie, Malaysia: International Relations, (Creative Enterprise Sendirian Berhad, Kuala Lumpur, 1982), p. 298.

¹⁹¹ADJ, July/August 1980, No. 4.

¹⁹²ADJ, November/December 1980, No. 6.

¹⁹³New Straits Times, 17 October 1979, p. 24, in the article "Domino Theory Utter Rubbish - Mahathir."

1979-1982, the trend of rapid expansion is spread across the entire bureaucracy.



Graph 4.1. Annual Expenditures, State Bureaucracy, 1977-1982.
(Deflated to 1985 Ringgit)

Source: Malaysia, *The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government*; Kuala Lumpur; author compiled data from the Annual Expenditure Budgets, 1977-1983.

From the graph above the trend is apparent, however it is important to note that, when compared to other institutions in the state bureaucracy, the Armed Forces experienced only slightly higher than normal increases in budgetary allocations. Between 1977 and 1982, the period of expansion and modernization, Social Services increased 57.3%, Natural Resources increased 60.1%, and the Armed Forces increased 67.8%. The Central Government Expenditures grew from M\$25,889.4 to M\$39,592.3, or 52.9%, during the same period.

The increase in Armed Forces expenditures, although substantial, was more a function of available monies, rather than of fear of imminent invasion.

This is further evidenced by the armed forces' self-inflicted curtailment of expansion—a curtailment induced because the impact to "combat proficiency, morale, administration, and discipline [was] said to have suffered" from the rapid expansion.¹⁹⁴ I contend that the armed forces' tremendous growth under Prime Minister Hussein Onn should be viewed more in the perspective of bureaucracy building rather than as a military build-up.

Becoming a Conventional Force

Coincident with the modernization and expansion program the Malaysian Armed Forces went through a change in mission and configuration. In an Asian Defence Journal article titled, "Hussein: We Need a War Strategy", PM Hussein Onn indicates that the Malaysian Armed Forces has not trained to fight a conventional war and adds, "Malaysia has to be ready whether or not there is imminent threat from the outside."¹⁹⁵ The shift in mission focus was further intimated to in early 1981, when retiring Chief of the Armed Forces Staff, General Tan Sri Muhamed Sany, clarified that the expansion program would result in an increase of "40% of the infantrymen and 100% of battalions by 1983." He continued that "new and modern weapons, vehicles and communications equipment would be acquired."¹⁹⁶ Two months later, in March 1981, the Chief of the General Staff, General Datuk Zain Hashim specified that the armed forces would train more, "especially in conventional warfare."¹⁹⁷

It was not that many years prior when Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, Minister for Home Affairs, stated "that any threat to Southeast Asian states in the seventies

¹⁹⁴F.M. Bunge, op. cit., p. 268.

¹⁹⁵ADJ, No. 1, January 1981, p. 10.

¹⁹⁶Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), O1, BK041245, 5 January 1981.

¹⁹⁷FBIS, O1, BK 010940, 5 March 1981.

is likely to be unconventional [and, therefore] the adoption of a static conventional military response pattern would, in fact, be retrogressive and, what is more, counter-productive."¹⁹⁸ There was confusion in Kuala Lumpur over the change of the military's mission focus. A radio broadcast in March 1981 announced that the modernization plan called for 40 billion ringgit; the armed forces would receive 9.8 billion while the police, which were "*directly responsible* for internal security," would be given approximately 3.3 billion ringgit.¹⁹⁹ The intention of the broadcast was not merely to announce the cost of the modernization program, but, more, to highlight the difference between the police and the armed forces' budgets. The broadcast was almost an indictment, challenging the military's allotment when the protection of the state had traditionally been safely in the hands of the police.

This change was brought on, primarily, by the realization that the threat to Malaysia was changing; the ever-present communist insurgency was losing momentum (if not beaten entirely) and there were significant factions that questioned the immanence of the threat from Vietnam. In light of the reduced (or confused) threat environment in which Malaysia found herself, expansion of the military would necessitate significant change to the configuration and mission of the armed forces.

