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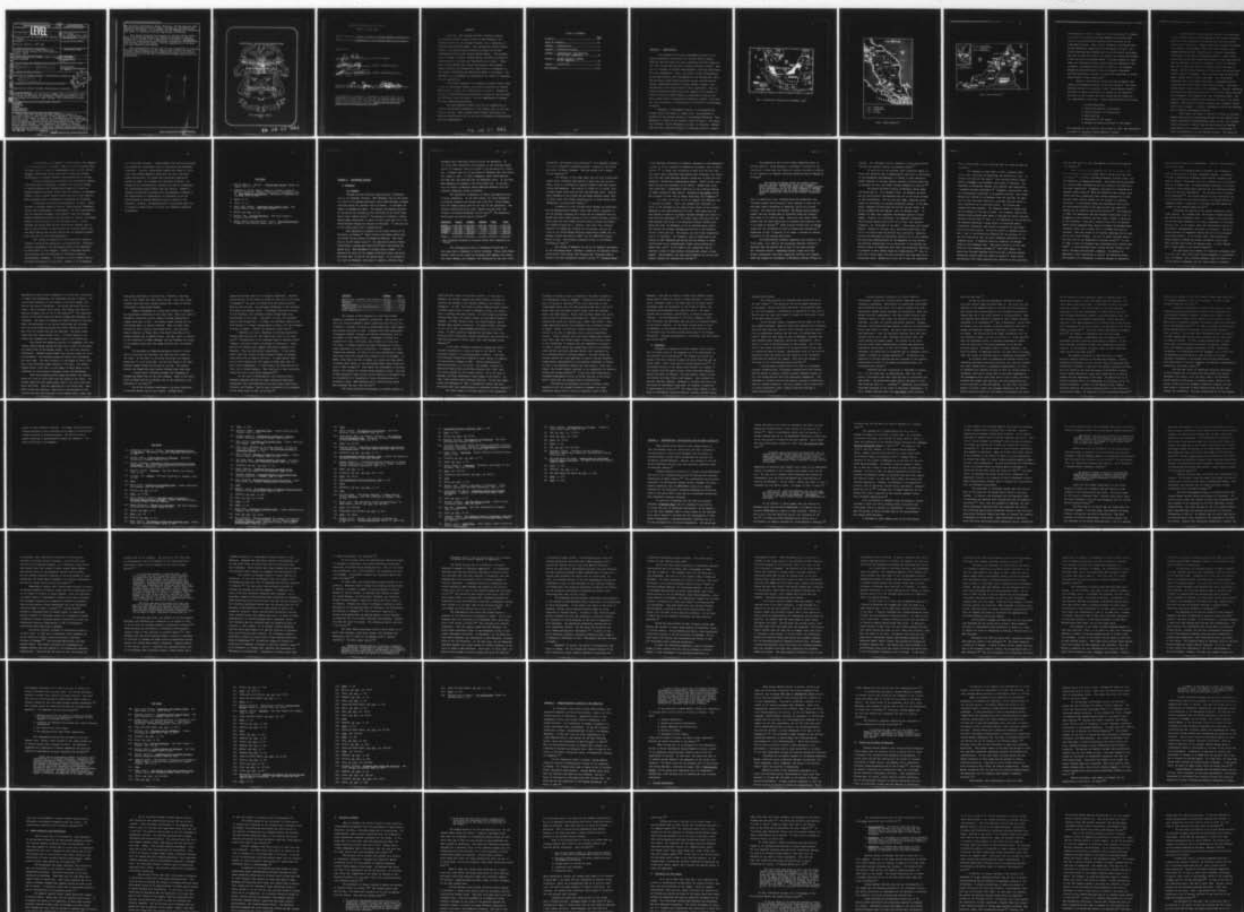
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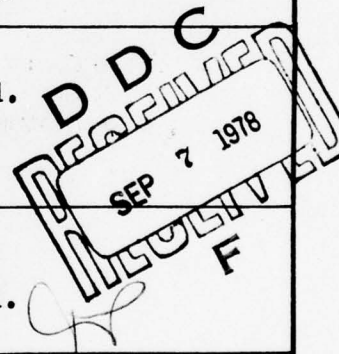
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From late 1962 through mid-1966, President Sukarno of Indonesia sought to gain control of East Malaysia, the northern portion of the island of Borneo, by a combination of political and military means. This process was called Confrontation. His efforts were successfully opposed by British Commonwealth forces under General Walter Walker. Upon assumption of command in Borneo, General Walker developed a concept of operation which included six "ingredients of success." These were: Unified Operations; Timely		



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This thesis examines the struggle in northern Borneo with a view to determining whether the factors identified by General Walker were, in fact, the "ingredients of success." Background factors to Confrontation are discussed, followed by the political and military course of events. The six ingredients of success are then examined individually.

The investigation reveals that the six ingredients of success, particularly Domination of the Jungle, were in fact the keys to victory. Their implementation helped bring about the political events which led to the end of Indonesia's Confrontation with the Commonwealth.

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CONFRONTATION: THE STRUGGLE FOR NORTHERN BORNEO

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the individual student author, and do not necessarily represent the views of either the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. References to this study should include the foregoing statement.

ABSTRACT

From late 1962 through mid-1966, President Sukarno of Indonesia sought to gain control of East Malaysia, the northern portion of the island of Borneo, by a combination of political and military means. This process was called Confrontation. His efforts were successfully opposed by British Commonwealth forces under General Walter Walker. Upon assumption of command in Borneo, General Walker developed a concept of operation which included six "ingredients of success." These were: Unified Operations; Timely and Accurate Intelligence; Speed, Mobility, and Flexibility; Base Security; Domination of the Jungle; and Winning the Hearts and Minds of the People. The remainder of the campaign was essentially the effort to implement the six ingredients.

This thesis examines the struggle in northern Borneo with a view to determining whether the factors identified by General Walker were, in fact, the "ingredients of success." Background factors to Confrontation are discussed, followed by the political and military course of events. The six ingredients of success are then examined individually.

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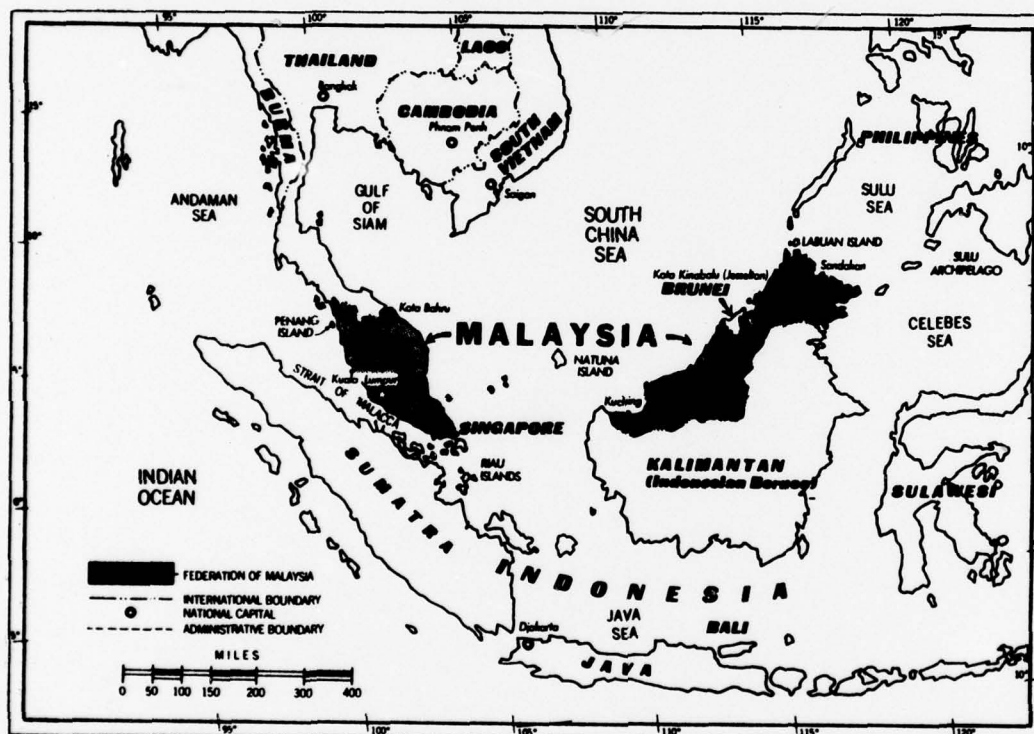
TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iii
CHAPTER 1, INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2, BACKGROUND FACTORS.....	12
CHAPTER 3, CONFRONTATION, THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY CHRONOLOGY.....	43
CHAPTER 4, GENERAL WALKER'S CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION.....	70
CHAPTER 5, CONCLUSIONS.....	100
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	105

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The operations of British Commonwealth Forces in resisting Indonesian incursions into northern Borneo between 1962 and 1966 are among the least understood and most neglected (at least by American sources) in modern military history. This lack of coverage is perhaps understandable, although unfortunate, from two standpoints. First, the effort, called Confrontation by the participants, was overshadowed by the Vietnam War, which was becoming a major American problem during the same period. Second, Commonwealth Forces in Borneo became, perhaps, less news-worthy by the very success of their operations. They employed a relatively small force (for example, four brigades to cover a 971-mile border)¹ against a numerically superior and well-trained enemy in practically impossible terrain. They were not only successful, but maintained a "low profile", discouraging notoriety.

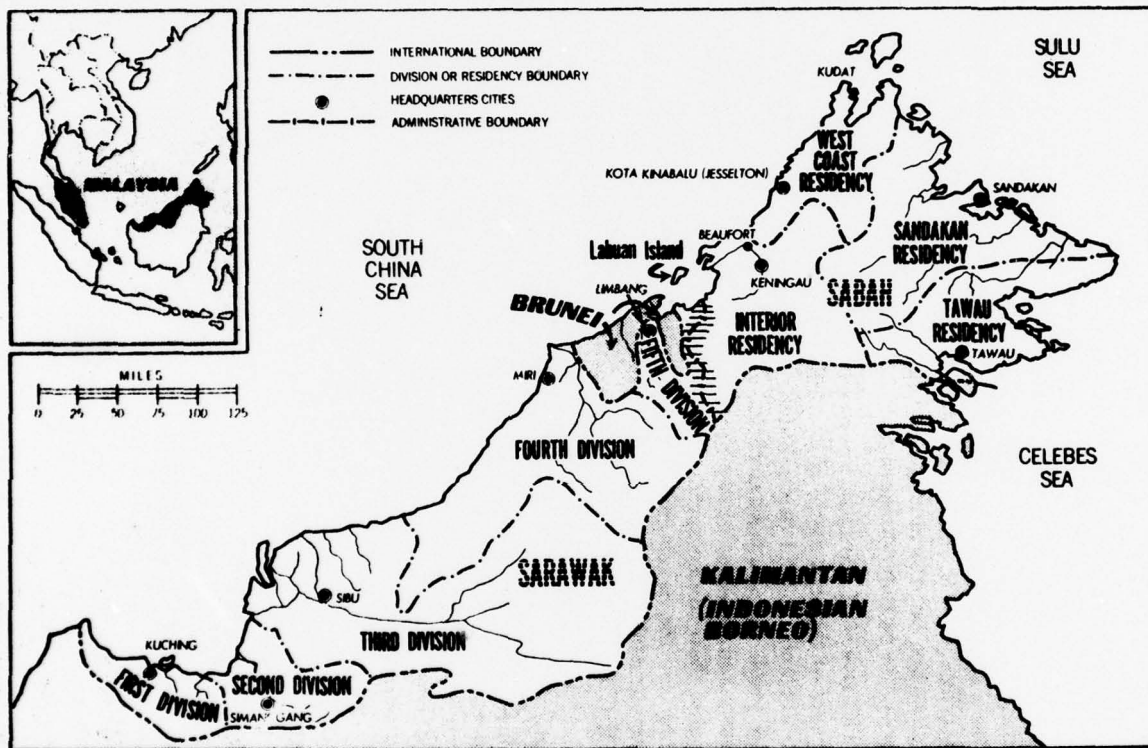
Malaysia, a Commonwealth member, is a geographically divided nation (See Maps 1-3, Pages 2-4). West Malaysia is composed of the southern portion of the Malayan Peninsula. East Malaysia is located on the northern coast of Borneo. The remainder of Borneo, called Kalimantan, is part of Indonesia. Between 1962 and 1966, President Sukarno of Indonesia sought to conquer



MAP 1, MALAYSIA'S POSITION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA²



MAP 2, WEST MALAYSIA³



MAP 3, EAST MALAYSIA⁴

East Malaysia in order to annex it to his own nation.⁵ Attempts to subvert the population of East Malaysia and cross-border raids in varying strengths were met with resistance by the Commonwealth allies. These allies ultimately included British, Gurkha, Malaysian, Australian, and New Zealand troops.⁶ The forces defending East Malaysia were met with massive challenges. They had to cope with some of the world's most difficult terrain, as well as with a determined enemy. Although compared to their tasks the Commonwealth Forces seemed woefully inadequate, they succeeded in dominating the area of conflict. For instance, during the 1965-1966 period, over 200 separate Indonesian military operations occurred, but only four penetrated to within mortar range of their objectives.⁷

Early in the conflict, General Sir Walter Walker took command of Commonwealth Forces in northern Borneo.⁸ Soon after assuming his post in December of 1962, General Walker issued a directive in which he outlined his concept of the operation. The heart of this concept was what General Walker termed the six "ingredients of success." These ingredients were as follows:

1. Unified Operations.
2. Timely and Accurate Intelligence.
3. Speed, Mobility, and Flexibility.
4. Base Security.
5. Domination of the Jungle.
6. Winning the Hearts and Minds of the People.

The remainder of the conflict, which ended in 1966, was essentially an effort to implement General Walker's concept.

6

General Walker's six projected elements of success were in part distilled from lessons learned in the Malayan Emergency, which had been successfully terminated only two years before Confrontation broke out. However, while some general principles of success in the Emergency (which had been confined to the Malayan Peninsula) were transferrable to Borneo, significant differences in the area of operations existed. These differences surely would have caused any attempt to copy slavishly the earlier operation to result in disaster. First, the British were not in political control in Borneo as they had been in Malaya. Northern Borneo was part of the newly unified and independent nation of Malaysia. Thus, Britain became an assisting power, rather than a controlling power. The second major difference lay in the border situation. Commonwealth Forces in Borneo had to deal with a long, hostile border. This was a problem which did not exist in the Emergency. Finally, operations in Borneo were conducted at the end of a 700-mile supply pipeline from Singapore, and Singapore was only the advanced base. The logistics system ultimately stretched all the way to the United Kingdom. This proved a logistic headache when transport assets were in short supply. In short, Commonwealth Forces were dealing with a new and challenging situation.

This thesis will seek to explore the effort in northern Borneo with an aim of determining whether the six factors originally identified by General Walker were, in fact, the "ingredients of success." Each of the six factors will be examined individually in an attempt to establish its contribution, or lack of contribution, to the ultimate outcome. The intent is

not to seek universal principles to be applied in any and all low intensity situations, but rather to simply determine the reasons for success in one example of low intensity warfare.

My personal interest in Confrontation arose from discussions with Major David Maitland-Titterton, who was British Liaison Officer at the United States Army Armor School, Fort Knox, Kentucky, while I was also assigned there as an instructor in 1970-1971. Later, while I was on leave in Malaysia in 1973, I was privileged to conduct limited research on the conflict in the National Library in Kuala Lumpur.

