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# The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organization of A Successful Counterinsurgency Effort

R. W. Komer

A Report prepared for

ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY

Rand
SANTA MONICA, CA. 90406

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## PREFACE

This Report, done under the sponsorship of the Advanced Research Projects Agency of the Department of Defense, is one of several case studies on the organization and management of counter-insurgency efforts in Southeast Asia. It does not attempt to give a full historical review or rounded treatment of its subject. Rather, it focuses on the structure and control -- and their effect on policy and performance -- of an actual counterinsurgency effort. Its purpose is to determine what lessons of future value the U.S. military establishment may learn from that effort.

Why another look at the Malayan insurgency? The case of Malaya, in which the United States did not play a role, is instructive as an example of how another Western power dealt with a serious insurgency, quite successfully as it turned out. Despite some notable differences, the similarities between Malaya and other Southeast Asian insurgencies are sufficient to make a comparative analysis worthwhile. Indeed, with the wisdom of hindsight, the Malayan experience seems even more relevant in the light of our own more costly and dubious experience in Vietnam. Also, as Sir Robert Thompson has aptly said, "Many Americans made studies of the British experience in Malaya, but these were largely superficial and confined to particular aspects of the campaign. It was never comprehended as a whole. . . ."*

A briefing based on this study has been given to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Systems Analysis) and other OSD officials, and to CINCPAC staff, at the Army War College, at the Armed Forces Staff College, at the Command and General Staff School, etc. Lessons from the study have been widely discussed with other Defense officials and State officials.

A related Rand study is Douglas S. Blaufarb's R-919-ARPA, *Organizing and Managing Unconventional War in Laos, 1962-1970* (U), January 1972, Secret.

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**No Exit from Vietnam,* Chatto and Windus, London, 1969, p. 131.

## SUMMARY

What seems most striking in retrospect about the experience of the British and Malayan governments in containing and ultimately defeating the Communist insurgency in Malaya is the wide range of civil and military programs tied together by unified management into a successful counterinsurgency (C-I) response. Though many mistakes were made in the early years and the whole process took from 1948 to 1960, the United Kingdom and the Government of Malaya (U.K./GOM) gradually evolved what stands out as an almost classic "long-haul low-cost" strategy well adapted to the problem they confronted.

Of course, such an approach was made feasible by several weaknesses of the insurgency, not least the fact that it was confined to the ethnic Chinese element of Malaya's polyglot population and even unable to gain popular support from more than part of this minority group. Also, it lacked any external aid. In coping with the insurgency the U.K./GOM had several advantages on which they shrewdly capitalized -- among them a viable politico-administrative structure and close British/Malayan ties. But in the early years (1948-1952) the contest was by no means so unequal as all this might suggest; the U.K./GOM response was quite inadequate, and it looked as though they were losing. By 1954, however, the insurgency was clearly on the wane, and the next six years were mainly a painstaking mopping up.

Notably, the Malayan C-I approach was *not* primarily military. Instead, the U.K./GOM employed a mixed strategy encompassing civil, police, military, and psychological warfare programs, all within the context of a firm rule of law and steady progress toward self-government and independence, which robbed the insurgency of much political appeal. At all times the police and the paramilitary forces under their aegis far outnumbered the military and took more casualties. There was comparatively little use of airpower and artillery (which cost so much in Vietnam). Intelligence was provided mostly by Police Special Branch, whose signal contribution to the C-I success was out of all proportion to its small size.

Through a process of trial and error, the U.K./GOM came to put primary emphasis on breaking the guerrillas' links to their popular base. While offensive small-unit operations to destroy or drive back the guerrilla bands into the deep jungle played an indispensable role, the great bulk of U.K./GOM resources (even much of the military effort) at any given time was devoted to protecting the populated areas and clamping down on the flow of supplies and recruits to the guerrillas. Crucial to this end were the extensive resettlement of half a million ethnic Chinese squatters, pervasive food controls and food-denial operations, and tough population controls. As the other side of a carrot-and-stick approach the U.K./GOM undertook a variety of political, economic, and social measures, accompanied by an information campaign, to win "hearts and minds."