The Malaysian Armed Forces changed from a jungle-oriented, counter-insurgency force, configured for small-unit combat operations, to a conventional army configured with larger units outfitted to conduct open-terrain tactics. The reasoning for the shift to a conventional force was alluded to in an

¹⁹⁸From "ASEAN's Response to Security Issues in SEA," by Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie in *Malaysian Digest*, Vol. 6, No. 14, 30 October 1974, p. 5.

¹⁹⁹FBIS, BK 240921, 26 March 1981. Emphasis added by author.

Asian Defence Journal article, "Preparation for Conventional Warfare," which declared that the Malaysian Armed Forces must now "take into account contingencies more diverse than internal security." The article cited that Malaysia's current armoured cars, the Panhard M-3 and Ferret Scout Armoured Car, are designed for "highly mobile, counter-insurgency" operations, but "are ill suited for the more heavily armed conventional enemy." In conclusion, the article asserted that the armed forces must prepare for an enemy that "has made a lodgement in Malaysia—or in short to be prepared for an invasion."²⁰⁰

The process of configuring a conventional army entailed restructuring nearly every aspect of training, maintenance, and operations. In 1982, \$250 million ringgit had been set aside for the purchase of 60 tanks with the goal of converting the three Reconnaissance Regiments into Armoured Cavalry Regiments. By 1984 Malaysia's army had assumed a conventional form and composition. Below (see Table 4.1) is a comparison of the army in 1979 and in 1984.

The conversion to a force capable of conventional warfare resulted in tremendous change, change not only in size, but more importantly, in structure and composition. The 91% increase in manpower can be attributed to the Modernization and Expansion Program, however the more significant change is in the equipment to support this type of force. Between 1979 and 1984 the Malaysian Army acquired 25 Scorpion (light) Tanks, 46 SIBMAS armoured

²⁰⁰"Preparation for Conventional Warfare Noted", ADJ, March 1982, pp. 20, 22.

cars (infantry combat vehicle), 33 Ferret scout cars, 320 armoured personnel carriers, and approximately 339 pieces of artillery (light and heavy).²⁰¹

Table 4.1. Comparison of the Malaysian Army, 1979 and 1984(Source: *The Military Balance*, (Praeger Publishers, New York); Vols. 1978 -1979 and 1984—1985)²⁰²

<u>1979</u>	<u>1984</u>
Total Manpower: 52,500	Total Manpower: 100,500
	1 Corps HQ
2 Division HQ's.	4 Division HQ's
9 Infantry Bde.'s, consisting of:	12 Inf. Bde.'s, consisting of:
29 Infantry Bn.'s	36 Inf. Bn.'s
3 Recon RGMT's	4 Armoured Cavalry RGMT's
3 Artillery RGMT's	4 Artillery RGMT's
2 Air Defense BTRY's	1 Air Defense RGMT
*1 Special Service unit	1 Special Service Bde.

The question is, how operationally effective is an armoured fighting unit in Malaysia? The light and highly mobile nature of a counter-insurgency force is well suited for the densely forested/mountainous terrain in Malaysia, while the armoured, or conventional force manifests the capability for heavier firepower. The essential difference hinges on firepower versus maneuverability.

²⁰¹Ibid. The pieces of artillery range from the 105mm howitzer to the 40mm anti-aircraft gun. In addition to those items listed there were outstanding orders for 25 Scorpion tanks, 138 SIBMAS armoured cars, and 140 armoured personnel carriers.

²⁰²Generally, the command structure for army units is as follows; a corps is commanded by a Lieutenant General, a division by a Major General, a brigade (Bde) by a Colonel, a battalion (Bn) by a Lieutenant Colonel, a 'regiment' (RGMT) by a Colonel, and a battery (BTRY) by a Captain. *In the absence of specific data, the author assumes that the term 'unit' means the Special Service unit was somewhat larger than a battalion, however did not have the command/administrative structure of a brigade.

Generally, armoured vehicles are restricted to more level/open terrain, i.e., plains, good road networks or urban districts.