The basic technique for this thesis is the historical method. Review of literature began with general works on the political, social, and economic background of Malaysia and Indonesia, with views to placing Confrontation in proper historical perspective and to finding paths to primary sources. Following this effort, primary sources were examined. In the context of this thesis, primary sources are those produced first-hand by actual participants in Confrontation. They were found principally in the form of memoirs and "lessons learned" articles in Commonwealth service journals. Finally, secondary works were consulted. As of the time of the preparation of this thesis, secondary works were composed largely of discussions of individual facets of Confrontation by journalists and soldiers, rather than in-depth analysis by historians. This is understandable in light of the fact that only a dozen years have passed since the end of the conflict. In the literature review, the goal was, initially, to gain background on the protagonists, and then to isolate the factors which brought success to the

Commonwealth nations.

There are compelling reasons why the conflict in northern Borneo should be a matter of study for the military officer. It is obvious that, since the end of World War II, massive numbers of well-trained troops from a host of economically advanced nations have been tied down for varying periods of years by small numbers of combatants in low intensity conflicts. The French and American experiences in Southeast Asia and the British efforts in Malaysia, Kenya, and Ulster are only a few of the more well-publicized struggles. In fact, low intensity conflict has swept the developing world and, from time to time, has gained footholds in developed areas as well. Low intensity conflict can be the means for expressing legitimate aims of oppressed groups. On the other hand, any disgruntled minority, radical party, or petty dictator can challenge a modern nation's will and strength with a reasonable hope for success, if only the right methods are employed. Add the catalyst of outside assistance, and reasonable hope of success becomes realistic ambition. Without discussing the relative probability of low intensity conflict, as opposed to nuclear or large-scale conventional war, it goes without saying that armies must be prepared to fight and win this type of conflict. The war in Borneo provides a case study on how it can be done. A small, professional army, using both high technology and traditional infantry skills, and employing indigenous personnel to good advantage, fought a prolonged and successful campaign in a hostile natural environment. Other armies could well find themselves in similar situations in the future.

In developing a discussion of Confrontation, two significant assumptions are necessary. First, it must be assumed that, although there is a lack of comprehensive works on the conflict in toto, enough data exists upon which to base conclusions; specifically, to isolate elements that contributed to success.

A second assumption is related to an alternative hypothesis which might be employed to explain the course of events. It must be assumed that Confrontation ended as a result of General Walker's policies, rather than the downfall of President Sukarno, which occurred shortly before the end of the conflict. This assumption must be addressed in analyzing the situation.

A few words concerning terminology are in order. First, the war in northern Borneo is called "Confrontation" in Western sources and "Konfrontasi" in Indonesian. The term Confrontation will be employed throughout this thesis to mean the struggle between Commonwealth Forces and Indonesia for control of northern Borneo on both the political and military fronts. Second, although the proper name British North Borneo applied only to what is now the state of Sabah during the colonial period, the term North Borneo and northern Borneo are now generally synonymous, and will be used interchangeably.

This thesis is presented in four additional chapters. Chapter 2 concerns the background of Confrontation. Political, economic, geographic, and sociological factors are discussed as they relate to the struggle. Chapter 3 discusses briefly the political side of Confrontation, President Sukarno's Crush Malaysia Campaign. In addition, a brief overall view of military developments is set forth. Chapter 4 is an analysis

of the military struggle. General Walker and his six principles for success are introduced, then the principles are discussed separately. Specific operational examples are drawn to illustrate that General Walker's ideas were not mere high-level staff abstractions, but rather were practical operational guides for small unit leaders and individual soldiers. Although the six principles are isolated for ease of discussion, the interrelationships between them are obvious. Chapter 5 presents conclusions developed from the analysis in Chapter 4. The significance of Confrontation is discussed, as is the effectiveness of General Walker's initial concept of the operation. Finally, the applicability of principles which led to success in North Borneo to future low intensity conflicts is examined.

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6. Walker, op. cit., p. 10.
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CHAPTER 2. BACKGROUND FACTORS

A. Malaysia.

(1) General.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of Malaysia lies in its physical division. West Malaysia lies on the southern third of the Malayan Peninsula, while East Malaysia occupies territory along the northern coast of Borneo. It includes the states of Sarawak and Sabah. The eastern and western portions of the nation are divided by over 350 miles of the South China Sea at their nearest point.⁹ The question of whether a viable nation-state could exist in spite of such a gulf was one of the prime problems facing the creators of Malaysia. It was also one of the issues which led to Confrontation.

West Malaysia is composed of the eleven states of the Federation of Malaya.¹⁰ These include nine Malay states plus the former British states of Penang and Malacca. The total area is 50,670 square miles.¹¹ The population shortly before Confrontation erupted was 6,909,000,¹² about 136 persons per square mile. West Malaysia is roughly oval in shape. It measures 480 miles at its longest north-south axis, and about 200 miles east to west at its widest point. It is bounded on the north by Thailand, with which it shares a 314-mile long

boundary which stretches entirely across the peninsula. On the south, West Malaysia's only neighbor is the bustling island nation of Singapore, which is joined to the peninsula by a causeway. Singapore was one of the states of Malaysia when that nation was formed in 1963. In 1965, Singapore, under Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, was expelled from the Malaysian union. On the east, West Malaysia is bounded by the South China Sea. To the west lies the Strait of Malacca, which separates Malaysia from the enormous Indonesian island of Sumatra.

The population of Malaysia is highly heterogeneous from a racial standpoint. In the 1960 census, the total population (including Singapore and Brunei) was 9,965,000. Ethnic Malays were the largest group, with 47 per cent of the population. The Chinese represented 42 per cent, Indians nine per cent, and "others" (including Europeans) two per cent.¹³ The population distribution by section was as follows:¹⁴

<u>TERRITORY</u>	<u>MALAYS</u>	<u>CHINESE</u>	<u>INDIANS</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
MALAYA.....	3,510,000..	2,595,000....	786,000..	126,000....	7,017,000
SINGAPORE...	232,000..	1,253,000....	140,000...	39,000....	1,665,000
SARAWAK†....	511,000....	229,000.....	2,000.....	3,000.....	745,000
SABAH†.....	314,000....	105,000.....	3,000.....	4,000.....	454,000
BRUNEI†.....	59,000.....	22,000.....	-----	3,000.....	84,000
TOTAL.....	4,654,000..	4,204,000....	931,000..	175,000....	9,965,000

*-The indigenous peoples of northern Borneo were classified as Malays.

The heterogeneous nature of Malaysian society has in some ways been a hindrance to nation building. Often, each racial element tends to see itself as standing alone against the others. The ethnic Malays, for instance, see themselves as the only "true"

Malaysians, and everyone else as alien.¹⁵ In a polyglot society, they are a remarkably homogeneous group. Nearly all are Muslim and speak the Malay language. They are melded into a single racial community.¹⁶

The Chinese, on the other hand, are not such a monolithic racial force, although other groups no doubt see them as such. First, there is a division of loyalty between China and Chinese culture and Malaysia. The loyalty to China is, of course, much stronger among those actually born and educated there. However, since immigration from China has decreased markedly since 1949, in future years the Chinese community will no doubt become more "Malaysian" in outlook and loyalty.¹⁷

In addition to the cultural split between the China-born and the Malaysia-born Chinese, there also exists a question of how the Chinese community as a whole can be integrated with the Malays and other ethnic groups to form a common national loyalty. Deep suspicions have always existed between Chinese and Malays and probably always will. However, there have been stunning examples of cooperation between the two groups, such as the union of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) and the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) into the UMNO-MCA Alliance Party in 1953. The Alliance achieved victory in the federal elections of 1955.¹⁸

The economy of Malaysia is one of the standout performers of the developing world. Willard A. Hanna of the American Universities Field Staff states that Malaysia has "Southeast Asia's happiest and most prosperous economic system."¹⁹ Wolfgang Kasper

of the National University in Canberra, Australia, calls Malaysia's economy "a little-regarded but generally successful case in development."²⁰ He draws this conclusion in part from the fact that the nation had a reasonably high growth rate throughout the 1960's, with the real Gross National Product rising six to seven per cent annually. Prices were exceptionally stable. Retail prices rose about one per cent annually in the 1960's. Kasper also notes that there was a "comfortable stability in the external balance of trade" during the same period. Malaysia's per capita income was exceeded in Asia only by Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore.²¹

All this, of course, is not to suggest that Malaysia has no economic problems. First, and perhaps most important, in spite of the strength of the agricultural sector of her economy, Malaysia is not self-sufficient in food. This means that she must depend on exports to acquire foreign exchange with which to cope with this shortfall.²² Of course, many countries face the same problem, and solve it by bartering finished manufactured goods for food, but Malaysia is not an industrialized nation. She depends for foreign exchange principally on two products, natural rubber and tin. The markets for both these commodities tend to be unstable. For instance, just as Confrontation was ending in 1966, Malaysia was having serious balance of trade difficulties due to international rubber prices having hit a twelve-year low.²³ In the case of tin, production can be limited in order to help control international prices to some degree. Unfortunately, the long term prospects for tin are not bright, because ore deposits are limited.²⁴

The examples of the tin and rubber industries point to another problem. Brian Harrison, a professor of history at the University of Hong Kong, and formerly a senior lecturer in history at the University of Malaya, described Twentieth Century Malaya as follows:²⁵

Development in Malaya during the present century has been the most spectacular of all the Southeast Asian countries. It has been based upon a rapid expansion of tin production, due in the first instance to Chinese skill and enterprise, and of rubber production, in which European capital and initiative have played a prominent part.

Thus, in Harrison's view, "Chinese skill and enterprise" and "European capital and initiative" have combined to form the two principal export industries of Malaysia, and he is no doubt correct. But where are the Malays? The Malays would probably answer that the Chinese have so dominated trade and industry that there is no room for them. After all, even small rubber estates and tin mines which have no European participation tend to be owned by Chinese.²⁶ Other sources contend that the Malays simply are not interested in jobs in large-scale enterprises.²⁷ Regardless of who, if anyone, is to blame, a problem of Chinese domination of the economy does exist.

The Malay-Chinese economic separation also exists in the rural areas. E.K. Fisk of the Australian National University believes that two sectors can be seen in the rural economy. The "advanced sector", comprising mining, rubber and other estate enterprises, and other commercial ventures, are largely owned and managed by foreigners or Malaysian national Chinese or

Indians. The "backward" sector, composed of small agricultural holdings and coastal fishing, is primarily Malay.²⁸

In spite of all its problems, most economists appear to agree with Lucian W. Pye of Massachusetts Institute of Technology in his assessment that Malaysia is "likely to show impressive yearly advances in economic growth, maintain relative stability in patterns of rule, and foster rising standards of justice."²⁹

The modern political history of Malaysia really began with World War II. On 8 December 1941, the Japanese declared war on Great Britain, and Malaysia was one of the chief victims of that declaration. The very day war began, Japanese troops landed at Kota Bharu in northern peninsular Malaya. A few days later, Japanese aircraft sank two British capital ships, the Prince of Wales and the Repulse, near the Malayan coast. In January of 1942, they conquered the Malayan capital of Kuala Lumpur. Finally, on 15 February, the Japanese accomplished what military experts said could not be done; they captured Singapore, the "Gibraltar of the East." Shock waves ran through Malaya. Decades of colonial rule, admittedly benevolent, had led to the belief that the British were invincible. Moreover, Britain had performed an absolutely crucial role in the economic and political administration of "an aggregate of very diverse and discrete communities, all of which were in the process (at various rates) of transition from their own respective traditional patterns to more modern norms and organizations."³⁰ Now, in less than seventy days, the whole structure had come down with a resounding crash. Malaya was on her own to face the conquerors

and, in early 1942, no one could say that the condition was not permanent.

The Japanese in some other of their conquered territories made a pretense of permitting the natives self rule. In Malaya, such was not the case.³¹ Four northern states, Kedah, Perlis, Trengganu, and Kelantan, were given to Thailand. The remainder of peninsular Malaya, plus Sumatra, were governed by a Japanese military government.³² Singapore, particularly, was too strategically important to be granted autonomy. Many ethnic Malays were induced to collaborate with the Japanese, who gave some of them jobs which paid well, although they were given no real responsibility or political power. The Chinese were treated much more harshly. The Japanese seemed to regard them as an extension of the war in China. For instance, some 60,000 Chinese estate workers were taken to Thailand as forced laborers, and about 40,000 died.³³ Also, at the beginning of the occupation, the Japanese massacred a large number of Chiang Kai-shek's supporters, Communists, and Chinese volunteers who had fought with the British forces. The entire period of Japanese control was a time of uncertainty and hardship for the Chinese, but it was from this group that the major organized resistance to the Japanese arose. A Communist minority organized the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army. This group proved to be the only effective anti-Japanese movement.³⁴ From 1944 onward, the guerrillas received supplies from Force 136, a British special operations element which was based in Ceylon.³⁵ Later events demonstrated that these supplies were received by the guerrillas

with as much intent to use them against the British as against the Japanese.³⁶

When the British returned at the end of the war, there was no national movement against them, although there was some resistance.³⁷ A British military government restored order, and the Federation of Malaya was formed. The Federation was governed by a British High Commissioner and two councils; one executive, the other legislative. Singapore continued to be governed as a separate crown colony.³⁸ When the Federation was created, what little political instability that existed subsided for a time. Tin and rubber exports helped put the economy in a healthy condition. A development scheme was implemented which called for simultaneous growth in the agricultural and industrial spheres and in education and social services.³⁹ Unfortunately, in 1948, the Communists, who had stressed strikes and riots in Singapore in the immediate post-war years, turned to terrorism in the peninsula. They had a residual force from the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, which now became the Malayan Races Liberation Army, with a total force of between five and six thousand. They were aided by the Chinese Communists and by some but not all local Chinese. The cost to fight them was twenty-five per cent of the Federation's national income.⁴⁰ In June of 1948, a state of emergency was established which lasted until 1960.⁴¹ A multi-national force, mostly British, fought a two-front, military and political, campaign. In addition to aggressive combat operations to destroy the Communist forces and dominate the countryside, a massive program of population

and resources control was implemented. Together, these measures achieved success.

While the Emergency was in progress, the foundations were being laid for a totally independent Malaya. In February of 1956, a Federation of Malaya Constitutional Conference was held in London. Plans were laid for a transfer with a projected date of 31 August 1957. An Anglo-Malayan commission of jurists prepared a constitution which provided for an independent Malaya within the British Commonwealth. The new nation would possess full sovereignty.⁴² One unique feature of the constitution lay in its provision for an elected monarch, the Yang-di-Pertuan, or "Paramount Ruler", chosen for a five-year term from among the sultans of the separate Malay states.⁴³

Following the meeting of the London Conference, events moved rapidly. On 3 August 1957, the Sultan of Negri-Sembilan was chosen first Paramount Ruler. On 5 August, he joined with the British High Commissioner to sign an agreement to terminate British rule. On 31 August, power was transferred formally by the Queen's representative, the Duke of Gloucester. The first Prime Minister of independent Malaya was the British-educated Tunku Abdul Rahman. On 27 October 1957, Great Britain and Malaya signed a defense and mutual assistance treaty under which Britain would train the Malayan Army. In turn, Malaya was to grant bases to the United Kingdom.⁴⁴

The next major step toward the formation of Malaysia came on 27 May 1961, when Tunku Abdul Rahman suggested to correspondents in Singapore that a Greater Malaysia might be formed, to include Malaya, Singapore, and the three states of northern

Borneo; Sarawak, Sabah, and Brunei.⁴⁵ Negotiations between the parties began immediately. Rahman's reason for including the Borneo territories lay in an effort to reduce the influence of the Chinese, who would have constituted 44 per cent of the combined populations of peninsular Malaya and Singapore.