All this was pulled together, once the need was realized, by an unusual, unified civil-military command structure. Using the well-known British "committee" system, the war was managed by a network of war executive committees extending from the top down to district level. Territorially organized, this system paralleled -- indeed was part of -- the existing civil administrative structure. It was headed by civilians, even though military men often played dual roles in the top slots. It was also a combined British-Malayan structure from the outset and became progressively more Malayanized, although the British held most of the top jobs until 1956. An important feature from 1950 on was a single Director of Operations who had operational control over the C-I effort.

The British and Malayans also deserve high marks for flexibility and adaptiveness over time. When the initial C-I effort of 1948-1950 proved inadequate, confused, and undermanaged, they brought in General Briggs as single Director of Operations; this reorganization under the "Briggs Plan" became the chief blueprint for victory. They then further unified the top management under General Templer's dynamic leadership in 1952-1954. Meanwhile the whole command structure was being Malayanized in anticipation of independence. By 1956, there were only 1,800 Europeans in a civil service of over 160,000.

Among the many C-I innovations introduced in Malaya were the widely publicized reward-for-surrender programs, imaginative exploitation of surrendered insurgents, use of police jungle squads, and food-denial operations.

By utilizing local civil and police resources as much as possible, and through effective administration and unified management, the British and Malayans were able to achieve success at remarkably low cost. It took twelve years, but it cost less than $800 million in all, and could mostly be funded from Malaya's own tin and rubber export revenues. Of course, U.K./GOM success in containing the insurgency's growth by 1951-1952 facilitated this type of long-haul response. But its cost effectiveness also resulted from the integrated use of a wide range of relatively cheap nonmilitary resources.

It is instructive to compare the Malayan C-I effort with the U.S. approach in Vietnam, although numerous differences make for a very imperfect analogy, particularly as the Vietnamese insurgency grew to massive proportions and had superimposed upon it a quasi-conventional war. Among the notable differences between the two insurgencies were the level of outside support, the use of external sanctuaries, and the fact that the British controlled Malaya during 1948-1957 whereas the United States has been allied to a xenophobic foreign regime. Thus the most valid comparison would be between Malaya 1948-1954 and Vietnam 1958-1962 (when the latter was still essentially a rural-based insurgency).

Yet the way in which the U.K./GOM learned from their mistakes and gradually evolved a mixed civil-military counterinsurgency strategy well adapted to the threat offers lessons of wider applicability -- even to Vietnam. In particular, Malaya has much to offer in showing how to pull together multinational and multifaceted civil-military programs for an optimum counterinsurgency response. Unified management made a crucial difference in Malaya. Lack of it -- granted that the obstacles were far greater -- was a serious handicap in Vietnam.

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# I. THE INSURGENT MOVEMENT

Like many other insurgent movements in Asian colonies of the Western powers, the Malayan insurgency grew out of one of those anticolonial movements of the 1920s which took the Russian Revolution as their source of inspiration. But from the outset the Communist movement in Malaya was almost exclusively drawn from the ethnic Chinese minority. It never gained much support from the Malay or Indian elements of Malaya's polyglot society, which critically limited its appeal.

## A. THE SEEDS OF CONFLICT: 1925-1941

A South Seas (Nanyang) Communist Party, described as "the overseas branch of the Chinese Communist Party," was formed in 1925, and a parallel labor organization was formed one year later. However, these two groups made little progress in winning popular support, and their seeming ineffectiveness prompted the Comintern to reorganize them in April 1930 as the *Malayan Communist Party* (MCP) and *Malayan General Labor Union* (MGLU). The Comintern was represented in the conference by a Nguyen Ai Quoc, who later became known as Ho Chi Minh. His role in the proceedings was reported to have been decisive.[1]

The newly founded party soon suffered a serious setback. In 1933 at least two of its leaders were arrested and the Comintern organization which supported it was destroyed.[2] But within a few years the party revived, particularly among Chinese students. The MGLU became the most powerful labor organization in the country and led a successful series of strikes in 1936 and 1937. MGLU-led strikes at the Batu Arang coal mines in 1937, which led to the temporary establishment of a "Soviet" government of workers, constituted "the most serious crisis" to date in the colony's history.[3]