The net result of the conversion to a more conventional army is that Malaysia's ground forces' firepower would be restricted to flat, urban areas, thereby insuring the security of the urban centers. While Malaysia did not totally surrender its guerilla warfare capability, the emphasis did, in fact, shift to a more modern, conventional configuration. The seminal point is that development had progressed to the extent that by the late 70's the urban centers, or primary centers of development, had grown (in size, value, and importance) to such an extent that the most critical threat to the country was no longer bands of guerillas operating in the hinter lands, but a force attacking or interrupting Malaysia's commercial centers—centers that, by the early 1980's, *bumiputera's* had a significantly larger stake in seeing prosper and operate uninterrupted.

Conclusion

The steady and rapid increases in development ended in 1982, largely due to the international recession of the early 80's.²⁰³ The recession affected the annual budget significantly. Central Government Expenditures decreased from M\$31,951.0 in 1982 to M\$28,749.0 in 1983, or in constant 1985 dollars, the CGE decrease was 19.5% from 1982 to 1983. In constant 1985 dollars, the Armed Forces decreased 28.8% and the Social Services 24.5%.²⁰⁴ The economic strain of the recession had an affect on the development of the state bureaucracy, and I find it interesting that the institution that was hit nearly the

²⁰³F.M. Bunge, op. cit., p. 154. As a result, Malaysia suffered a tremendous 13.3% drop in Gross Domestic Product in 1982

²⁰⁴Malaysia, The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government, Kuala Lumpur, vols. 1982-1984; and the International Financial Statistics, vol. 1989, pp. 490-91.

hardest was the Armed Forces.²⁰⁵ I contend, rather than the result of a reduced threat, the 28.8% decrease in annual expenditures was a response to the voluntary cut back the armed forces effected in 1981, as a result of the inability to properly train recruits during the height of the expansion and modernization era.

The state bureaucracy, between 1970 and 1982, as expressed in overall Central Government Expenditures, increased 997%, compared to the 857% increase in the Armed Forces expenditures. When deflating the expenditures to a constant value of 1985 ringgit, the CGE grew only 190% and the Armed Forces increased 167%. The institution which experienced even more growth over the same period was the Social Services—whose annual expenditures increased 209% (constant 1985 value).

Prime Minister Hussein Onn presented the Fourth Malaysia Plan (1981-1986) to the parliament in early April 1981. The speech defined PM Hussein's reasoning for the budget plan; "the concept of development embraced both the physical and spiritual. They were equally important." The armed forces were to support the economy "because social-economic development and national security were inter-related."²⁰⁶

This connection between security and development became an important theme in the late 70's. Deputy Prime Minister Mahathir expressed his belief in this concept in describing the security—development relationship as nearly one of *sine qua non*, during an address to the Conference of Chairmen of District Security Committees. "The expansion of the armed forces must go hand

²⁰⁵The only state institution to suffer a more severe decrease was Natural Resources, which suffered a 33.6% decrease between 1982 and 1983.

²⁰⁶FBIJ, BK 271435, 2 April 1981.

District Security Committees. "The expansion of the armed forces must go hand in hand with the economic development of the nation. Expansion of the armed forces alone without economic strength would be meaningless. Economic weakness would result in dependence on [a] big power, hence it is vital that the nation's development drive should continue alongside the development of the armed forces."²⁰⁷

The melding of security and development became policy in the early 80's with the declaration of KESBAN—an acronym from the words *keselamatan* (security) and *pembangunan* (development)—as the military's 'war of national development'. It is this interdependent relationship that not only separates the Malaysian Armed Forces from other Southeast Asian militaries, but also keeps the Malaysian Armed Forces subservient to policy and, thus, I contend, insures that the armed forces maintain an apolitical role in the state.

²⁰⁷FBIS, BK 081143, 9 June 1981.