Taking the Bornean territories into consideration, the Chinese still outnumbered the Malays, but Rahman apparently felt that he could persuade the indigenous peoples of Borneo to side with the Malays politically.⁴⁶ After plebiscites in both states, Sarawak and Sabah entered Malaysia in 1963. Singapore also joined, but Brunei chose to maintain its autonomous status as a sultanate within the Commonwealth.

Unfortunately, the antagonism between Chinese and Malays made the presence of Singapore in Malaysia short and stormy. The basic Malay-Chinese antagonism continued unabated. On 3 June 1964, Lee Kuan Yew, the ethnic Chinese political leader of Singapore, made a speech in which he charged that elements of Tunku Abdul Rahman's party were conspiring to prevent the Chinese from playing their proper role in Malaysia's political life. In July and September of 1964, race riots erupted in Singapore. Roughly 20 people were killed and several hundred wounded. Rahman attempted to persuade anti-Chinese Malays to moderate their positions in the interest of tranquility, but Lee's speech had created wide-spread ill feelings. Practically without warning, the Malaysian Parliament expelled Singapore from the Federation.⁴⁷ Singapore was set adrift as an independent nation. Considering the size of the city-state (about 227 square miles) and her large population, Singapore did remarkably well on her own.⁴⁸

(2) Northern Borneo.

East Malaysia is composed of a narrow strip of land along the north coast of Borneo (See Map 3, Page 4), which runs for approximately 670 miles in a northeast-southwest direction. The maximum width is 160 miles. The two states, Sarawak and Sabah, are contiguous, with Sabah lying to the northeast and Sarawak to the southwest.⁴⁹ The total area of East Malaysia is 77,600 square miles, but its population totals less than 1.5 million.⁵⁰ The estimated population of the two Malaysian states and the independent sultanate of Brunei and their percentage racial breakouts during Confrontation (1964) are listed below:⁵¹

	<u>Sarawak</u>	<u>Sabah</u>	<u>Brunei</u>
TOTAL POPULATION.....	818,000.....	507,000....	83,869
MALAY.....	17%.....	---	50%
CHINESE.....	31%.....	23%.....	20%
INDO-PAKISTANI.....	1%.....	8%.....	---
EUROPEAN.....	---	1%.....	---
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.....	51%.....	68%.....	30%
IBAN.....	(32%).....	---	---
LAND DYAK.....	(8%).....	---	---
MELANAU.....	(6%).....	---	---
DUSUN.....	---	(32%).....	---
BAJAU.....	---	(14%).....	---
MURUT.....	---	(5%).....	---
OTHER.....	(5%).....	(17%).....	---

The total length of coastline of East Malaysia is approximately 1,400 miles. The coast is generally regular in Sarawak, but irregular and indented deeply in Sabah. The bodies of water which bound East Malaysia are the South China Sea on the northwest, the Sulu Sea on the north and east, and the Celebes Sea on the southeast.⁵²

Perhaps the most significant geographic feature of East

Malaysia from the military standpoint is the 971-mile long border it shares with Kalimantan, the Indonesian portion of Borneo. The entire area traversed by this border is extremely rugged, and much of the area is unexplored. The border has never been surveyed. Due to constant cloud cover, even aerial plotting of a definite boundary line is out of the question.⁵³ The indigenous people of the border area move freely between East Malaysia and Indonesia. The border in Sarawak is roughly defined as the point where the watersheds of the rivers flowing west and northwest into the South China Sea divide from those flowing south and east into the Celebes Sea and the Java Sea. The Sabah border lacks even this rough natural line. It simply begins at the border with Sarawak and runs roughly east to the Celebes Sea.

Both states are generally similar in topography, with flat coastal plains rising through rolling hills to meet the mountainous areas along the Kalimantan border. But there are important differences. Sarawak slopes upward from the sea toward the south and southeast. The mountains along its border with Kalimantan are very rough. The mean elevation of the ranges is about 5,000 feet, with occasional peaks rising to 7,000 feet. The state's highest point, 7,950 feet, is the summit of Mount Murud on the confluence of the borders of Sarawak, Sabah, and Kalimantan.

From the mountainous area along the border, the terrain drops to a line of hills that runs the length of the state. The coastal areas are flat plains which tend to lie only a few feet above sea level. They are typically 20 to 40 miles wide. Sarawak's rivers are numerous. They rise in the mountains in the interior and fall precipitously to the coastal plain, where they

drop great quantities of alluvial mud. Moreover, they drop more of this burden when they reach the sea. Over time, great offshore bars have been created, making the rivers of limited usefulness to ocean-going vessels.

Sabah's topography is in most ways similar to Sarawak's. One significant difference is the coast line. While the coast of Sarawak is relatively smooth, Sabah's becomes progressively rougher from west to east. The eastern coast, facing the Sulu and Celebes Seas, is heavily indented. Many of these indentations are fine, natural, deep water ports. The principal harbor, however, is Brunei Bay on the South China Sea at the extreme western end of Sabah's coast. The bay, which is located at the confluence of Sabah, Sarawak, and the Sultanate of Brunei, is the primary entry point for goods bound for all of northern Borneo.

The mountains of Sabah are generally similar to Sarawak's in altitude and structure, but they are much closer to the coast. In the west, on the South China Sea, the coastal plains are 10 to 20 miles wide. On the Sulu Coast to the east, parallel ranges extend all the way to the sea. The valleys between the ranges have been eroded, forming long, deep bays.

A second major difference between the topography of Sarawak and Sabah lies in the river systems. Those on the north coast of Sabah tend to be shorter, due to the proximity of the mountains to the coast.⁵⁴

One of the principal challenges to military operations in northern Borneo lies in the climate. Average daily

temperatures range from 70 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Rainfall varies from 60 to 160 inches in Sabah and from 120 to 160 inches in Sarawak.⁵⁵ The year is divided into two monsoon periods. Both are hot and wet. The principal difference is the direction from which the rainfall comes. In Sarawak, from early October to late February, the northeast monsoon brings heavy rain, particularly to the coast. From April to July, the southeast monsoon also brings rain. In Sabah, the northeast monsoon lasts from October or November through March or April, and the southeast from May to August. Between the monsoons, winds vary.⁵⁶

Vegetation is also a hindrance to military operations. Cleared land accounts for less than 10 per cent of the total area.⁵⁷ Although most of the uncleared area is commonly called "jungle", this word covers a multitude of variations. Along much of the coastal area, swamps, principally mangrove, are dominant. They are practically impenetrable. In the upland areas, some rain forests contain enormous stands of hardwood trees which rise as high as 200 feet. In these areas, trees are so close together and the canopy so dense that there is very little undergrowth. In other areas, the trees are not so tall, nor so closely packed. This results in a less restrictive canopy and thus a very thick undergrowth.⁵⁸

At the time of Confrontation, the economy of East Malaysia remained dominated by those industries which were predominant when the modernization process began; agriculture, forestry, and fishing. This is best illustrated by a breakdown of the labor force in 1960, as follows:⁵⁹

<u>INDUSTRY</u>	<u>SARAWAK</u>	<u>SABAH</u>
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing...	239,600.....	142,100
Services.....	16,300.....	10,100
Commerce.....	13,800.....	7,700
Manufacturing.....	11,500.....	6,700
Transportation and Communications.....	5,600.....	4,700
Construction.....	4,600.....	4,500
Other Industries.....	2,900.....	800

The economy of East Malaysia is, like that of West Malaysia, dominated by plantation industries. They account for about one half of Sarawak's export income and about 40 per cent of Sabah's, although it should be acknowledged that these figures vary widely from year to year. Although both state governments distinguish between "estates" and smaller plantations, they do not agree on their definitions. In Sarawak, an estate is a plantation of over 1,000 acres, and in Sabah it is one over 250 acres. In Sabah, estates and small holdings are of about equal importance in terms of production. In Sarawak, the small holders are dominant. In fact, at the time Confrontation began, there were only five estates (all rubber) in all of Sarawak. In Sabah, there were six: two oil palm, one cocoa, and three abaca (a banana plant native to the Phillipines whose inner fibers are used to make cordage).⁶⁰ Like nearly all settlements in northern Borneo, the estates are located along navigable rivers. The size of East Malaysia's agricultural sector relative to the West's can be illustrated by a comparison of total cultivated acres of plantation crops. West Malaysia had 2.2 million acres while East Malaysia had less than 100,000.⁶¹

The modern historical development of northern Borneo is

among the most exotic of any area on earth. In the case of Sarawak, the initial catalyst was James Brooke, a British adventurer and protege of Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of Singapore. In 1841, the Sultan of Brunei granted Brooke several thousand square miles of land in Sarawak in return for assistance in putting down some revolts. In future years, additional cessions were made, and Brooke became the first White Rajah of Sarawak. In 1888, Brooke's heir, his nephew Charles, placed Sarawak under British protection. The Brooke family continued to rule until 1946, when Sarawak was granted to the British Crown. In 1948, political organization was begun, and a constitution with a partially elective legislature was activated in 1956 and continued in effect until 1963, when Sarawak joined Malaysia.⁶²

In the case of Sabah, an American company was given a ten-year concession to a tract of land in the 1860's. The concession passed to the Austrian Baron Overbeck. A British firm followed Overbeck and obtained a royal charter to organize the North Borneo Company in 1881. Britain simultaneously granted protection to the colony. The company continued to administer Sabah (then called North Borneo) until 1946, when its control passed to the Colonial Office. As in the case of Sarawak, political development really began in the 1940's. By 1951, local councils were becoming effective. By the time Sabah united with Malaysia in 1963, a Legislative Council had been developed which had a preponderance of popularly elected members.⁶³

The third element of northern Borneo is the independent

Sultanate of Brunei, which is composed of two small enclaves on the northeastern coast of Sarawak. Although the sultanate has about 100 miles of coastline,⁶⁴ the total land area is only 2,226 square miles, and the 1966 population was about 112,000.⁶⁵ Brunei has three principal cities: Brunei Town (the capital), Seria, and Kuala Belait. Brunei Town and Kuala Belait are ports, while Seria is a petroleum producing area. Brunei's principal products are crude oil, natural gas, rubber, and timber. These items habitually provide the sultanate with a favorable balance of trade. Brunei is ruled by a Sultan, assisted by a Privy Council, a Council of Ministers, and an elected Legislative Council. Close relations with the United Kingdom have existed since 1847, when the Sultan signed a treaty with Britain aimed at the furtherance of commerce and the suppression of piracy. In 1888, a second treaty was signed which placed the sultanate under British protection and gave Britain the responsibility for conducting Brunei's foreign affairs. The 1888 treaty was further refined by a 1905 agreement by which a British Resident became senior representative of the British Government in Brunei. In 1959, a new agreement replaced the 1905 accord. Under this treaty, the United Kingdom continued to be responsible for Brunei's defense and foreign affairs.⁶⁶ It was this 1959 treaty which obligated Commonwealth forces to become involved in the Brunei Revolt, which was the opening round of Confrontation.

Considering the geographic position of Brunei, being engulfed on all its landward borders by Sarawak, one might reasonably assume that it would be logically a part of East

Malaysia. This was an element of Abdul Tunku Rahman's grand design when he bared his plans to create Malaysia. Unfortunately, financial terms of the offer made by the Kuala Lumpur government were not acceptable to the Sultan of Brunei, who otherwise would probably have opted for union. The basic problem lay in economics, specifically in Brunei's petroleum industry. Oil was discovered by the Shell Company in 1929. Over the years, the government had used the oil revenues largely in the public interest. In the offer to make Brunei a state of Malaysia, it was evident that much of the control of the oil revenues from the Brunei fields would pass to the Federal Government. This was unacceptable to the Sultan, and the proposal was turned down.⁶⁷

B. Indonesia.

Indonesia is composed of 13,667 islands, which stretch from 100 miles south of the southern tip of the Phillipines to the northern tip of Australia.⁶⁸ The islands lie across the equator, and form a barrier between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. Their total area is 735,865 square miles.⁶⁹ In the western portion of the nation lies Sumatra, the largest of the islands (180,380 square miles), which faces West Malaysia across the Strait of Malacca. The much smaller island of Java lies across the Sunda Strait from Sumatra. Java contains the national capital, Jakarta. Although it includes only about one fourteenth of Indonesia's land area, it contains a population of approximately 70,000,000.⁷⁰ The other large islands of Indonesia are Kalimantan (southern Borneo), Celebes, and West Irian

(western New Guinea).

The total population of Indonesia was 119,232,499 as of the 1971 census.⁷¹ This gives her the fifth largest population in the world. During the period 1961-1971, the population grew 2.1 per cent annually. Distribution of population is very uneven. This is true not only from island to island, but from area to area on the same island as well.

In the economic sphere, Indonesia has not fared so well as her neighbor Malaysia. When the Dutch were expelled from Indonesia, they left what has been called a "dual" economy, with one portion tied to subsistence farming, and the other to international markets.⁷² While the same might be said of Malaysia, Indonesia has some problems which complicate the matter considerably. First, there is a lack of diversification in the economy. Over 80 per cent of the people are employed in the agricultural sector, most on inefficient small holdings. Additionally, most of the nation's plantation crops and nearly all the products of her extractive industries are produced for export. This puts the economy at the mercy of the international price structure.⁷³

A second major problem lies in the lack of an adequate economic infrastructure, including a transportation and communications system to support a modern economy, adequate energy output, and enough skilled labor and experienced management. Here Indonesia is troubled with an ever-present problem of developing nations, capital formation. How can a people, most of whom exist at a bare subsistence level, compile sufficient savings to create modernization.⁷⁴

Another economic difficulty is closely linked to nationalism. During the colonial period, there was very little indigenous capitalism. Practically all significant enterprises were controlled by the Dutch. As a result, Sukarno and other nationalist leaders became strongly anti-capitalist. When they gained political independence, they also sought economic independence, which, to them, meant the expulsion of foreign-held business. By 1966, the process was almost complete. Belgian, American, and British business people, as well as the predominant Dutch, were forced to leave. The result was more autonomy but less efficiency. Only the petroleum industry, which was under foreign control until 1965, increased its profits over 1940 levels during the Sukarno years. The removal of the Dutch from the inter-island transportation industry was especially disruptive, particularly to the outer islands. Perhaps most important, the production of foodstuffs has not expanded rapidly enough to satisfy the rising population.⁷⁵ In addition, the expulsion of foreign business has also resulted in the physical deterioration of much of the means of production which the foreigners left behind.⁷⁶

Inflation has also contributed to Indonesia's economic ills. In the first year of Confrontation, 1963, the total money in circulation was twice what had been in circulation the year before. The government budget deficit was equal to more than fifty per cent of its revenues.⁷⁷ Naturally, such economic chaos was reflected in the lives of individual Indonesians. In fact, between 1958 and 1965, real per capita income actually

fell five per cent.⁷⁸

As was the case with Malaysia, Indonesia's modern political history began with World War II. The Dutch had been expelled by the Japanese early in the war, and the conquerors had allowed native participation in an occupation government. Sukarno was one of the prime leaders of this government. When the Japanese were defeated in August of 1945, Sukarno declared Indonesia to be independent.⁷⁹ This "independence" lasted about six weeks, until the arrival of British forces who had come to disarm and repatriate Japanese troops and to protect Dutch civilians. The British and Dutch sought cooperation from the new Indonesian regime, but did not receive it. A war resulted when the Indonesian desire to maintain independence clashed with the Dutch aim of returning Indonesia to its pre-war colonial status. Following a year of "chaos incarnate", the Dutch succeeded in regaining control, but that year of struggle "gave the temper of hardened steel to Indonesian nationalism."⁸⁰

On 25 March 1947, an agreement was reached whereby the Indonesian government was given authority over Java and Sumatra. The other islands would be separately administered, but would be federated with Sumatra and Java to form the United States of Indonesia, which would become part of the Dutch Commonwealth. The arrangement soon broke down, and in July of 1947, the Dutch attacked and fought their way into the most economically productive portions of Java and Sumatra. At this time, the Dutch agreed to accept a cease fire proposal adopted by the United Nations Security Council at the request of Australia and India.