After 1937 the rising threat from Japan brought about a gradual shift in MCP policies. Since it drew almost all of its support from the Chinese community in Singapore, its policies became increasingly shaped by the deepening Japanese penetration of China. Unlike some other Asian Communist parties (notably those of Indochina and the Philippines), the MCP did not carry its anti-Japanese policy to the point

of open collaboration with the Western colonial administrators. But it inevitably became increasingly involved in national, as opposed to exclusively labor, issues. As early as June 1940 it shifted its stance to support Britain's aid to China. The MCP's new "united front" policy paid off handsomely in terms of popularity. According to one British estimate, its following more than quadrupled between 1934 and 1940 to a total of more than 50,000 (including 1,700 MCP members), giving it a formidable base for its wartime operations.

After the German attack on the USSR, the MCP -- like other Communist parties -- quickly abandoned its overtly anti-British position, and went so far as to offer its assistance to the colonial administration -- an offer which the British rejected. According to Government of Malaya (GOM) records, however, the MCP's support of a "united front" against the Japanese was only one prong of a two-pronged policy. In secret documents circulated among its higher leadership, it reaffirmed its objective of expelling the British as soon as possible or, if the Japanese invaded the country, supporting an anti-Japanese front only as a means of extending its influence.[4]

## B. BETWEEN HAMMER AND ANVIL: 1941-1945

With the Japanese invasion of Malaya, the MCP found its prospects being rapidly transformed. It proposed that the Chinese community be permitted to form a military force -- armed by the British -- to fight the Japanese. The Governor of Malaya initially rejected this offer. But as the military situation deteriorated, he reversed his decision and even sanctioned the release from jail of those political prisoners whom the MCP chose to name. A few days later the first class of Chinese students began to study guerrilla warfare at the 101 Special Training School.[5]

The period of collaboration lasted no more than two months. With the surrender of the British Forces in Singapore on February 15, 1942, all active resistance in Malaya ended for the time being. The MCP's top leadership narrowly escaped from Singapore after its fall and set up headquarters in nearby Johore; some of its members were captured by Japanese forces late in 1942, but its senior leadership remained

substantially intact. Long before the British were able to place their stay-behind operations on an organized basis, the MCP formed the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). It later won official U.K. and U.S. recognition as the foremost resistance organization behind the Japanese lines.

In 1943 the MCP Central Committee drew up its first wartime statement of policy, favoring such traditional objectives as the guarantee of civil liberties and free vernacular education. It ended with a call for Malayans to "unite with Soviet Russia and China to support the independence of the weak and small races in the Far East, and to aid the people of Japan in their anti-Fascist struggle." The restoration of British rule clearly had no part in the MCP's agenda, but this was soft-pedaled for the time being.

In 1943 the MPAJA established liaison with Force 136, the component of the British Special Operations Executive responsible for clandestine operations. In 1944, when new Liberator bombers brought Malaya within range of Allied support, supplies and personnel were parachuted into MPAJA bases in increasing quantities.[6] According to one estimate, "over 500 liaison personnel and more than a million and a half pounds of equipment were flown into Malaya during the last eight months of the war."[7] Many drops went astray and much equipment apparently disappeared into secret caches for postwar use. Supreme Allied Command South-East Asia was fully aware of the probable consequences of the military buildup of a highly politicized army under Communist or pro-Communist control. But as British planners expected heavy fighting to precede the liberation of Malaya, military considerations were accorded precedence in the shaping of high policy.[8] However, Japan's capitulation brought an end to the war without large-scale fighting.

Predictably, estimates of the MPAJA's actual military efforts vary widely. One Soviet source estimates the combined strength of the MCP and MPAJA at 10,000 in 1945; another Soviet source states that 10,000 Japanese troops were killed by the guerrillas. Malayan government sources, however, estimated the size of the guerrilla force at only 6,500, while their chief, Loi Tek, claimed no more than 2,000 MCP members at the end of 1946 -- a figure only marginally higher than the

prewar estimates. Whatever truth there may be in these figures, it is clear that compared to other guerrilla movements in both Europe and Asia, the MPAJA did not rank very high in offensive action.[9] The simplest explanation of its relative inactivity may be that it was confident that the issue of Japan's defeat would be decided in other theaters of the war, and that it could best serve its long-term interests by husbanding its strength for the power struggle which would inevitably follow the Japanese surrender.