Chapter Five

THE FINAL ANALYSIS

The principal foundations that all states have, new ones as well as old or mixed, are good laws and good arms. And because there can not be good laws where there are not good arms, and where there are good arms there must be good law, I shall leave out the reasonings on laws and shall speak of arms.²⁰⁸

It can be argued that when analyzing a country, it is essential to consider the role and function of the state's coercive institution. According to Prabhakar Parakala, in a paper titled "Military Regimes, Security Doctrines, and Foreign Policy", members of the military assume a 'higher' role than their civilian or political counterpart:

The *raison d'être* of the armed forces is to defend the national frontiers from external aggression. From this primary purpose of their profession they infer that there exists a national interest which is probably distinct and certainly above any partisan or class interest, but only expressions of sectional interests which are detrimental to and divisive of the society as a whole. The military institution, on the other hand, by fighting an external aggressor, defends the whole nation, not any particular class or sectional interest. Following this reasoning the military officers perceive themselves as the only ones who can really understand the national interest of their country and defend it.²⁰⁹

Morris Janowitz, in his excellent study of military and developing nations, asserts that "a nation's military leaders are self-conscious men who come to

²⁰⁸Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, (translated by H.C. Mansfield, Jr.); (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1985); Chapter XII, p. 48.

²⁰⁹Prabhakar Parakala, "Military Regimes, Security Doctrines, and Foreign Policy;" a paper presented to the Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Washington, D.C.; 10-14 April 1990.

recognize that the fate of their nation is related to regional and international developments."²¹⁰ This sort of world view or vision is especially evident in developing nations where, for the most part, national leaders tend to focus on establishing internal stability and order, and the citizenry on personal or community prosperity, thereby leaving the external perspective to the military.

Parakala's traditional (Western) liberal democratic view, and Janowitz's analysis of development at an earlier stage for the post-colonial state, both present the point that the military profession in developing states generally, assumes a 'higher purpose'. This is important in understanding the role of the military in Southeast Asian states. Clearly in Malaysia the armed forces, although apolitical, has been as important and necessary to the nation's development and modernization as the militaries in Indonesia and the Philippines.²¹¹

Comparative Perspective

By 1983, Malaysia had in place an armed force manned with 136,500 soldiers, sailors, and airmen and approximately 90,000 Police Field Force (paramilitary) members that were capable of fighting a conventional war. When

²¹⁰M. Janowitz, Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations; (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1977), (expanded version of The Military in the Political Development of New Nations, 1964); p. 21.

²¹¹The salient point is the difference in roles for the armed forces among these developing states. In Indonesia and the Philippines, I contend, the military protects and defends their respective regimes, while, in Malaysia, the military protects and defends the state policy - specifically, the New Economic Policy. "What needs to be pointed out is that the jungle war of the kind the army is fighting cannot be separated from the wider 'war of national development' being waged by the government on all fronts." It is this critical difference, where one military is charged to defend a ruling regime and the other a state policy, that separates the military in Malaysia from other Southeast Asian states. Although there have been challenges to the Malaysian government (best evidenced by the communist insurgents) the ruling regime effectively portrayed those challenges as threats to the nation, as a whole, and not merely the ruling party. The quote is from ADJ, "The Malaysian Army - an Update"; March 1985; p. 12.

compared with the military fourteen years earlier (1970), the difference is remarkable. The armed forces consisted of 57,154 men and approximately 45,000 PFF members that were trained almost exclusively in jungle, counter-insurgency warfare.²¹² The evolution of the Malaysian military into a modern force reflects much about the character and motivation of this young, post-colonial nation. Analysis of the growth of the Malaysian military is interesting; however, when viewed in a Southeast Asian context, the growth of the Malaysian Armed Forces is more revealing.

Indonesia, the Philippines²¹³, and Malaysia appear to follow a similar course in armed forces development; however the role (both announced and actual) of the armed forces in all three nations is quite different. Indonesia, after General Suharto became President and announced his "New Order" government, had become a state where the most significant institution in the nation was, unquestionably, the army. After President Marcos enacted Martial Law on 23 September 1972, the armed forces openly became the most dominant institution.²¹⁴ In Malaysia, on the other hand, the armed forces had

²¹² The 1983 data is compiled from International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1984-1985; (Praeger Publishers, New York, 1986). The 1970 data is compiled from Government of Malaysia, The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government, Kuala Lumpur, 1970, p. 131.