By the terms of a truce agreement signed in January 1948, the Dutch were allowed to retain the areas they had occupied. The truce lasted less than a year. In December of 1948, full-scale civil war erupted. The Dutch fought on, but now they were fighting not only the Indonesians, but world opinion as well. They released nationalist leaders, including Sukarno, whom they had imprisoned, and reopened negotiations. These new talks resulted in the Hague Agreement of 2 November 1949, which granted full sovereignty at the end of 1949 to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia.⁸¹ The first cabinet was headed by Mohammed Hatta,⁸² but Sukarno, as President, held the real power.

Unfortunately, independence did not bring an end to Indonesian economic problems, particularly inflation. By the first national elections in 1955, the economy was in serious trouble. As one example, the price index in rural areas had risen 100 per cent since 1950.⁸³

The general elections of 1955 resulted in no party having a dominant position in the National Assembly. Sukarno remained as President, but did not feel that the government was sufficiently cohesive to deal with the nation's enormous problems. Over the course of the next few years, he developed a concept called "Guided Democracy", under which power was to be held by Sukarno and the leadership of the Army. The cabinet was to be chosen by Sukarno and to be responsible to him alone, not to the National Assembly. In fact, in the Spring of 1960, Sukarno actually dissolved the elected assembly after it had criticized the national budget. He replaced it with an appointed assembly.⁸⁴

Thus, as the decade of the 1960's opened, Sukarno was essentially in complete personal control of his nation. In 1963, he was declared President for Life.⁸⁵

It would be impossible to discuss the history of modern Indonesia without describing the career of the flamboyant and controversial President Sukarno. He was born on Java in 1901. His father was a Moslem school teacher, and his mother a Hindu. While still a university student, he became a committed nationalist and an outstanding orator.⁸⁶ In 1927, he founded the Nationalist Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia), which achieved popularity from its birth. Its aim was total independence from the Dutch.⁸⁷ In 1929, Sukarno was charged with plotting a revolt, and served two years in prison. In 1933, he was arrested again in connection with his nationalist activities, and was not released until the Japanese conquered Indonesia in 1942. During the occupation, he collaborated with the Japanese, but in 1945, with the Japanese obviously about to lose the war, he declared Indonesia independent in accordance with his Five Principles, which were faith in one God, humanity, nationalism, representative government, and social justice.⁸⁸

The post-war course of Indonesian political development in which Sukarno was the major actor has already been traced. Throughout the period, until the early 1960's, the President proved himself a politician of consummate skill. Within a few months of the end of the Japanese occupation, Sukarno, who had been called a "quisling" by Radio Moscow during the war, had charmed the communists. This was accomplished by his willingness

to call himself a Marxist and by the naive belief on the part of the communists that they could manipulate him. The President developed an almost uncanny ability to convince each one of many disparate groups that he was sympathetic to their aims.⁸⁹

In conjunction with his political skills, Sukarno developed a desire to be a leader of the Third World. A popular view in the early 1950's saw a world in which an essentially monolithic communist bloc was faced by the Western nations and their world-wide system of alliances. This left a large bloc of nonaligned nations which Sukarno saw as a potential power center, and which he developed a desire to lead.⁹⁰ The much-publicized gathering of 29 developing nations at the Bandung Conference in April 1955 was probably the zenith of optimism concerning the concept of the Third World as a concerted force.⁹¹

Although the high hopes of the Bandung Conference ultimately withered, Sukarno continued to seek Third World leadership. One obvious method by which the non-aligned countries could be courted was by impressing them with foreign policy triumphs, particularly triumphs won against the former colonial powers.

The early 1960's saw one of Sukarno's campaigns against colonialism come to fruition. The independence of Indonesia had not signalled the immediate end of the entire Netherlands Empire. The Dutch still held the western portion of the island of New Guinea (called West Irian by the Indonesians). From independence forward, Sukarno had made the acquisition of West Irian a personal goal. As the years passed, he used the West Irian

issue to create an artificial aura of emergency which he then employed to enhance his domestic political position. Soon after independence, talks with the Dutch concerning the transfer of West Irian to Indonesia proved futile. From 1954 through 1957, Sukarno switched his tactics to seeking United Nations support. This failed also.⁹² More direct action was then attempted. During the period 1957-1959, Dutch property in Indonesia valued at about two billion dollars was confiscated and 36,000 of the remaining 40,000 Dutch nationals residing in Indonesia left.⁹³

In 1959, the Dutch began sending military reinforcements. Their buildup in West Irian ultimately reached 2,500 ground troops and 1,500 marines, as well as accompanying aircraft.⁹⁴ From 1960 to 1962, the campaign entered a more violent phase. Unconventional warfare was carried out against Dutch troops in West Irian, and large amounts of Soviet military aid was received by Indonesia.⁹⁵ The Dutch soon found themselves in a hopeless situation. Their small West Irian garrison faced a possible Indonesian invasion which they had no hope of repelling.⁹⁶ Further, the Dutch were diplomatically isolated, defending a colonial anachronism in a time when colonialism had gone out of favor. On 15 August 1962, Dutch and Indonesian delegations led by their respective foreign ministers signed an agreement in Washington for transferring power in West Irian. The United Nations was to oversee the transfer.

The successful expulsion of the Dutch from West Irian was the high point of Sukarno's power.⁹⁸ But the termination of that effort threatened to turn the attention of the Indonesian

people to their domestic problems. If Sukarno could find another foreign adventure, public attention could again be diverted from economic failure to military success. His solution lay in openly advancing a long-treasured program for expansion. The first victim was to be Malaysia.

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CHAPTER 3. CONFRONTATION, THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY CHRONOLOGY

When Malayan Prime Minister Abdul Rahman stated in 1961 that Malaya could not stand alone, and that, eventually, she would have to combine with Singapore and the states of northern Borneo, he was openly recognizing the process that ultimately created Malaysia. However, the creation of the new nation interfered directly with the long-term, grandiose plans of President Sukarno.⁹⁹

Sukarno fervently believed in a concept called MAPHILINDO. This was to be a confederation of all the nations with dominant populations of Malay origins.¹⁰⁰ The confederation would include Indonesia, the Phillipines, Malaya, Brunei, Sarawak, and Sabah. Sukarno apparently saw the MAPHILINDO concept as a logical extension of the nationalist movements sweeping the developing world in the early 1960's, and also as a convenient distraction from Indonesia's domestic problems.

It should be recognized that the idea of a greater Indonesia (Indonesia Raya) did not originate in the 1960's. Its roots lay deep in Indonesian nationalism. As an example, on 31 May 1945, Mohammad Yamin, a major leader of the nationalists, made a speech to the Body for the Investigation of Indonesian Independence, a Japanese-sponsored committee set up to lay the groundwork for political independence. The speech was

titled "The Area of the State of Indonesia," and Yamin included Malaya and British Borneo in his concept of the scope of the nation.¹⁰¹ There is considerable debate upon the question of whether Sukarno was won to the MAPHILINDO enterprise by Yamin and, if so, how quickly he became an advocate himself. Harold James and Denis Sheil-Small maintain in their book The Undeclared War that:¹⁰²

Professor Yamin electrified the forty-five year old Sukarno with a precise and grandiose definition of Indonesian aspiration. Yamin visualized no less than an Indonesian Empire- an alliance of countries in the South- consisting of Indonesia, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Phillipines.

Regardless of precisely when Sukarno first heard of the MAPHILINDO concept, he adopted it (in a slightly more modest form) as his own. The idea lay in abeyance while Indonesia was winning her independence from the Dutch and Sukarno was consolidating his position as President. By the 1960's, Sukarno was ready to move to implement his and Yamin's dream. In August of 1963, he said:¹⁰³

Asia is one. Asia has awakened, and not only Asia but also Africa. This is history, and you cannot escape the history that Africa has awakened. Imperialist countries, you cannot escape history, that MAPHILINDO has been born.

On the surface, it would appear that the creation of Malaysia would have furthered MAPHILINDO, but Sukarno did not perceive MAPHILINDO as a group of equal partners. Rather, he saw it as a "sun and satellite" group, with Indonesia as the sun.¹⁰⁴ A strong and united Malaysia would hinder such a development, so Sukarno launched his "Crush Malaysia" Campaign.¹⁰⁵

chaos was reflected in the lives of individual Indonesians. In fact, between 1958 and 1965, real per capita income actually

He swore that the sun would not rise on Malaysia on 1 January 1965.¹⁰⁶

The opening act of Confrontation did not occur in Sarawak or Sabah, but in Brunei, in late 1962. On 8 December, an abortive uprising, since called the Brunei Revolt, broke out under the leadership of the Northern Borneo National Army (Tentera Nasional Kalimantan Utara or T.N.K.U.)¹⁰⁷ The leader of the T.N.K.U. was A.M. Azahari, of the leftist Brunei Peoples' Party. Azahari and his party had been in close contact with the Communist Party of Indonesia (P.K.I.) Azahari was an opponent of the concept of Malaysia as it had been set forth by Prime Minister Rahman. In Rahman's original proposal, Brunei was to have had a place in the new nation as well as Sabah and Sarawak. In July of 1962, the Brunei Legislative Council had accepted the Malaysia Concept in principle and had voted support for Brunei's entry. At that time (July 1962), the council was entirely appointive. However, in September, a new Legislative Council, with 16 indirectly elected seats, was formed. Azahari's party won all 16.¹⁰⁹ Although the 17 members appointed by the Sultan still held a majority in the council, Azahari's prestige increased dramatically.¹¹⁰

As an alternative to Rahman's plan for Malaysia, Azahari intended to seize all three northern Borneo territories and consolidate them as a prelude to independence. He planned to make the Sultan of Brunei titular head of the new government and himself Prime Minister.

In November of 1962, Azahari went to the Phillipines

to seek support for his stance against the creation of Malaysia. He was in Manila when the Brunei Revolt exploded. Azahari immediately proclaimed himself Prime Minister. In his Manila statement he claimed that the Sultan supported the revolt. From this it can be assumed that Azahari's plan included kidnapping the Sultan and forcing him to serve as a front for the revolutionaries.¹¹¹ The actual course of events varied considerably from Azahari's intentions. When the Sultan first heard reports of the outbreak of the revolt, he went to police headquarters in Brunei Town, where he issued treason warrants against Azahari and his chief confederates. He also precipitated the Commonwealth effort in northern Borneo by seeking British assistance in restoring law and order under the treaty of 1959.¹¹² Two weeks later, he suspended the Brunei Constitution, dismantled the Legislative Council, and replaced it with an Emergency Council. After leaving Manila, Azahari went to Jakarta for consultations with the Indonesian government.

The government of Indonesia claimed that they did not know of the plans for the Brunei Revolt before it actually erupted. In reality, the government and the Communist Party of Indonesia had supplied both training and arms for Azahari's rebellion.¹¹³ Also, upon the outbreak of fighting, the Indonesian government announced that they supported the revolt. This event was particularly noteworthy because it was the first opportunity President Sukarno had taken to denounce the creation of Malaysia in strong terms. This represented a diplomatic about face from previously-stated Indonesian policy, exemplified

by the following excerpt from a November 1961 speech by Foreign Minister Subandrio before the United Nations General Assembly:¹¹⁴

When Malaya told us of its intention to merge with Sarawak, Brunei, and North Borneo as one federation, we told them that we had no objections and that we wished them success with this merger so that everyone might live in peace and freedom.

Within one month of the failure of the Brunei Revolt, Indonesia began to assemble both the military and political programs to snatch Sarawak, Sabah, and Brunei away from Malaysia and thus smash the new nation at its birth.¹¹⁵ By mid-January 1963, the Indonesian turnabout was complete. On 20 January in a Jakarta speech, Subandrio stated:¹¹⁶

We cannot but adopt a policy of confrontation towards Malaysia because at present they represent themselves as accomplices of neo-colonialist and neo-imperialist forces pursuing a policy hostile towards Indonesia.

Under the 1959 treaty commitments of the United Kingdom to defend the sultanate, British reaction to the outbreak of the Brunei Revolt was swift. The revolt began at 0200 hours, 8 December 1962. Thirteen hours later, Royal Air Force transports took off from Singapore with the initial British reaction force.¹¹⁷

The first day of the revolt saw the rebels make considerable headway. In Brunei Town, they captured the power station, cutting off the city's electricity. They also attacked the police headquarters, the Sultan's palace, and the residence of the Brunei Prime Minister. Due to a warning

which had been passed to the police by an informant, security around these buildings had been tightened and the attacks failed. However, the British High Commissioner, Mr. W.J. Parks, was captured at his residence. The Commissioner of Police and a small body of his personnel were able to rescue Mr. Parks, recapture the power plant, and restore order without any outside assistance except one platoon of the North Borneo Field Force, which had been flown into Brunei from Sabah by the Royal Air Force.¹¹⁸ The most significant action performed by the police was securing the airfield in Brunei Town, which facilitated the arrival of security forces from Singapore. Without this field, reinforcements would have been forced to land on Labuan Island, 30 miles away by water.¹¹⁹

Outside of Brunei Town, the rebels had considerably more success. To the west, along the coast, they seized the town of Tutong, and to the south the towns of Limbang and Bangar. Most important, they captured the oil fields at Seria, a major contributor to the economy of Brunei.¹²⁰

The first Commonwealth troops to reinforce Brunei from outside Borneo arrived during the evening of 8 December. The initial force, under the command of Major Tony Lloyd-Williams,¹²¹ was composed of two companies of the First Battalion, Second Gurkha Rifles. The 1/2nd was part of the 17th Gurkha Division. Major Lloyd-Williams was briefed upon arrival by the Brunei Commissioner of Police. He decided that his first task should be securing Brunei Town, followed by the retaking of the Seria Oil Fields. Patrols were immediately dispatched to enforce the

city's curfew, and a platoon was sent to guard the palace of the Sultan.¹²²

Major Lloyd-Williams recognized the danger in further dividing his force by attempting to retake the oil fields in Seria without more troops. Seria was 50 miles west along the coast road from Brunei Town, and the route was ideal for ambushes, since it passed through stretches of thick jungle. The following morning, 9 December, another company of the 1/2nd Gurkha Rifles arrived, accompanied by the Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Shakespear. Seria was cleared of rebels on 9 December, except for the airfield there, which was secured three days later.¹²³

The 1/2nd Gurkha Rifles were followed to Borneo almost immediately by the 1st Battalion, Queen's Own Highlanders. On 10 December, the 42 Royal Marine Commando was flown in. On 14 December, 40 Royal Marine Commando arrived at Kuching, in western Sarawak, aboard HMS Albion. 1st Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets, was moved from Penang to northern Sarawak. Thus, within six days of the outbreak of the revolt, three Army battalions and two Royal Marine Commandos were moved from West Malaysia to Borneo by sea and air.¹²⁴

The quick reinforcement of East Malaysia brought the revolt to a speedy conclusion, although there were several notable fire fights. One of these occurred at Limbang, south of Brunei Town and a short distance inside Sarawak. At Limbang, the rebels had captured some European hostages. One company

from 42 Royal Marine Commando freed these captives and secured the town on 12 December after heavy fighting.¹²⁵

The suppression of the revolt, which was completed by 14 December, belied the relatively broad support that it had received. Azahari claimed that the Northern Borneo National Army had 20,000 members.¹²⁶ While this was no doubt an exaggeration, even more conservative commentators, such as David Hawkins in a monograph published by the Royal United Services Institute for Defense Studies, concedes that "a high proportion" of the youth of Brunei were involved in the revolt.¹²⁷ Several thousand suspects were arrested, most of whom were speedily released. But about 500 were detained, some for a number of years. In fact, as late as 1971, there were still an estimated 40 people in detention.¹²⁸ Although a few thousand arrests and 500 incarcerations may seem insignificant judged in terms of other conflicts, coupled to the fact that Brunei's total population was less than 85,000, they indicate a considerable amount of support for the rebels.