## C. RISING TIDE OF VIOLENCE: 1945-1948

In late 1945 Malaya was "somewhat of a shambles."[10] The end of the war came far more swiftly than anyone expected. On September 5, 1945, thirty days after the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, the British East Indies Fleet landed British-Indian forces at Singapore. The British then moved to reestablish their control of the country. Finding that the MPAJA had established *de facto* control of many areas, they decided to accord the guerrillas official military status, place them under military command, clothe and ration them -- and pay them $30 (Malayan) per month. To cast the net as wide as possible, these arrangements were offered not only to known members of the MPAJA but to anyone who could plausibly claim to have joined it.[11] Impressive ceremonies were held in which the MPAJA marched alongside Commonwealth troops, and its members were awarded medals; one of its outstanding leaders, Chin Peng, was invited to London to participate in the victory celebrations, and awarded the Order of the British Empire.[12]

The British Military Government than began negotiations aimed at convincing the MPAJA leaders that negotiations, disbandment, and disarmament on agreed terms offered them a better future than returning to the jungle to continue their guerrilla war. The MPAJA leaders, on the other hand, clearly hoped to win such concessions from the British as would accord their army either *de jure* or *de facto* status as a permanent military force to augment (or replace) the Malaya Regiment. However, they soon realized that this objective was beyond their reach, and that hard bargaining over the terms of disbandment offered better prospects than did a renewal of insurgent warfare.

While the British were eager to collect all weapons dropped to the guerrillas, their required surrender was not too painful to the MPAJA. The country by then was saturated with a great variety of arms, and those turned in could be readily replaced by others. In some areas the MPAJA turned in more arms than had been issued to them. But more popular weapons, such as Sten guns, carbines, pistols, and revolvers were undoubtedly held back.[13] As soon as the MPAJA officially disbanded, the MCP replaced it with a number of front organizations of a traditional Communist character.

During 1945-1948 the MCP -- now legalized and its prestige grown from its wartime role -- switched its effort to labor agitation and strikes in an attempt to bring down the government. By gaining control of the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions and affiliated federations, it won substantial domination over the burgeoning Malayan trade union movement. By the end of 1945 there were 90 registered unions, and 291 more applications on file. A year later, they had grown to 289 unions, with 101 more applying.[14] Strikes became both more bitter and more frequent. In 1947 there were 291, involving 69,000 men and the loss of nearly 700,000 man-days.[15] In May 1948 alone, the number of man-days lost rose to 178,500 (or an annual rate of more than two million), while 117 of the 289 registered unions were officially regarded as controlled by the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions (or the MCP), leaving 86 independent of such control, and 86 doubtful.[16] It seemed that the day was not far off when the MCP would be able to extend its control to the other unions and command a position of overriding power in the economy.

The MCP also turned its attention to terror. During the twenty-seven months between October 1945 and December 1947, there were 191 murders and abductions by insurgents; during only the first six months of 1948, there were 107.[17] In the first week of June 1948, 7 persons were killed and 10 wounded in a riot involving only 200 people. An atmosphere of bitterness and defiance grew rapidly.[18] The challenge could not be postponed for long.