²¹³ I have selected Indonesia and the Philippines essentially, because I found, when looking at post-WWII Southeast Asia, these two nations appeared most similar to Malaysia. Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia each experienced colonial rule (although all had different colonizers), each suffered under Japanese occupation during WWII, each won their independence after WWII, and each experienced a 'radical' transition in government during the late-60's or early-70's: for Indonesia the attempted coup d'etat on 30 September 1965, for the Philippines the enactment of martial law by President Marcos in 1972, and for Malaysia the declaration of a State of Emergency after the communal riots in Kuala Lumpur on 13 May 1969 following the national elections.

²¹⁴ J.F. Cady, The History of Post-War Southeast Asia: Independence Problems, (Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio, 1975), p. 660. This was dramatically articulated by Liberal Party leader Benigno Aquino in late August 1973, during his 'trial' before a military tribunal on charges of subversion; "I agree that we must have public order and national discipline, if the country is to move ahead. But, discipline without justice is merely another name for oppression." (emphasis added by author)

not become a political power; in fact, it could be argued, the armed forces in Malaysia had remained apolitical since Malay(sian) independence in August 1957. The issue was not whether or not these nations would develop an armed force, but to what extent and what role was that institution to play in both society and the state bureaucracy-building process.

When quantifying the comparison, Malaysia appears to have relied more heavily on the institution of the armed forces during the developmental years of the 1970's than either Indonesia or the Philippines. Below are comparisons of three significant indicators of armed forces predominance and importance in a society: namely: (1) the percentage of annual armed forces expenditures from overall governmental expenditures; (2) the number of soldiers per thousand population, which I label 'Men Under Arms'; and (3) armed forces expenditures per capita.

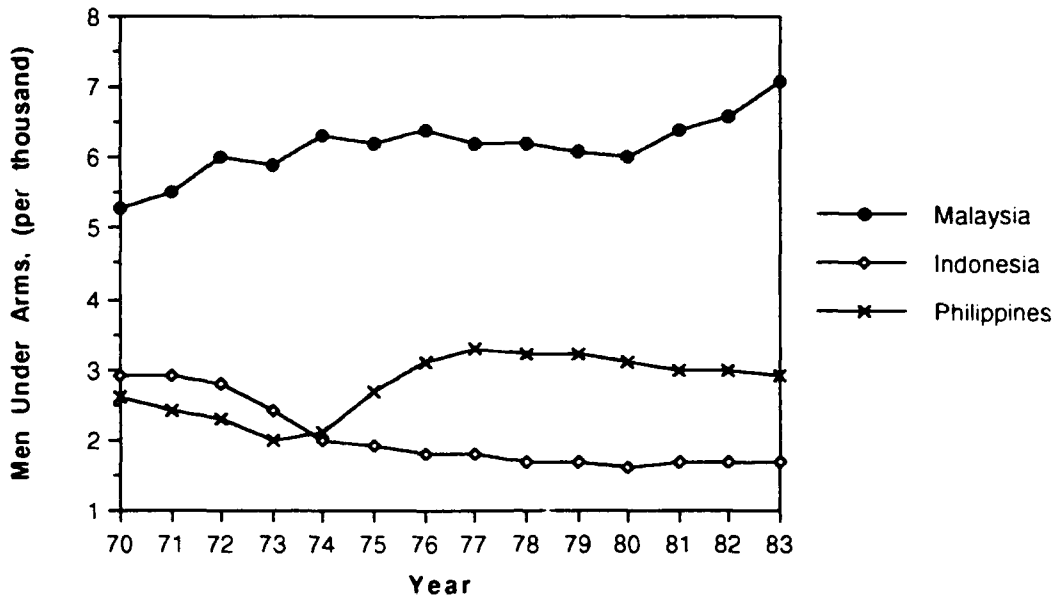
In the category 'Mean Annual Percentage of Armed Forces Expenditures' Malaysia outspends both Indonesia and the Philippines between the years 1970 and 1983. Although this comparison is a function of the amount of available capital and the level of foreign military assistance, it also indicates the level of importance the military plays in both the society and the state bureaucracy.