To an extent, the Brunei Revolt spilled over the border into Sarawak, particularly around Limbang, where part of the Fifth Division of Sarawak lies between two sections of Brunei. (See Map 3, Page 4). Order was soon restored, although many T.N.K.U. supporters were arrested and several hundred, principally Chinese, crossed the border into Kalimantan, where they later became active participants in Indonesia's Confrontation policies.¹²⁹

Although the Brunei Revolt had been put down by

mid-December 1962, indicators of potential future security problems in northern Borneo continued. The units which had reacted to the uprising remained. On 19 December, these forces were placed under the command of Major General Walter Walker. His official position was Commander, British Forces Borneo, and his command initially consisted of one Army brigade of three battalions, two Royal Marine Commandos, six coastal minesweepers, and about 15 naval and air force helicopters.¹³⁰

Beginning in January 1963, reports were received of people, including indigenous tribesmen, being recruited in Kalimantan and on the island of Celebes to assist Azahari. From the beginning, it seemed evident to Commonwealth analysts that this recruiting and attendant training were supported by Sukarno's government. This strong suspicion became established fact when Indonesian officials began to admit it openly.¹³¹ Foreign Minister Subandrio's aforementioned 20 January speech in Jakarta was further evidence of Indonesian complicity in Azahari's schemes. In addition, various communist groups (collectively called the Clandestine Communist Organization or CCO by Commonwealth authorities) were operating in Sarawak.

The actual military outbreak of Confrontation came on 12 April 1963. On that day, an estimated 30 men attacked the police station at Tebedu, south of Kuching in the First Division of Sarawak.¹³² One policeman was killed, and some weapons taken. The raiders included both Indonesians and Sarawak Chinese, who were members of the Clandestine Communist Organization. This raid was the first of over 100 during the

initial year of the struggle. The pattern of the first year of Confrontation from the standpoint of the Indonesians was described by Major C.M.A.R. Roberts of the 1/10th Gurkha Rifles:¹³³

So a pattern emerges. A pattern which, like a life cycle, can go on repeating itself endlessly. It begins with the raising of the raider force in Kalimantan. Some Javanese, some Chinese, men from the Celebes: a mixed bag, with perhaps Regular Army leadership. Certainly with regular Indonesian Army training and commanders, who sometimes stay their side of the border. The band is trained, heavily armed with mortars, machine guns and automatic rifles, loaded down with ammunition and sent off to capture Simanggang, or Song, or Long Jawi, or Tawau, or Sandakan. The people will rise up and help you, they are told (and anyway, if they do not, no one can resist the barrel of a loaded rifle). Of course, if anything goes wrong there is always the border just behind.

The cycle ends when the raiders find that they are not as welcome as they had been led to believe. When they are contacted by resolute security forces, who hunt them relentlessly, and break them up into small parties, which, without maps and compasses, begin to run short of food, lose hope, and then give up.

On the political front, the leaders of the Phillipines, Malaysia, and Indonesia met in Manila in the summer of 1963 to try to iron out problems inherent in Malaysia's creation.¹³⁴ These problems lay principally in Indonesian and Phillipine claims to some of the territory in northern Borneo.¹³⁵ Both demanded that the United Nations conduct a survey to determine if elections in Sarawak and Sabah actually represented popular support for fusing these states to Malaysia. Malaysia agreed to the survey. The U.N. conducted the requested survey, and on 14 September 1963, Secretary General U Thant stated that a

"sizeable majority" of individuals surveyed desired to join Malaysia. Malaysia was officially created on 16 September, and one day later broke relations with both the Phillipines and with Indonesia. These actions were taken because the two nations had announced their refusal to recognize the new Malaysia.¹³⁶

The creation of Malaysia caused a violent reaction in Indonesia. On the very day Malaysia came into being, 5,000 demonstrators assaulted both the Malaysian and British embassies in Jakarta.¹³⁷ Two days later, mobs actually succeeded in seizing and burning the British embassy. In addition, the homes of British diplomatic personnel were attacked. On 20 September, Sukarno seized British-owned properties in Indonesia. These properties were valued at about one half billion dollars.¹³⁸ The Indonesian government stated that the seizures were not for purposes of nationalization, but were merely to protect the companies' property, assure uninterrupted production, and preclude leftwing unions from taking them over. In spite of these explanations, the British Foreign Office expressed concern that Indonesia had not clarified when the properties would be returned to their owners. On 31 October, Britain announced that she would participate in no new aid projects in Indonesia until good relations were restored. On 6 November, Sukarno proceeded to seize all rubber mills in East Sumatra which were owned by Malaysians.¹³⁹ In addition, Sukarno's fervent denunciations of Malaysia continued to keep the situation tense.¹⁴⁰ On 25 September, he charged that Indonesia was threatened by "Malaysian neo-colonialism." Indonesia, he stated, would have

to "fight and destroy" her tormentor.¹⁴¹

On the military front of Confrontation, operations began to intensify in September, and regular Indonesian troops were definitely identified among raiding parties. Most of the raids were ineffectual, but, on 26 September, one penetrated 35 miles into Sarawak. In December, another unit travelled nearly that deep into Sabah.¹⁴²

In early 1964, the United States became involved in the conflict. President Lyndon Johnson sent Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy to attempt to dampen the border warfare in Borneo. Between 17 and 26 January, in meetings with leaders of Japan, the United Kingdom, the Phillipines, Malaysia, and Indonesia, Kennedy helped arrange a cease fire, which went into effect on 30 January. Kennedy also helped to arrange a meeting in early February of the foreign ministers of Indonesia, the Phillipines, and Malaysia in Bangkok.¹⁴³ This conference began with a hopeful development when the parties agreed to allow Thailand to supervise the truce between Indonesia and Malaysia. However, this was the limit of success. The conference failed, and with it the truce.¹⁴⁴

The Kuala Lumpur government issued a white paper on 23 April 1964 charging, among other things, that Indonesia was advancing a plot to annex all of Malaysia into a "greater Indonesia." The white paper stated:¹⁴⁵

Indonesian expansionism as a successor to Western imperialism and colonialism is a basic tenet of Sukarno's national policy. Indonesia's confrontation policy against Malaysia is the natural result of the long-term Indonesian policy and not the result of the formation of

Malaysia, which is only an excuse made up by Indonesia to launch her present campaign of aggression.

The United Nations met on 9 September to consider Malaysia's charges of Indonesian aggression. The Indonesians admitted that they had personnel fighting in northern Borneo, but explained that they were fighting "colonialism", and that Malaysia was a neo-colonialist tool of Britain designed to encircle Indonesia. A Norwegian resolution condemning Indonesian landings in West Malaysia was passed by the Security Council by a vote of nine to two (Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union).¹⁴⁶ The resolution was vetoed by the Soviet Union.¹⁴⁷ Four months later, on 1 January 1965, Indonesia withdrew her membership in the United Nations in protest of Malaysia's having been elected to a one-year term on the Security Council. She thus became the first nation ever to quit the U.N.¹⁴⁸

The Commonwealth force which had entered Borneo in response to the Brunei Revolt continued to expand. By the time Malaysia came into existence on 16 September 1963, there were about 6,000 troops in Borneo.¹⁴⁹ This included four infantry battalions. Upon the fusing of West and East Malaysia, the Kuala Lumpur government began to send Malaysian troops to help combat Indonesian incursions. In September, the 5th Battalion, Royal Malay Regiment, was transferred to East Malaysia, followed later by the 3rd Battalion. At the same time, the 1st Malaysian (Sarawak) Rangers were being trained by British personnel in the state of Kedah in West Malaysia. Much later, in early 1965, the Borneo forces became even more cosmopolitan with the addition

of Australian combat troops. The Australians sent their 3rd Infantry Battalion, which had been in West Malaysia, and a Special Air Service (S.A.S.) unit from Western Australia. During the same period, New Zealand announced that the battalion she had currently assigned to West Malaysia and a 40-man S.A.S. element were available for Borneo duty if called upon. By 1965, the combined efforts of the four Commonwealth nations had established a force in East Malaysia of four infantry brigades (13 battalions), one battalion equivalent of Special Air Service, and two battalion equivalents of paramilitary police, plus supporting land, sea, and air units.

The Australian and New Zealand forces were only committed to the defense of East Malaysia after a good deal of soul-searching by their governments. In the period just prior to the birth of Malaysia, neither nation was particularly eager to become embroiled in northern Borneo. In March of 1963, Prime Minister Rahman expressed his view that Australia, along with Britain, was obligated to defend Malaysia in the event of aggression from Indonesia. The Australian government retorted that no such commitment existed. One day after the Australian protest, Rahman apologized in Parliament.¹⁵⁰ In spite of this minor diplomatic upheaval, Australia pledged military support to Malaysia in September of 1963. New Zealand had done the same in August.

Meanwhile, in Borneo, the nature of Confrontation had begun to change. The ill-trained and equipped raiders of the early months were being steadily replaced by well-armed and

disciplined Indonesian regular soldiers. This trend became evident in late 1963 and early 1964.

One of the first major indicators of Indonesian regulars' participation was a 29 December raid on Kalabakan in Sabah (See Map 3, Page 4). The original intent of the foray was to raid Kalabakan, then move on to the coastal towns of Tawau and Sandakan. The force consisted of a total of 128 men. Most were volunteers, but 35 were Indonesian regular troops, members of the Korps Komando Operasi, the Indonesian Marines. The raid on Kalabakan was repulsed by police, Home Guards, and a reinforced platoon of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Malay Regiment. After being repulsed at Kalabakan, the Indonesians lingered in the area, instead of pushing on to their next target or retreating back into Kalimantan. They paid dearly for this tactical mistake. Reinforcements, principally from 1/10th Gurkha Rifles, were brought into the area to hunt down the survivors. By the first of March, 96 of the original 128 raiders had been killed or captured.¹⁵¹

During the early months of 1964, evidence mounted that Sukarno had decided to commit large numbers of Indonesian troops to northern Borneo. During February and March, three significant incursions occurred in the First Division of Sarawak. In all three cases, the raiders were intercepted and forced to flee into Kalimantan after suffering casualties.

In June, the Indonesians appeared to make a deliberate change in their tactics from hit and run raiding of civilian targets to open challenges of the military superiority of

Commonwealth forces. These challenges came in the form of attacks on the jungle bases of the defenders of East Malaysia. The first example of the new tactic came on 21 June, in the First Division of Sarawak. Two platoons of the 1/6th Gurkha Rifles had completed a ten-day patrol, and had occupied a previously-used base during the evening hours of 21 June. Shortly after their arrival, a party of about 100 Indonesians took the base **under** fire with small arms, rockets, and mortars. During the next four hours, four ground attacks were attempted on the position, after which the attackers withdrew over the international border. Five Gurkhas were killed and five wounded. Indonesian casualties were unknown.

On 18 July, another forward base was attacked. This camp was also in the First Division. It was defended by a platoon of the 1st Green Jackets. At about 1900 hours, the platoon leader had received a report that a local native had seen a group of approximately 100 Indonesians moving toward his position. He ordered that the base remain on alert status throughout the night. Shortly after the initial report, movement was heard about 200 yards from the perimeter. The platoon leader ordered that the enemy not be engaged until they fired or presented a good target. A little later, the Indonesians opened fire from 200 yards with rifles and automatic weapons. All the defending platoon's weapons returned fire. Exchanges continued periodically until 0100 hours the following morning, when the attackers collected their casualties and withdrew toward the border. The Green Jackets continued to fire on the

anticipated route of escape. At dawn, a reaction force with a tracker team was flown in to pursue the raiders, but only some blood and bone fragments indicating two casualties were found.

In a third raid in the First Division, the Indonesians paid more dearly. The Commanding Officer of "B" Company, 1st Green Jackets, was well aware of the new Indonesian tactics emphasizing attacks on bases, and was therefore concerned about a possible strike against his forward border base at Stass, southwest of Kuching, which was held by 7 Platoon. To impose maximum casualties on an enemy making such an attack, he placed another platoon (11) one thousand yards south of 7 Platoon's base in an ambush position.

At 0230 hours on 31 July, the southwestern portion of 7 Platoon's perimeter was engaged from about 80 yards by a light machine gun. At the same time, two-inch mortars fired on the base. 7 Platoon responded with command-detonated mines, mortars, and pre-registered 105mm artillery. The enemy pulled out at 0300 hours. A group of about 30 moved into the area of 11 Platoon's ambush shortly after 0400 hours. 11 Platoon's leader decided to wait until the last element entered the kill zone before giving the order to fire. When this occurred, there were ten enemy in the zone. The ambush, which had been prepared with illumination flares, hand grenade necklaces, and sharpened bamboo "panji" stakes, was sprung with shotgun and automatic weapons fire. The ambush force then withdrew to a predetermined rally point and called artillery and mortar fire on the anticipated Indonesian route of escape. It was later

established that the entire operation had cost the Indonesians six dead, five wounded, and nine missing in action.¹⁵²

Throughout the remainder of Confrontation, the nature of Indonesian operations in northern Borneo continued in the vein of these raids in the summer of 1964. Raids on Commonwealth bases were an ever-present threat, and the Indonesians also habitually sought to intimidate natives of the border area in order to discourage their cooperation with Commonwealth forces. Neither goal was reached, but the defenders were met with stern challenges from an ever improving enemy. By the fall of 1964, the day of the ill-trained and poorly-equipped "volunteer" had nearly ended, as more and more Indonesian regulars came into the fight. These men were prepared to ambush security forces, and often did. When ambushed or pursued themselves, they were able to deliver disciplined counterstrokes.¹⁵³ Only the highest qualities of initiative and aggressiveness kept East Malaysia from being overrun.

Unfortunately, Sarawak and Sabah were not the only areas that Malaysia and her allies had to defend. When Sukarno's policies of Confrontation were frustrated in Borneo, he chose to expand the scope of operations by seeking a "second front" in West Malaysia.