The exact date when the MCP decided to move to open insurgency may never be known. Having failed to seize power in 1945, its leaders were no doubt anxious to recover lost ground. Certainly their actions

suggest that from early or mid-1947 on they were doing all they could to force the crisis. But in February 1948 they either received new instructions or had older ones confirmed. It is now widely assumed that a Cominform conference which brought together in Calcutta representatives of most Asian Communist parties served as the forum in which plans were laid for the insurrections that broke out soon afterward, notably in Burma (March), Malaya (June), the Philippines (August), and Indochina (September). Whether or not this interpretation is correct, the decision for insurrection was soon ratified by the MCP Central Executive Committee in March.[19] On June 19, under considerable pressure from the planters -- after three of them were killed in one incident -- the Federation in turn declared a "State of Emergency."[20] Captured documents showed later that the MCP leaders hoped to declare a Communist Republic of Malaya on August 3, 1948.[21]

## D. FACTORS FAVORING THE INSURGENCY

Continuing postwar disruption had created a climate conducive to insurgency. Neither the government nor the economy had yet recovered from the harsh effects of wartime occupation. The political future of Malaya was uncertain, the administrative structure was still undermanned, the security forces were weak and understrength. Crime and banditry were rife, and some rural areas still under virtual MCP control.

Equally important, the insurgents had a popular base among Malaya's large and unassimilated ethnic Chinese minority (some 38 percent of its population). Most of these Chinese were apolitical in the Western sense. They lived as a group apart, and were not even represented in Malaya's exclusively Malayan political structure, though this had been attempted in the short-lived Malayan Union of 1946-1948 (see Section VIII). Few Chinese had entered government service or the security forces; for example, in 1948 there were only 228 Chinese in the 10,000-man police force.[22] Chinese merchants dominated Malayan commercial life, though most of the rural Chinese worked as rubber tappers or tin miners in Malaya's two chief industries. However, the MCP by no means enjoyed the backing of the whole Chinese community. Most were probably fence sitters, whereas others actively supported the rival Nationalist Chinese Kuomintang.

But the MCP could draw on one group in particular. Severe wartime and postwar economic dislocation, especially unemployment and food shortages (Malaya had long been a food deficit area), had led about half a million Chinese to become "squatters" on fallow land along the jungle fringe in the countryside. Here they grew their own food so that they could survive. These squatters lived largely outside the ambit of slowly reviving GOM administration. In the postwar confusion, MCP power had flowed into this vacuum. The squatters became a main source of insurgent recruitment (along with students from the Chinese private schools), and the source of most of its logistic support. Some 70 percent of total guerrilla strength -- especially as the old wartime resistance fighters were killed off -- reportedly came from the laborers and squatters along the jungle fringe.

Last among the insurgent advantages was that Malaya was about 80 percent thick jungle. Even many of the rubber estates had become disused and overgrown during the war. Thus the guerrillas could find relatively secure jungle bases close to the population for the type of Maoist rural insurgency the MCP now launched. It was the jungle's protection which permitted the guerrillas to survive so long after their hopes of a takeover had vanished.

## E. THE PATTERN OF INSURGENT ORGANIZATION

In typical Communist style, the insurgent organization consisted of far more than the guerrilla/terrorists who were its cutting edge. An elaborate organization pattern evolved on a territorial basis, largely paralleling that of the GOM. Directing the insurgency was the clandestine Malayan Communist Party (it had been outlawed again in 1948). Its structure included a Federation-level central committee, three regional bureaus, ten state committees, and fifty district committees, each of which controlled about four branch committees. This territorial pattern was doubly significant because it helped shape the U.K./GOM response.

The party structure controlled the guerrilla "army"; normally the same key people served as both party leaders and guerrilla officers, especially as attrition took its toll. A state committee usually

provided the command and staff for a guerrilla regiment, of which ten existed by 1950. They operated not as regiments, however, but typically as district companies and branch platoons (and later in much smaller groups).

The size of these active forces was badly underestimated in the early years; the best guess is that they numbered about 12,000 in 1948. British intelligence believed that about 60 percent of the old wartime guerrillas, many of whom had stayed in the jungle, rejoined what later was renamed the "Malayan Races Liberation Army" (MRLA), and provided most of its officers. The insurgents were equipped mostly with rifles, pistols, and light automatic weapons, largely from wartime British supply drops. Few mortars were ever found. They also lacked radio, which made them highly dependent on very slow courier communication -- a crucial handicap as time passed because the security forces could react much more quickly than the guerrillas could coordinate.