Table 5.1. Mean Annual Percentage of Armed Forces Expenditures, 1970-1983, (Source: *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*, vols 1963-1973, 1968-1977, 1970-1979, and 1986; by United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, (U.S. Government Press, Washington, D.C.) for Indonesia and the Philippines. The Malaysian expenditure figures are derived from the annual budget, *The Expenditure Budget of the Federal Government*, vols 1970-1981, (Kuala Lumpur).)²¹⁵

<u>Malaysia</u>	<u>Indonesia</u>	<u>Philippines</u>
21.2%	16.5%	13.9%

A look at the density of soldiers in the overall population, 'Men Under Arms', provides an interesting comparison. The assumption is that there is a correlation between the prevalence (as expressed in number of members per thousand) of an institution in a society and the dominance or importance of that institution to the state apparatus. Realizing the overly political roles of the armed forces in Indonesia and the Philippines compared to the armed forces role in Malaysia, one might expect the Men Under Arms ratio to weigh in favor of either Indonesia or the Philippines. This is not the case; in fact quite another phenomenon is evidenced.

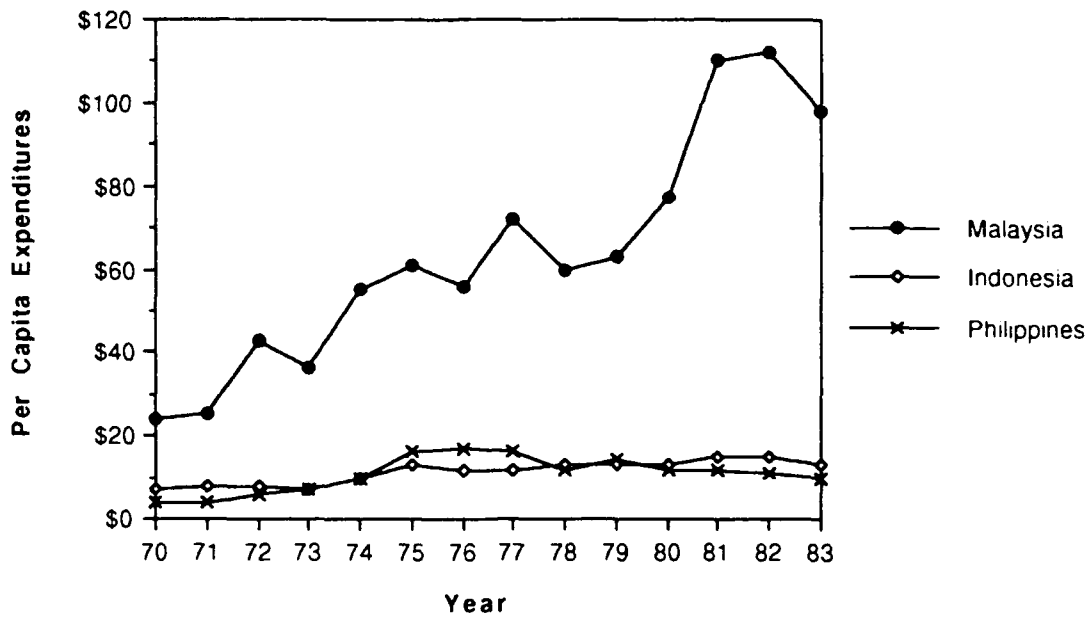
²¹⁵These figures are percentages of annual armed forces expenditures from the overall central government expenditure budget for the respective years 1969-1981.



Graph 5.1. Men Under Arms.

Source: *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*, vols 1963-1973, 1970-1979, and 1986.

Finally, the category of 'Armed Forces Expenditures Per Capita' displays the amount of government dollars spent on the armed forces in a relative manner. The per capita expenditure graph merely adds to the overall comparative picture of the role and dominance of an armed force in a society. The figure by itself indicates little, as the amount of government monies expended on an institution is closely related to the overall wealth of that nation. For example, generally it does little good to compare developing, post-colonial Southeast Asian nation per capita expenditures with those of a developed European nation. For this study, the utility of the graph is derived from the comparison of countries with similar historical, political, and economic conditions and when used with the other categories, as displayed above.



Graph 5.2. Per Capita Armed Forces Expenditures.

Source: *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*, vols. 1963-1973, 1970-1979, and 1986.