Throughout late 1964 and early 1965, Indonesian commandos made periodic raids on the peninsula.¹⁵⁴ The first operation occurred on 17 August. A party of about 100 men landed from the sea on the southwest coast of Johore, the southernmost state of West Malaysia.¹⁵⁵ The force consisted of 53 Indonesian Air Force

Paratroops, 21 Marines, 32 Malaysians (of whom 27 were Communists of Chinese extraction), and two Indonesian volunteers. Upon landing, over half the raiders were captured; the remainder were scattered in swamps. On 2 September, a second raid was made. About 100 paratroopers were dropped in Labis in Johore (See Map 2, Page 3). This time, all but 12 were accounted for by security forces in search operations that lasted a month.¹⁵⁶

The Indonesians continued their West Malaysian operations. In late October, more than 50 men landed at Melaka on the southwest coast. In November and December, two more raids were made in Johore. All ended in failure. In addition, in late December HMS Ajax intercepted a waterborne raiding party which was moving toward a landing northwest of Kuala Lumpur. The failure of their operations on the west coast of the peninsula caused the Indonesians to turn to the east side. Between 7 November 1964 and 25 March 1965, five raids were attempted, but all were failures. A few minor attempts to attack West Malaysia were made later, but no more large raids.

The purposes of the raids into West Malaysia appear to have been two-fold. First, in at least one case, the 2 September paradrop on Labis, the intent apparently was to create a base for sabotage. In most of the raids, the aim seems to have been to gain popular support. There were three presumed target groups. First were Malays who had emigrated from Indonesia. Next were Malays in general, who the Indonesians felt would not want to fight their brothers in race, language, and religion. Finally,

there were the leftist Malaysian Chinese.¹⁵⁸ When the raiders actually reached West Malaysia, however, the anticipated local support failed to materialize.

In describing the Indonesian raids into West Malaysia, the word "failure" has been used repeatedly. This is true only in the tactical sense. Certainly it is true that the raiders failed to establish either a sabotage base or a significant amount of popular support. But they did succeed in tying down security force personnel and equipment far out of proportion to their numbers. Not only were large numbers of ground troops occupied in tracking down and neutralizing those elements which succeeded in landing, but large naval forces were required to prevent the landings by interception at sea. Naval forces involved included two aircraft carriers, a guided missile destroyer, and three squadrons of frigates.¹⁵⁹

The beginning of the end for Sukarno's Crush Malaysia Campaign came when Indonesia went through a severe political crisis in the Fall of 1965. On 30 September, a coup was attempted in which six high-ranking Army officers were assassinated. The rebel officers who perpetrated this stroke were a politically diverse group. However, all had been enthusiastic supporters of the Crush Malaysia Campaign, when many more conservative officers were beginning to have reservations about the wisdom of the effort. The Communist Party of Indonesia (P.K.I.) had also stoutly supported Sukarno against Malaysia. It is not clear to what extent the leadership of the P.K.I. participated in the coup attempt. However, the Army high command accused the

communists and agents of the People's Republic of China of planning the coup. What followed was an all-out purge of the communists. In February of 1966, the party and all its affiliated groups were banned.¹⁶⁰

The regime of General Suharto, which took over after the coup attempt, and which maintained Sukarno as a mere figurehead President, had no desire to continue Confrontation.¹⁶¹ Another Bangkok Conference was convened and an agreement was reached on 1 June 1966 to end it. The pact was signed officially in Jakarta on 11 August 1966.¹⁶² On 22 August, Indonesia's Crush Malaysia Command, which had been employed by Sukarno to execute the military phases of Confrontation, was disbanded.¹⁶³

The fall of Sukarno raises a significant question which must be addressed in any evaluation of the Commonwealth performance in Confrontation. That question is, were the backers of Malaysia triumphant because of their skills on the battlefield, or were they merely fortunate in having an opponent who could not sustain long-term combat operations because of internal strife?

In seeking an answer to this question, another look must be taken at the Indonesian domestic scene. Throughout the period of Confrontation, inflation had continued. The money supply quadrupled between 1961 and 1963. Sukarno helped to bring this about with his grandiose public works projects and with the expense incurred by the Crush Malaysia Campaign. Aid from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and from individual Western nations was terminated. This combination of factors caused a twenty-five-fold rise in the Consumer Price

Index between the beginning of the Guided Democracy program in 1959 and 1964. The economic squeeze was perhaps worst among government employees who could not live on their salaries. It also caused severe problems in the largely barter subsistence economy in the rural areas when prices of basic imports like cotton cloth rose tremendously.¹⁶⁴ These economic conditions, coupled to the Army's growing discontent with rising Communist influence on Sukarno, brought about the coup.

What direct relevance does the Indonesian domestic situation have on Confrontation? There is a considerable body of opinion which holds that one of the reasons for the Crush Malaysia Campaign was to draw attention from the nation's domestic woes. As Ronald McKie put it in his 1963 book The Emergence of Malaysia, "The Indonesian leaders face grave pressures from within and from without, and much of their verbal opposition to Malaysia is intended for their own people as a diversion from internal problems."¹⁶⁵

Whether or not Sukarno embarked upon Confrontation to divert attention from domestic problems, the struggle certainly served that purpose once begun. If General Walker's forces had failed to stop the raiders from Kalimantan, Sukarno could have pointed to a brilliant success in the international arena to justify the sacrifices of the individual Indonesian citizen. However, Confrontation did not succeed, and this left Sukarno with two problems instead of one. The combination of foreign and domestic failure was too much for the military to bear, and the coup resulted.

Presumably, Confrontation could have served the

post-Sukarno government as it had served him, to divert the public's attention from economic woes. But the new government decided to attack their domestic problems directly. They felt that an end to the fighting in Borneo would "form a basis of economic stability" and encourage foreign economic assistance.¹⁶⁶ The ultimate result of these policies was the 11 August peace agreement. The agreement had four provisions:¹⁶⁷

1. Malaysia would give the people of Sabah and Sarawak the opportunity to re-affirm their decision to join Malaysia in a general election.
2. Indonesia and Malaysia would grant each other diplomatic recognition.
3. All hostile acts would cease.
4. The agreement would take effect immediately.

The Commonwealth forces were not saved by the anti-Sukarno coup. Rather, their success in the jungle became one of several factors which brought it about. One battalion commander with experience in Borneo summarized the political effects of Commonwealth tactical operations as follows:¹⁶⁸

Borneo was an encouraging example of military force contributing to a political situation. Instead of progressive escalation, often so inevitable, military force intelligently employed produced conditions which helped and perhaps even promoted sensible negotiations. It did this by decisively rendering the confrontation ineffective while not using more force than was necessary to achieve this and retaining the sympathy of world opinion throughout. No mean feat which reflected great credit on the skill and sagacity of the higher command.

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CHAPTER 4. GENERAL WALKER'S CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION

On 19 December 1962, Major General Walter Walker was appointed Commander, British Forces Borneo. Later, his title became Director of Operations. Immediately prior to this assignment, he had been General Officer Commanding, 17th Gurkha Division. His credentials to manage a campaign in a jungle environment were considerable. He had had extensive experience in Burma during World War II and in the Malayan Emergency. He had also been the first Commandant of the Jungle Warfare School, then called the Far East Training Center, which was established in West Malaysia in 1948.¹⁶⁹ When the Brunei Revolt broke out, Walker was in Nepal on a combination business and pleasure trip. When he heard of the revolt on his aide's transistor radio, he immediately returned to Singapore.¹⁷⁰

On his subsequent flight to Borneo, General Walker drafted a directive containing his concept of the operation in Brunei. The concept later came to apply to all of northern Borneo throughout Confrontation. General Walker later wrote that his directive was based on two elements. One was a study of insurgency in Indochina from 1946 through 1962. The other was his own experience in the Malayan Emergency. He wrote in 1969:¹⁷¹

It goes without saying that the Malayan Emergency influenced me tremendously, because it was there that Field Marshal Templer forged that unique and successful system of unity- between the armed forces themselves, between the armed forces and the police, and between the security forces as a whole and the civil administration. It was this unity, joint planning and joint operations at all times and at all levels, that defeated the communist guerrillas in Malaya.

In his directive, General Walker listed five ingredients of success which he felt would be critical in Borneo. They were:

1. Unified Operations.
2. Timely and Accurate Information.
3. Speed, Mobility, and Flexibility.
4. Security of Bases.
5. Domination of the Jungle.

After about a month in Borneo, he added a sixth ingredient, Winning the Hearts and Minds of the People.¹⁷²

What follows will be a discussion of how Commonwealth forces in Borneo implemented General Walker's initial concept of the campaign, isolating where possible each of the six ingredients of success. In each case, the first step will be to examine General Walker's own appraisal of his troops' performance. The basic source of his analysis will be his article "How Borneo Was Won", published in August 1969 in British Army Review. After seeing each ingredient from the commander's perspective, other sources will be examined for more in-depth commentary.

1. Unified Operations.

When General Walker arrived in Borneo, the Army and Royal Air Force were controlled from widely separated headquarters, and the Royal Navy had no headquarters ashore at all. One of the new commander's first actions was the creation of a joint headquarters. This was to establish a pattern to be copied at all levels throughout East Malaysia. These joint headquarters consisted of five elements: Navy, Army, Air Force, civil administration, and police. In his own commentary on the campaign, General Walker stressed the importance of remembering always that the military in a counter guerrilla campaign is in support of the civil government, and not the other way round. "Civil administration must be seen to be conducting affairs, and must not be kept, or allow themselves to be kept, in the background."¹⁷³ One of Walker's tasks assigned by the National Operations Committee in Kuala Lumpur was "stimulating and encouraging the civil administration." While this directive did not give him direct control of East Malaysia's civil government, it did allow him to cause directives to be given to the civil government through the National Operations Committee.

Following the successful example of the Malayan Emergency, Walker controlled joint operations through a triumvirate (military commander, police commander, and senior civil administrator) under the Director of Operations.

Walker's belief in the tremendous importance of a close civil-military-police relationship at every level from national to village was developed in his service in Malaya during the Emergency. He gave concrete substance to this concern as soon as he arrived in Borneo by establishing a "first

class liaison with both police and civil administrations."¹⁷⁴

An interesting sidelight to General Walker's emphasis on liaison lies in the actions of the commander of the initial troop unit which came to the aid of the Sultan in the Brunei Revolt. The first action of the commander, Major Tony Lloyd-Williams, upon landing in Brunei was to seek out the Commissioner of Police for a briefing.¹⁷⁵ Obviously, General Walker was not the only officer who recognized the value of unified operations.

One battalion commander summarized the importance of unified operations in Borneo as follows:¹⁷⁶

If nothing else was learnt in the Borneo campaign except the necessity to have a rational, flexible joint organization to fight a common battle, then the three years along the border will not have been wasted.

2. Timely and Accurate Information.

Perhaps General Walker's most vexing problem throughout Confrontation was the question of how to secure the 971 miles of frontier that separated East Malaysia and Kalimantan. A second major problem was dealing with the threat of internal subversion in Sabah, Brunei, and Sarawak from a Clandestine Communist Organization which was 24,000 strong.¹⁷⁷ Obviously, an absolute necessity for dealing with these two challenges was an effective intelligence structure. This ingredient of success was, of course, closely tied to unified operations. One of the principal purposes of unified operations with its close civil-military liaison was the sharing of information.

In addition to the analysis and dissemination of information, there was the requirement to collect the raw data. For this, General Walker employed a considerable number of sources.

Again in response to his experience in the Malayan Emergency, he stressed the importance of the Special Branch of the civilian police. The Special Branch had proven to be a tremendous asset in several postwar British counterinsurgent campaigns. It was essentially a police intelligence bureau charged with the responsibility for detecting guerrilla organizations, particularly the unseen infrastructure which the military arm of any anti-government force must have to acquire all manner of aid, including recruits, food, political support, and arms. Special Branch has a particular advantage over military intelligence organizations in ferreting out guerrillas. General Walker emphasized that "military intelligence should be the servant and not the master of the Special Branch."¹⁷⁸ Military units tend to move from place to place when fighting guerrillas. They seldom remain in one area long enough to mount the long-term undercover operations required to penetrate the infrastructure. On the other hand, civilian police are permanent residents of their areas and are quicker to detect suspicious activity. They are in a much better position to seek information from inside the enemy's organization. General Walker recognized that the need for an effective Special Branch was paramount, and its expansion was assigned "immediate priority."¹⁷⁹

Unfortunately, when Confrontation broke out, East

Malaysia had a tiny police force. Sarawak and Sabah had been practically free of crime. There were only three police posts near the Kalimantan border. The others were along the coasts and in the major towns.

In the military intelligence field, the principal agency was the 22 Special Air Service (S.A.S.) Regiment. The S.A.S. had been formed during World War II to undertake unconventional warfare missions. In the postwar era, S.A.S. changed its emphasis from squadron-sized raids in the enemy's rear to small patrols.¹⁸⁰ Special Air Service elements, The Malayan Scouts (S.A.S.) and "B" Squadron, 21 S.A.S. Regiment, performed effectively in the Malayan Emergency. In 1952, they were combined to form the 22 Special Air Service Regiment.¹⁸¹ The primary mission of the S.A.S. in Borneo was early warning of Indonesian incursions into East Malaysia. In a jungle environment, with the enemy able to cross at practically any point along a 971-mile, undefended border, mobile observation points became a necessity. The Special Air Service troopers were specifically trained for just such tasks as this. They were dropped in the jungle by helicopter in detachments frequently less than one half dozen strong. They would then remain in the jungle for weeks, seeking enemy unit locations. When they found an Indonesian raiding party, they did not normally engage it, but sent a radio message which would allow conventional infantry to deal with it.¹⁸²

Walker developed a high degree of respect for the capabilities of the S.A.S. He wrote:¹⁸³

I regard 70 troopers of the S.A.S. as being as valuable to me as 700 infantry in the role of Hearts and Minds, border surveillance, early warning, stay behind, and eyes and ears with a sting.

A third intelligence agency which proved effective in Confrontation was both a supplement to the work of the 22 S.A.S. Regiment and unique to Borneo. This was the Border Scouts, an organization of indigenous tribesmen who did invaluable service in surveillance of the Kalimantan frontier. The idea for the Scouts originated with the British Resident of the Fourth Division of Sarawak, one Mr. Fisher. Mr. Fisher convinced General Walker of the potential utility of a force of local tribesmen who were intimately familiar with their area of operations and who routinely crossed into Kalimantan for trade and social visits, hardly even recognizing the existence of the frontier. Such a force could be a tremendous adjunct to more conventional intelligence collection activities. After he became an advocate of the program, General Walker faced a considerable degree of reluctance on the part of the police and civil government. Ultimately, he was able to convince the government of Sarawak to go ahead with the project, which they had to finance by selling shares. On 10 May 1963, the order was issued which created the Border Scouts in Sarawak. A few months later, the state of Sabah formed their own Border Scouts.¹⁸⁴

General Walker's problems with the Border Scouts did not end with their acceptance by the state governments. The initial supporters of the Border Scout concept pictured the Scouts as working in civilian clothing and seeking information in places

where the uniformed security forces could not travel without being recognized. Unfortunately, the first units were formed as military and given three weeks of rudimentary tactical and weapons training under the control of S.A.S. and the Gurkha Independent Parachute Company. The result was an inadequately trained, equipped, and organized militia force.

Fortunately for the future of the Border Scout program, shortly after it was organized it was placed under the command of Major John Cross, a man who had already proven himself as a jungle fighter in the Malayan Emergency.