Supporting the guerrillas was the *Min Yuen* (or People's Movement) organized clandestinely cell by cell, largely in the Chinese squatter villages. It provided the link between the guerrillas and their popular base, supplying food, drugs, information, recruits, and money -- largely by coercion and extortion among the Chinese community. The Min Yuen was not composed of Communist Party members, and was linked to the MCP only through the lowest echelon branch committee. The British estimated in 1952 that active working members of this separate logistic structure numbered about 11,000 (of whom 3,500 to 4,000 were armed).[23] By this time a more specialized group of ten-man "Armed Work Force" sections had been formed from the guerrillas themselves as well as from the Min Yuen to handle the increasingly difficult task of linking the guerrillas with their sympathizers. They worked for the district committees.

The Min Yuen, and related groups such as the Armed Work Force, Self-Protection Corps, and later the Masses Executives, played a crucial role. Gradually these support groups became larger than the guerrilla force itself; indeed, the latter eventually had to be drained to stiffen up the former so that the guerrillas might survive. Without them the guerrillas could not have survived for so long, since relatively little aid was even received from outside Malaya and Singapore.

Over time it was U.K./GOM success in separating the active insurgents from this support which reduced the insurgency to minor proportions.[24]

## F. COURSE OF THE INSURGENT MOVEMENT, 1948-1960

By the time the GOM declared an Emergency in June 1948, the terrorist campaign was already in full swing. The wartime guerrillas had been recalled and regrouped in the jungle to operate largely against the rubber estates along the jungle fringe and the tin mines. Apparently the insurgents hoped to disrupt the key rubber and tin industries on which Malaya's whole economy depended. Administrative dislocation and the sheer terrorization of the population were other aims.* Incidents rose rapidly. The MRLA initially organized eight regiments, but operated in these early days largely in company groups of about one hundred. The MCP seemed prepared for an early mass uprising.

When it did not occur and the opposing security forces grew, a lull set in in 1949 while the insurgents withdrew to the deep jungle to regroup and rethink. Recognizing that an early mass revolt was no longer in the cards, their leadership decided on a more systematic strategy of classic Maoist pattern. It was to gain control of selected rural "liberated" areas by destroying the local government structure village by village through terrorism and attacks on local police posts.[25] The people in these areas would then be used to flesh out an organized guerrilla army, which in the final phase would move out of the liberated areas to take over progressively the whole country. Insurgent "incidents" again rose sharply in late 1949 and 1950. They reached their highest intensity between July 1950 and the end of December 1951. Perhaps their symbolic high point was the assassination of British High Commissioner Sir Henry Gurney in October 1951.

But the gathering U.K./GOM response, reflected in a steep rise in security force contacts and kills after July 1951, was already forcing the insurgent hand. In October, even before Gurney's death, the MCP

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*That terror was a major technique is shown by the fact that the 4,668 civilian casualties in 1948-1960 exceeded the number of security force casualties (4,425). Some 1,055 civilians were killed or wounded in the peak year of 1950 alone.

leaders directed an end to indiscriminate terror against civilians, which they found was alienating the very people on whom they depended for support, in favor of much more selective targeting. This MCP Politburo directive of October 1951 (not captured by the British until late 1952) was a tacit admission that the 1948 policy of quick takeover had failed.[26]

By this time, however, the insurgency had passed its peak, as reflected in the estimated decline in guerrilla strength from 12,000 in 1948 to something over 7,000 in 1951 and to only about 2,000 in 1957. Insurgent-created incidents dropped sharply from 450-500 a month in the period July 1950-December 1951 to around 100 a month by early 1953. Guerrilla casualties also told the tale, rising sharply to 70-100 a month by December 1950 and staying there till December 1953.

That the MCP knew the insurgency to be hopeless was evident when in late 1955 MCP leader Chin Peng made overtures for peace. The GOM, now led by Tungku Abdul Rahman as Chief Minister, offered full amnesty, but involved negotiations foundered on the GOM's refusal to accept Chin Peng's bedrock condition of legal status for the MCP. However, continued pressures and GOM amnesty offers produced some substantial mass surrenders in 1957-1958. By 1960 guerrilla strength and activity had declined so much that in July the Emergency was declared officially over. During the twelve years 1948-1960 the insurgents had lost 6,710 killed, 1,287 captured, and 2,702 surrendered -- a total of 10,699.