Clearly, the role and prominence of the Malaysian Armed Forces is significant, if only in comparison to the militaries of Indonesia and the Philippines. Within the scope of this study this point is attributable to two characteristics of the armed forces in Malaysia. First, the growth and expansion of the armed forces experienced between 1970 and 1983 was a function of the overall growth of Malaysia's state bureaucracy; and second, the essential function of the armed forces was to support the development of the nation in accordance with NEP.

Conclusion

I contend that there is a paradigm of development for post-colonial, Southeast Asian nations. However different the role of the armed forces in each country, the armed forces becomes the premier institution serving the new government. Generally patterned after their respective colonial military institutions, they assumed many of the same law and order functions of those forces. The interesting phenomenon is that the armed forces additionally assumes various other roles, such as a vehicle for social mobility, and in many cases an instrument of the state for the expression of national identity. In most cases, new states spend vast amounts of scarce resources developing their armed forces, in large part to display to the international community that they are, in fact, independent.

Throughout Southeast Asia there exists a consistency in the prominence of the institution of the armed forces; a prominence that often correlates to the armed forces becoming a significant political force or factor. Even though I have specifically selected Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines for this study, the example of the prominence of the armed forces in post-colonial nation-building is further evidenced in Thailand, Vietnam, and Burma, with each displaying prominent military regimes or governments during this same period.²¹⁶

²¹⁶Under the leadership of Royal Thai Army General Sarit Thanarat, Thailand suffered a bloodless coup d'etat in the Fall of 1957. A second military-backed coup occurred on 17 November 1971 followed by a civilian-student led "October Revolution" in 1973. The military re-assumed power in October 1976 as a result of a military coup d'etat. Vietnam was embroiled in the 'Second Indochina War' until South Vietnam fell to the North on 30 April 1975 and the armed forces continued to be the dominant institution in post-war Vietnam. In Burma, military acquisition of power occurred on 2 March 1962 with General Ne Win assuming leadership. General Ne Win retained primacy over the socialist military state of Burma throughout the period of this study.

Malaysia does not manifest a military regime; in fact, the armed forces maintains a subservient relationship with the civilian government, even during the states of emergency (the first emergency being declared in 1948 and the second in 1969). The armed forces does, however, serve a more vital role than merely the state coercive apparatus in Malaysia. The role of the armed forces transcends social, political, and economic conditions during Malaysia's nation-building years after 1970. The continued and significant growth of the armed forces, despite the lack of a legitimate armed threat, indicates that armed forces provide more than 'just' military defense.

* * *

The Malaysian Armed Forces was, undeniably, an important institution in the state bureaucracy; however, by the late 70's its primary mission was no longer the execution of war. The insurgency had diminished and the fear of a Vietnamese invasion was waning, yet the armed forces continued their rate of development. Aside from the shift to a conventional army, the more important trend during the period of this study is the growth of the Malaysian Armed Forces into a Malay, or *bumiputera*, institution.

There is an historical precedent for associating ethnic Malays with the armed forces, beginning with the induction of ethnic Malays into the British Malaya Regiment as an experiment in 1933. That experimental unit became the Royal Malay Regiment and is still the largest element, Malay or non-Malay, within the Malaysian Armed Forces. The Royal Malay Regiment is clearly the backbone of the Army; and it is, in large part, due to the prominence of the RMR that the predominance of Malays in the military is accepted.²¹⁷ Malay

²¹⁷See the section "The Army", Chapter One, this text.

predominance also grew in the armed forces significantly from 1970 to 1982, as a result of policy initiatives that guaranteed ethnic Malays senior leadership positions. A combination of the historical advantage and a nearly-pure Malay hierarchy in the military contributed to the armed forces becoming a Malay institution.

It is this trend that should be considered the most dramatic when analyzing the growth of the Malaysian Armed Forces in the 70's. The NEP clearly had the objective to improve the social, political, and economic condition of the Malays, and the institution of the armed forces in Malaysia provided an infra-structure where Malays were able to improve their social standing, acquire economic wealth, and attain political status. In essence, the Malaysian Armed Forces was more valued for its institutional characteristics, than for its combat power.

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