After a quick tour of inspection through Sarawak, with emphasis on the westernmost First and Second Divisions, Cross began reorganizing and retraining the Scouts in accordance with the original, "civilian clothes" approach. In the beginning of the program, the leadership of the Border Scout subelements, called sections, had been entrusted to noncommissioned officers of the Gurkha Independent Parachute Company. In time, corporals promoted from the ranks took command of the sections and performed quite well.

With the reorientation of the Border Scouts directed by Major Cross, the concept became a major contributor to Commonwealth success. Border Scout strength ultimately grew to 1,500.¹⁸⁵ Their missions ultimately included scouting, observation of crossing points along the frontier, surveillance of trails, guiding conventional military patrols, and defense of settlements which had no other military presence. But to summarize the primary role of the Border Scouts, it was to gain

information and to communicate it to the security forces.¹⁸⁶

The conventional military units also had an intelligence collection mission. Their constant patrolling was an effective factor in the accomplishment of this task. Also, the habit of the local population of visiting relatives in Kalimantan meant there were many people in the border area willing to sell information. There always exists the danger of agents working for both sides or fabricating information in such situations, but by confirming information with other sources and by picking agents carefully and paying well, these dangers were minimized.¹⁸⁷ The Indonesians also sought information from indigenous people who travelled on both sides of the border. This meant that the Border Scouts could, in rare and carefully selected situations, be used to provide false information to the enemy, such as deliberately understating the strength of a border base in order to induce an attack.¹⁸⁸

One notable example of the effective use of troop units to collect information lay in the 1st Battalion, Royal Leicestershire Regiment. 5 Platoon of the battalion, under the command of Second Lieutenant Alan Thompson, was assigned during the period 1963-1964 to a platoon base camp at Ba Kelalan, in the southeastern portion of the Fifth Division of Sarawak. Ba Kelalan was opposite an Indonesian base in Kalimantan. Second Lieutenant Thompson built up an effective intelligence collection apparatus primarily through the use of indigenous personnel who moved freely through his area. He was able to collect information concerning the entire First Battalion zone. His most imaginative

coup lay in an exchange of letters between himself and an Indonesian intelligence sergeant across the border. The letters were delivered by an itinerant tribesman.¹⁸⁹

3. Speed, Mobility, and Flexibility.

Like so much else in Confrontation, this ingredient of success was dictated by the ever-present paramount problem, the long and largely uncharted border with Kalimantan. If this huge expanse of terrain was to be kept free of Indonesian penetrations with the 13 battalions that General had for the task during most of the conflict, then speed, mobility, and flexibility in their use were absolute requirements. Walker himself called these qualities "all-important."¹⁹⁰

The requirement for speed, mobility, and flexibility was only multiplied by the primitive nature of Borneo's transportation system. There were few roads in the rural areas and no railroads. There was only one deep water port, Labuan island in Brunei Bay. From there, materiel had to be taken on coastal steamers and lighters across 20 miles of the bay to Brunei. In addition, there were no prestocked materiel and no installations for quartering troops.¹⁹¹

The massive logistic effort inside Borneo was largely an aerial effort. Ninety per cent of supplies moved by air. To illustrate the scale of the operation, in each month between November 1964 and October 1965, an average of 19,000 troops were transported, and 3,900,000 pounds of supplies were delivered; 1,900,000 by air landing and 2,000,000 by air drop.¹⁹²

One of the prime methods by which speed, mobility, and flexibility were achieved was through the use of helicopters. Their important contribution to the campaign was made in spite of the fact that there were never more than 100 in service. The security forces made up for this shortage by imaginative tactics. The guiding principles were forward deployment and decentralization. The aircraft were kept with the forward infantry rather than being moved back and forth from rear bases. This yielded several advantages. First, there was little lost time shifting the helicopters. Also, pilots, by being in forward bases, became intimately familiar with the terrain and with ongoing operations. Most important, forward deployment insured instantaneous response in emergencies. The helicopter became a critical part of operational planning at all levels. The aircraft became fully integrated into ground operations.

The security forces used their helicopters principally to facilitate contact with Indonesian raiding parties. This could be done by placing the troops in blocking positions along anticipated routes or by using aircraft to enable ground troops to pursue raiders more effectively. In this role, one hour travelling by helicopter was the equivalent of at least five days of foot travel in the jungle. When an enemy party was located, the aircraft were used to close the distance for friendly infantry. But the security force elements were not placed as close as possible to the enemy. Rather, they were landed far enough from the raiders to be out of sight and hearing

so that the element of surprise could be maintained.¹⁹³

The effectiveness of the helicopter in Confrontation is perhaps best indicated by one estimate that a battalion with six Wessex troop-carrying helicopters was worth as much to the Director of Operations as a brigade without the aircraft. The same authors postulate that, if the security forces had had six helicopters for each battalion committed, Confrontation might have ended a year earlier.¹⁹⁴

Another transport mode which proved of high value was the hovercraft. The SNR-5 could carry about 20 troops or two tons of equipment at a cruising speed of 50 knots. It proved of use in patrolling rivers and coastal areas, and for logistic support in those situations (particularly at night) when the helicopter was at a disadvantage.¹⁹⁵

In addition to the tactical problems caused by large operational areas, administrative problems abounded as well. Those battalions which were on 30-month tours in East Asia had to leave sizeable rear parties in their main bases in West Malaysia and Hong Kong while their main bodies were in Borneo. This, along with the abnormally large operational areas in Borneo proved to be too much for the existing battalion staffs, which had to be augmented. As a minimum, battalion staffs in Borneo usually included an adjutant, intelligence officer, helicopter tasking officer, operations and plans officer, quartermaster, and communications officer. The Battalion Second-in-Command was chief operations officer and was charged with coordinating the entire staff.¹⁹⁶

4. Security of Bases.

When he prepared his initial concept of the operation, General Walker recognized that the maintenance of base security presented a problem. Certainly bases had to be protected. But unfortunately, base security conflicted with one of Walker's prime operational concerns, domination of the jungle. If the major part of a unit were tied down guarding its base, the jungle domination mission was sure to fail. Walker wrote, "Unless Commanders take a firm stand, they can very soon have all their forces tied down defending their bases."¹⁹⁷

The security forces solved this paradox by a variety of innovative techniques. Perhaps most important, Walker determined not to tie down masses of infantry defending either forward bases or rear areas. He directed that every unit was to be responsible for its own security. He required that every man, regardless of his branch or whether he was deployed forward or in the rear, "had to be a potential front line infantry soldier."¹⁹⁸

The battalions in Borneo "adopted a fairly set pattern of defense behind the border."¹⁹⁹ The forward patrol base was the key. The bases were normally one to five kilometers from the border. They had two primary aims:²⁰⁰

1. To provide a springboard from which patrols could operate and a haven to which they could return, in comparative security, in order to receive a reasonable minimum of good administration (proper meals, showers, etc.), without imposing an undue strain on helicopter resources.

2. To provide protection for border villages and a focal point for the gathering of intelligence on the activities of the enemy on the other side of the border.

The company proved to be the optimum-sized unit for the forward bases along the border. A smaller contingent would have been too vulnerable to a determined ground attack and thus would have had to keep too many troops in place defending the base instead of patrolling. The bases were therefore generally designed for a permanent force of one infantry company plus its supporting artillery personnel, but could accommodate a second reinforcing company if required. In some cases, platoon-sized bases were used, but these allowed only about ten men to be patrolling. As soon as possible, these small bases were closed down.²⁰¹

When in camp, the troops slept protected by overhead cover and blast walls, and within easy reach of their fighting positions, which were manned at night with automatic weapons and mortars. Fighting positions were linked by field telephone to the base command post.

Another measure which allowed relatively small numbers of personnel to handle base security was the technique used for constructing forward bases. They were thoroughly dug in and had overhead cover. They were designed to be capable of being defended overnight by one third of the garrison against any potential attack, to include an enemy battalion supported by mortars, artillery, and Bangalore torpedoes. The rest of the garrison were to be offensively patrolling.²⁰² Infantry bases

on the frontier were to be used for rest between long patrols, not to be permanent installations from which occasional patrols might be launched. They were also not to serve as blocking positions. Such a mission would necessarily have failed because of the ease with which a static position could be avoided in the northern Borneo terrain.

Some of the difficulties of living in a border base for extended periods were listed by an artillery officer with extended Borneo experience. They included:²⁰³

1. The hot and humid climate in which cuts and grazes went rotten and skin disease was difficult to avoid.
2. Sleeping underground in the patrol bases with rats and snakes as bed mates.
3. Boredom when not firing the guns.
4. Crumbling field defenses.
5. Torrential rain.

Many commentators compare the forward base camps to the trenches of World War I, at least from the standpoint of austere living conditions. While the accommodations were by no account luxurious, the units did make attempts to improve conditions. For instance, hot showers were installed, which helped to alleviate the ever-present skin ailments.

Keeping the bases from being overrun by the jungle was a constant problem. Sandbags tended to last about 60 days. Attempts were made to extend their life by such means as applying a thin cement solution. Unfortunately, the only effective reinforcement was placing corrugated iron sheets around sandbag

structures.²⁰⁴

Boredom was also a problem in the border camps. It was estimated that in 1964, 95 per cent of patrols resulted in no tangible effect.²⁰⁵ The relatively short tours of duty helped, as did the practice of rotating troops between camps where this was possible, as in the case of artillery units. Rest and recuperation camps were established which did much for morale. For instance, the 4th Light Artillery Regiment camp near Kuching was located on a "Hawaiian-type" beach. The troops could "fish, swim, water ski, sleep, drink, and play most popular games."²⁰⁶ In the case of the 4th Artillery, the men spent about a week in the camp per quarter. At the forward bases, boredom was actively combatted by supplying the troops with radios, games, and a current and regular supply of books and magazines.

5. Domination of the Jungle.

If it can be said that there was a core ingredient of success in Confrontation around which the others revolved, then that core was domination of the jungle. Unity of command, intelligence, base security, speed, mobility, and flexibility, and winning the hearts and minds of the people would have meant nothing by themselves had they not supported domination of the jungle. The long border between East Malaysia and Kalimantan has been addressed repeatedly. The border frontages for which the four brigades were responsible were (from west to east) 181, 442, 267, and 81 miles respectively. Prior to January 1965,

when there were only three brigades, the frontage of the western brigade was 681 miles.²⁰⁷ One artillery battalion was deployed to cover a "front" slightly longer than that of the British Army of the Rhine and an area about the size of Wales.²⁰⁸ To the extent that Indonesian forces could move freely through this area, Confrontation would succeed. If they could be stopped by security forces, it would fail.

As noted earlier, jungle domination and base security appear to be inversely proportional, at least superficially. But this apparent dichotomy was dealt with effectively through the policy of building jungle bases so that they could be defended by one third of their complement. This left the other two thirds for ambushing and patrolling; in short, dominating the jungle. As General Walker put it:²⁰⁹

The enemy never knew where we were, and was always liable to be contacted and savaged.... Results could not be achieved merely by attacking and shooting the enemy and then returning to base. He had to be played at his own game, by living out in the jungle for weeks on end, by winning the hearts and minds of the people and by planting our own agents in villages known to be unfriendly. In these conditions, your base must be carried on your back.... The jungle has got to belong to you; you must own it; you must control and dominate it.

In 1965, Lieutenant Colonel J.A.I. Fillingham of the 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles wrote:²¹⁰

It is one thing to sit along the Indonesian border in well defended positions only venturing into the jungle on limited ambushes and patrols. Any worthwhile battalion dominates its area by ceaseless patrolling and ambushing, ever looking for a chance to bring the enemy to battle, and having done so, to harry and pursue him to the limit when he recrosses the border to lick his wounds.

The "ceaseless patrolling" of which Lieutenant Colonel Fillingham wrote had three objectives:²¹¹

1. Reconnaissance. To discover, with the help of experienced trackers, if certain routes had been recently used by the enemy and, if they had, to follow up these tracks and report on the enemy's movements.
2. Ambushing. To anticipate the enemy's likely movements, possibly based on information received in carrying out the first role, and to move into a position where an effective ambush could be laid.
3. Harassing. To destroy any enemy patrol or firm bases or bivouac areas which the enemy might be inclined to establish on our side of the border.

Patrols varied in strength from half a dozen men to a full company. The aim of the large patrols was either an ambush of a likely enemy route or, rarely, an assault on a large enemy camp where maximum firepower was required. The distance from the patrol's base varied, but patrols usually prepared for eight days in the jungle. The troops frequently had to remain in ambush positions for up to 72 hours under total light and noise discipline.²¹²

General Walker believed that the key to domination of the jungle was the fighting qualities of the individual soldier. His skills would have to compensate for the problems in providing fire support, both field artillery and tactical air.

Tough training and acclimatization were two of the factors which facilitated the patrolling required to dominate the jungle. Lieutenant Colonel Fillingham of the 10th Gurkha Rifles estimated that "at least four months hard training and acclimatization" were required before a unit could "be expected

to be fit to fight."¹¹³ Before being sent to Borneo, troops were acclimitized to the tropics and given a thorough tactical indoctrination. The chief facility involved was the Jungle Warfare School in South Johore, West Malaysia. During both Emergency and Confrontation, battalions entering Malaysia sent advance parties to the school to a six-week course which qualified them as unit instructors. When the battalion arrived, it entered a camp adjacent to the school for six weeks of training under the control of their advance party. The training included all aspects of operating in jungle terrain, including living off the land, patrolling, using local water craft, and tactics to company level. The school also ran courses for individual officer and noncommissioned officer replacements. It performed additional functions such as training dog handlers and providing travelling teams to introduce new weapons to units.²¹⁴

In addition to proper training of the troops in the rudiments of jungle operations before they set foot in Borneo, another problem was the adoption of equipment suitable to the environment. A primary concern was to lessen the amount of weight carried by the individual soldier. Unfortunately, this goal was not achieved until 1965. In that year, the infantry was issued the American Armalite Rifle AR-15 (a commercial version of the US Army's M-16). In addition, the 3-inch mortar was replaced by the Carl Gustav M2, a Swedish 84mm free flight rocket launcher capable of firing high explosive antitank, high explosive, smoke, and illumination rounds.²¹⁵ Finally, the

water-cooled Medium Machine Gun gave way to the much lighter General Purpose Machine Gun. The troops were also issued claymore mines, M79 grenade launchers, M26 hand grenades, unattended ground sensors, Australian light-weight jungle uniforms, and British and Gurkha light-weight rations.²¹⁶

One of the tactical problems involved in General Walker's policy of aggressive patrolling to dominate the jungle was his relative paucity of fire support. He had the equivalent of only two regiments of artillery, with component units from Britain, Malaysia, and Australia. As an illustration of the demands on the artillery elements, the 4th Light Artillery Regiment provided support to 14 maneuver battalions spread along the entire length of the Kalimantan border.²¹⁷ The problem was how to provide support to dozens of patrols spread over the huge area of operations. The answer was, like that for the allocation of critically short helicopters, forward deployment. Guns were posted to the forward infantry bases singly or in pairs. For example, 30 guns were deployed singly in forward bases over nearly 1,000 miles of border. To give flexibility to the fire support system, a few guns (for instance, one per battery in the 4th Light Artillery Regiment), were held in readiness to move at short notice to areas of the border not covered by the forward-deployed guns or to reinforce guns already in position.²¹⁸ In some of the forward bases where only one gun was permanently stationed, a "double bed" concept was used, in which preparations were made in advance for the reception and employment of a second gun should it be required.²¹⁹ The basic

weapon was the 105mm pack howitzer. It had the advantage of being transportable by helicopters equipped with slings. A gun, ammunition, and crew could be moved 20 miles to a new post in less than one hour with only one aircraft.²²⁰

The splitting of batteries into one and two-gun sections for maximum coverage presented the artillerymen with several challenges. First was the requirement to place more than normal responsibilities on junior leaders. All second lieutenants of artillery had to be proficient as Gun Post Officers and as Forward Observation Officers. Warrant officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted gunners also held these positions on occasion.