## II. MAIN LINES OF THE BRITISH/MALAYAN RESPONSE

Though Britain and Malaya had been slow to appreciate the purpose behind the rising tide of violence in 1947-1948 and their initial response was confused and inadequate, they gradually evolved a long-haul, relatively low-cost strategy which proved successful over time. Through a process of trial and error, they slowly managed to separate the guerrillas from their support among the people and eventually to reduce the guerrillas themselves to a remnant. Such a response was facilitated by the insurgency's limited scope and lack of external support. But it was also as much a product of necessity as of design -- severe financial limitations almost dictated a low-cost approach.

What makes the U.K./GOM response most notable is the multifaceted techniques employed -- utilizing all available civil and military assets -- and the degree of flexibility in its adaptation to the nature of the insurgent threat. It was not primarily a military effort but rather one in which the military played only a limited though indispensable role. Even in its security aspects, it was as much a police as a military operation.

### A. FACTORS SHAPING THE RESPONSE

We have already noted several factors tending to favor the insurgency. Another was the *initial weakness of the security forces*. In March 1948 there were 30,000 troops in Malaya and Singapore, but only 11,500 in Malaya itself, of which but 5,800 were combat troops. The understrength police numbered only 10,000. Hence, police and troops together were not much stronger than the 12,000 guerrillas plus their Min Yuen support organization, especially when one considers that most policemen and many troops were tied down on static defense or routine law-and-order tasks. Also, almost no intelligence network directed at the insurgents existed at the time.

On the other hand, the British had several important factors working for them from the outset, on which they shrewdly capitalized. All were factors notably lacking in the U.S. experience in South Vietnam:

## 1. British-Malayan Ties

Not least among them were the long experience of the British in Malaya, their knowledge of the country, their control or influence over the local government, and traditional local respect for impartial justice under rule of law -- a strong suit of British-trained local administrations. But as Sunderland remarks, "this was not a situation . . . in which British administrators were giving orders to a subservient oriental population." Rather, "persuasion and negotiation were the order of the day,"[1] while the Federation was headed by a U.K. High Commissioner assisted by an appointed Legislative Council, much power was reserved to the sultans of the nine semisovereign Malay states, which had mostly Malayan administrations. Only the two "straits settlements" of Penang and Malacca were directly U.K.-governed.

## 2. A Viable Administrative Structure

Also important was the framework of accepted civil administration which existed, though unwieldy and decentralized because of the mixture of quasi-autonomous Malay states and settlements. The federal administration handled defense, foreign affairs, commerce, communications, finance, and the judiciary. All else was administered by the states and settlements. Under them came 71 districts.[2] All levels were jointly staffed by British and Malays, with an increasing proportion of the latter as time passed. However, both army and police had mostly British officers.

A tiny elite, the Malayan Civil Service of 300-320 highly selected senior members (36 of them Malayan in 1948), held the key administrative posts, including that of District Officer. Below it came the Malayan Public Service, consisting of a senior cadre of about 2,500 in the government departments (of whom all but 587 were British) and a much larger junior cadre which was mostly local. Most senior British personnel were permanent career officers, which facilitated institutional memory. In sum, a well-organized territorial machinery with long tradition was in place before the insurgency, and the British had a pool of experienced talent to draw upon.

Depleted by the long Japanese occupation, however, this administration was weaker than it looked. As late as 1949, most of the technical departments were estimated to be 40 percent understrength. Many remoter areas were virtually unadministered, especially the Chinese squatter locales that lacked even police posts. Relatively few officials or policemen spoke Chinese.

### 3. Malay Loyalty

That the insurgency failed to make any headway among multiracial Malaya's 49 percent Malay population or even among its large (12 percent) Indian community crucially weakened its popular appeal. On the contrary, the Malays firmly supported the government and enlisted heavily in the security forces. Indeed, much anti-Chinese sentiment existed among them.