Command and control of widely-separated artillery elements also proved a problem. An artillery control net for all of northern Borneo was set up. Also, liaison visits were emphasized. During the 4th Light Artillery Regiment's nine-month tour of duty in 1965, their commander, Lieutenant Colonel R. Lyon, tried to make monthly visits to his supported brigades and all his gun positions.²²¹ In view of the size of the operational area, this was no small task. Another control measure was the Standing Operating Procedure. These were prepared in two parts. Part I was general data covering operations in all of Borneo, and Part II was tailored to the supported brigade's area.²²²

The employment of the guns, once in position, had to be tailored to the nature of both the conflict and the terrain. Gun pits were made as small and deep as practical due to the

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mortar threat. Normally, the pits were 20 feet in diameter and 5 feet 6 inches deep. If the gun had a direct fire role in the defense of its base, it was emplaced behind a wall of fuel drums filled with sand which could be moved as required. Rudimentary tables were developed which listed corrections based on air temperature for each gun position. As Colonel Lyon put it, "This was adequate in getting the first rounds in the middle of the parish, but it was much to 'hit or miss' for effective counter bombardment."²²³

The roles of the artillery were to provide support to patrols in the jungle and to cover with fire as much of the border as possible. Although the guns were, of course, used to defend their own bases or to provide support to neighboring bases under attack, defense was a secondary mission. Artillery was to be used offensively, to aid the infantry in their jungle domination mission.

A representative example of the employment of infantry and supporting elements to dominate the jungle was Operation Arrant, which occurred in extreme southwestern Sabah in January of 1964. On 23 January, a Border Scout patrol entered a platoon base at Long Pasia, about nine miles from the Indonesian frontier. The base was manned by 9 Platoon, 1st Battalion, The Royal Leicestershire Regiment. The Border Scouts reported finding an enemy camp for 200 men which had been occupied about two days earlier. The camp was near Long Miao, about three miles northeast of 9 Platoon's base. The scouts said that the trail signs indicated the enemy had left the camp heading north. Second

Lieutenant Michael Peele, Commander of 1st Battalion's 6 Platoon, was flown into Long Pasia with ten of his men. At Long Pasia they were formed into a patrol with eight men from 9 Platoon and two Border Scouts. The patrol left Long Pasia at 231745 hours and arrived at the deserted camp at 240900 January. They found tracks heading east rather than north. They followed these tracks, moving as rapidly as possibly and even abandoning their packs to permit moving faster. About 1030 hours, they found another camp which had held approximately 80 men. Indications were that this camp had been left about 24 hours earlier. Peele and his men moved out in pursuit again, and about two hours later heard three shots. A short while later they sighted two men at a distance of 75 yards. They believed these men were on the fringe of a camp spread along a stream. They suspected about 80-100 enemy to be present.

Lieutenant Peele decided to place an ambush on the opposite side of the camp before attacking from his current position. Nine men were given an hour to get into position. Meanwhile, the assault party under Peele crept toward the camp. After 20 minutes, by which time the assault force was only 40 yards from the camp, an unarmed enemy soldier stumbled into them. Recognizing that he had lost complete surprise, Peele ordered an immediate assault through the camp. The attackers were fired upon by one automatic weapon and a few rifles. The automatic weapon, a Browning Automatic Rifle, was accounted for by a coordinated reaction of Peele's troops, and the

attackers continued through the camp, which was about 200 meters long. A total of seven enemy were killed. Lieutenant Peele then had his men search the area, but they found no tracks. Most of the enemy force had apparently fled when the assault began.

A considerable amount of equipment was found, including weapons, ammunition, clothing, miscellaneous equipment, and 48 mess kits. The strength of the enemy detachment, based on the size of the camp and the materiel left behind, was 50-60 troops.

The patrol rendered the weapons unserviceable, hid the ammunition, searched the bodies and the area, and then returned to Long Pasia. The next day they again moved to the camp and blew a landing zone with explosives so that the captured materiel (weighing over 1,000 pounds) could be lifted out. Meanwhile, an S.A.S. patrol had been brought in to search for survivors of Lieutenant Peele's attack.²²⁴

Second Lieutenant Peele and his men showed what had to be done if the jungle was to be dominated. The mission was initiated with a minimum of preparation time. Once on the move, the patrol covered in six hours a distance which the Indonesians had covered in a minimum of two days.²²⁵ Peele formed his assault plan quickly and decisively. When it went awry through an unforeseeable occurrence, he had the mental quickness to adapt to the new situation and carry out the assault with commendable ferocity. Finally, comprehensive follow-up actions were taken.

6. Winning the Hearts and Minds of the People.

The "hearts and minds" idea was another development of Field Marshal Templer in the Malayan Emergency. General Walker adopted it to Borneo for one very practical reason. He saw winning popular support as "absolutely vital to the success of operations because, by winning over the people to your side, you can succeed in isolating your enemy from supplies, shelter, and intelligence."²²⁶ He might have added, of course, that local people could actively aid the security forces, particularly in the border area by providing information.

At all levels, Commonwealth Forces were encouraged to learn the language and customs of the indigenous peoples in their areas. In the case of the 2nd Battalion, 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles, visits were prearranged to Iban longhouses. The visitors would talk to the village headman, sometimes through an interpreter and sometimes in rudimentary Malay. The intent of the effort was to explain to the Ibans who the Gurkhas were and their reasons for being in Borneo. Recent Indonesian actions were discussed, as was the necessity for the curfew.²²⁷ Also, patrols were sent to live in some of the local villages, to gain the confidence of the people and to help to defend them. In General Walker's words:²²⁸

We set out to speak their language and respect their customs and religion. We sent small highly trained special air service-type patrols to live and work among them, to protect them and share their danger, to get to know them and gain their confidence. These troops were as friendly, understanding and patient to the villagers as they were tough and ruthless in the

jungle. We sought to give the villagers a feeling of security by day and night, through the presence of phantom patrols and through constant visits by the civil administration, the police and the army. We helped their agriculture, improved their communications and trading facilities, improved their water supply, provided medical clinics and a flying doctor service, established schools, provided transistor wireless sets and attractive programmes, and so on.

It was recognized that, unless villages along the border could be secure day and night from Indonesian intruders, they could be intimidated into providing the enemy aid. Although an armed patrol could not be posted in every village, frequent visits could be made, not only by soldiers, but by police and civil administrators as well. These visits had several purposes, two of which were to "encourage the loyal to give information and to discourage the few disloyal from doing anything that would disturb the uneasy peace."²²⁹

Units near settlements did a great deal of civic action work. The British troops got along well with the Ibans. They profitted from the residual colonial relationship, by which Europeans were expected to be helpers and advisors.²³⁰ Agricultural advice was given, water supplies were improved, schools were established, and medical treatment was provided, to list only a few projects.²³¹

The Ibans took to modern technology, particularly the helicopter, with considerable gusto. In one case in the Third Division of Sarawak, a child was named Helicopter, having been born healthy through the assistance of a Royal Navy flying medic.²³²

As important as was improving the lives of the indigenous

people, saving their lives, especially from friendly fires, was a good deal more important. Walker wrote that his command "went to any length to keep our hands clean.... One civilian killed by us would do more harm than ten killed by the enemy."²³³ The security measures employed for friendly tactical air and artillery were made as air tight as possible. When contact was made with the enemy, efforts were taken to see that retribution could not be taken on the nearest village. It was seen as an absolute necessity that the enemy not be permitted to capture a village and fortify it. This would have meant a pitched battle to expel him, with great loss of civilian life and property. In a lightly veiled reference to the American effort in Vietnam, General Walker wrote, "If the price a village had to pay for its liberation from the enemy was to be its own destruction, then the campaign for hearts and minds would never have been won."²³⁴

END NOTES

169. Hall, P.G. "The Jungle Warfare School." The Infantryman, Number 82, November 1966, p. 45.
170. James and Sheil-Small, op. cit., p. 46.
171. Walker, op. cit., p. 8.
172. Ibid.
173. Ibid., p. 14.
174. James and Sheil-Small, op. cit., p. 46.
175. Ibid., p. 10.
176. "Reflections on Borneo", p. 24.
177. Walker, op. cit., p. 7.
178. Ibid., p. 14.
179. James and Sheil-Small, op. cit., p. 66.
180. "S.A.S.", The Infantryman, Number 83, November 1967, p. 54.
181. Ibid., p. 55.
182. James and Sheil-Small, op. cit., p. 67.
183. Ibid.
184. Ibid.
185. Walker, op. cit., p. 14.
186. James and Sheil-Small, op. cit., pp. 67-70.
187. "Reflections on Borneo", p. 15.
188. Badger, P.E.B. "Tigers in the Jungle." The Infantryman, Number 80, October 1964, p. 53.

189. Ibid., p. 51.
190. Walker, op. cit., p. 9.
191. Ibid., p. 8.
192. Ibid.
193. "Reflections on Borneo", p. 14.
194. James and Sheil-Small, op. cit., pp. 86-87.
195. Walker, op. cit., p. 10.
196. "Reflections on Borneo", p. 22.
197. Walker, op. cit., p. 10.
198. Ibid.
199. "Reflections on Borneo", p. 14.
200. Ibid.
201. Ibid.
202. Walker, op. cit., p. 10.
203. Lyon, R. "Borneo Reflections." British Army Review, Number 23, August 1966, p. 78.
204. Ibid.
205. Holworthy, Richard. "Keeping the Borneo Peace-1964." The Infantryman, Number 80, October 1964, p. 31.
206. Lyon, op. cit., p. 78.
207. Walker, op. cit., p. 9.
208. Badger, op. cit., p. 49.
209. Walker, op. cit., p. 10.
210. Fillingham, J.A.I. "Operations in Sarawak." British Army Review, Number 21, October 1965, p. 13.
211. "Reflections on Borneo", p. 16.
212. Ibid.
213. Fillingham, op. cit., p. 19.
214. Hall, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

215. Brassey's Infantry Weapons of the World 1975. London: Brassey's Naval and Shipping Annual Limited, 1975, pp. 167-168.
216. Walker, op. cit., p. 11.
217. Lyon, op. cit., p. 72.
218. Ibid.
219. Ibid., p. 73.
220. Walker, op. cit., p. 11.
221. Lyon, op. cit., p. 74.
222. Ibid.
223. Ibid., p. 76.
224. Badger, op. cit., pp. 54-56.
225. Ibid., p. 56.
226. Walker, op. cit., p. 8.
227. Mayman, L. "Company Operations in Sarawak." British Army Review, Number 19, October 1964, p. 23.
228. Walker, op. cit., pp. 8-9.
229. Holworthy, op. cit., p. 28.
230. Ibid., p. 29.
231. Walker, op. cit., pp. 8-9.
232. Holworthy, op. cit., p. 30.
233. Walker, op. cit., p. 9.
234. Ibid.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS

General Walker's conduct of the Commonwealth's reaction to Confrontation constitutes a textbook case of how guerrilla warfare can be dealt with effectively, and with a relatively small expenditure of lives and money. Although total casualty figures are elusive, on 26 July 1968, the United Kingdom Ministry of Defense issued the following breakout of personnel killed:235

<u>UNITED KINGDOM</u>	
<u>Army</u>	32
<u>Royal Marines</u>	13
<u>Gurkhas</u>	47
<u>AUSTRALIA</u>	
	2
<u>TOTAL</u>	94

Malaysian troops killed in action are estimated at about 100.

It is evident that General Walker's initial estimate of the six ingredients of success was correct. He stressed all six throughout his tenure as Commander, British Forces Borneo, and later Director of Operations. If a single key to success were to be isolated, it would surely be domination of the jungle. The other five ingredients certainly contributed mightily to victory, but, in the final analysis,

aggressive patrolling beat the invaders at their own game. As General Walker himself put it:²³⁶

The jungle belonged to us.
We owned it-we dominated it-we conquered it.

Whenever a successful military operation is examined, there is a natural and proper tendency to try to condense lessons which can be applied to similar situations in the future. Before attempting this for Confrontation, certain facts should be listed which make the operation in Borneo unique and which should be considered before trying to apply lessons learned to future conflicts.

1. Generally, the civil populace in northern Borneo was on the side of the Commonwealth forces. Although a large Clandestine Communist Organization existed, friendly forces could generally expect cooperation from civilians.
2. The Clandestine Communist Organization was not a major threat. This allowed friendly units to concentrate on dominating the jungle.
3. The border area was very lightly populated, which kept the enemy from hiding among the local population.
4. The civil administration, including the police, in East Malaysia were generally dedicated and honest. Corruption was not a significant problem.
5. The Director of Operations was in effective control of all anti-Indonesian efforts. While he was not a "governor", he could use his influence (both locally and in Kuala Lumpur) to encourage the East Malaysian governments to cooperate fully with him. It should be noted, however, that General Walker's emphasis on coordination generally made it unnecessary to resort to using political leverage to compel "cooperation."
6. The Commonwealth forces in Borneo were highly trained professionals. Many officers and noncommissioned

officers had previous jungle warfare experience in Malaya and Burma, and the enlisted men were on four to six-year tours in the service.

7. Indonesian incursions were small, never larger than company-size. A counter point to this comment is the argument that the Indonesian raids never exceeded company strength because the raids at that size and smaller were never able to succeed. The threat was never able to develop. Indonesian forces never got a foothold in East Malaysia.

In spite of the unique conditions listed above, there certainly are lessons to be drawn from the Borneo experience. These lessons revolve, as might be expected, around the six ingredients of success:

1. Unified Operations.
2. Timely and Accurate Information.
3. Speed, Mobility, and Flexibility.
4. Security of Bases.
5. Domination of the Jungle.
6. Winning the Hearts and Minds of the People.

These principles are, of course, extremely general. They do not give future commanders specific guidance for every new situation, nor should they. Instead, they are one successful commander's concept of the operation. They are valuable not because there is a shortage of concepts for combatting low intensity threats, but because there is a decided shortage of successful commanders, at least in this field.

Unfortunately, it is all too easy to study a successful campaign and to select and set in concrete a Golden Rule, Six

Ingredients of Success, or, for that matter, Ten Commandments. What are needed in the future, as in the past, are not hard and fast rules to be followed rigidly as a substitute for original thought, but the quickness and flexibility of mind, based on study and experience, which allowed General Walker to develop his ingredients of success and then to manage the Borneo operation so successfully.

Perhaps the most succinct evaluation of the campaign in East Malaysia was made by Mr. Denis Healey, formerly United Kingdom Secretary of State for Defense. On 27 November 1967, Mr. Healey said in the House of Commons:²³⁷

When the House thinks of the tragedy that could have fallen on a whole corner of a Continent if we had not been able to hold the situation and bring it to a successful termination, it will appreciate that in the history books it will be recorded as one of the most efficient uses of military force in the history of the world.

END NOTES

- 235. Hawkins, op. cit., p. 26.
- 236. James and Sheil-Small, op. cit., p. 130.
- 237. Walker, op. cit., p. 15.

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