### 4. Anticolonialism Not a Major Issue

Closely related was the fact that Malaya had never been ruled in the classic colonial manner. In fact, as part of the decolonization process after World War II, the U.K. Labour government created in 1946 a short-lived Malayan Union, designed to enfranchise the entire population -- including the ethnic Chinese -- and to reduce the rulers' autocratic powers. It aimed at facilitating eventual independence for Malaya as a unitary state. But growing Malay resentment forced reversion to a federation in early 1948. Nonetheless, early independence was hardly in doubt, which robbed the insurgent movement of this element of appeal. Not only was the GOM in 1948 being Malayanized, but it was clear that the transition to full self-government would not be long delayed (see Section VIII).

### 5. Economic Constraints

One key factor that almost forced the U.K./GOM to opt for a long-haul, low-cost counterinsurgency strategy with maximum use of locally available assets was the United Kingdom's postwar economic straits. Britain had emerged from World War II almost bankrupt, needing vast aid

infusions from the United States for its own postwar recovery. Moreover, the Malayan Emergency spanned a period of often acute competing demands for limited U.K. resources: the 1948-1949 Berlin Blockade, the Korean War, threats to Hong Kong, Middle East trouble before and after Suez, Cyprus, the Mau Mau troubles in Kenya, and NATO force commitments. Malaya was only one of many problems confronting Britain. Hence, London was able to contribute only modestly to Malaya, and required the latter to finance the C-I effort mostly from its own resources. The U.K. paid only for the British military units used and for some equipment, plus some modest grants for development projects.

But the GOM too was in sore economic straits from the wartime Japanese occupation and its aftermath. Of its two chief revenue sources, tin mining had come to a virtual standstill during the war, while rubber production was way down and prices were depressed. Long a food deficit area, Malaya was forced to use its slender reserves to purchase rice. Until 1950 the GOM was so short of funds that it had to calculate each month "whether there was enough to pay even the next month's salaries."[3] On the other hand, Malaya's natural wealth proved a longer-term boon. The Korean War brought a temporary boom in rubber prices, none too soon. They so swelled GOM coffers that the government was able to meet its whole cost of the Emergency in 1950 and 1951 from current revenues.[4] But rubber slumped again in 1952-1953, bringing a recession and forcing retrenchment, especially in the police and paramilitary forces.[5]

## B. U.K./GOM POLICY AND STRATEGY

It is easier to pick out the main lines of U.K./GOM counterinsurgency policy and strategy in retrospect than it was at the time. But after an initial period of confusion, the local leadership settled on and gradually developed an effective C-I strategy. Its main features were:

### 1. Balanced, Multifaceted Response

For many reasons -- the limited scope of the insurgency itself, existence of a sound administrative structure, competing local demands, and financial stringency -- the U.K./GOM opted from the outset for a

balanced civil/police/military response. It was designed to capitalize as much as possible on all available local resources rather than bring in large forces from outside. It relied even more on the civil arm than on the military; for example, full-time police strength (including special constables) was always far greater than that of the military. And all measures were carried out within the framework of an impartial rule of law, which was carefully modulated though firmly enforced (see Section IV).

## 2. Territorial Framework

Owing to the relatively small number and wide dispersion of the guerrillas and the existence of a viable civil structure, the U.K./GOM response could be organized on an essentially territorial basis. War management followed existing administrative lines from village to district to state to Federation level. The police were already organized in this manner. Though the pattern varied, troops were usually assigned on a similar basis, a brigade to each state and a battalion to each district. Stress was laid on working through the existing local administration. This also permitted minimum disruption of normal activities and socioeconomic life.

## 3. Unified Management

Rather than create a separate C-I command chain, the U.K./GOM managed the campaign via a British-style committee system, which essentially followed and fleshed out the existing civil administrative structure at each level and linked closely together at all times the military, police, and other civil aspects of the effort. The principle of civilian supremacy was maintained throughout, even when military men occupied civilian posts. Though top policy direction became increasingly centralized, execution was decentralized to state and district level or even below (see Section III).

## 4. Reliance on Intelligence

Though good intelligence on the insurgents was badly lacking at the outset, the U.K./GOM came to emphasize it as crucial to success.

Instead of building up a big new military intelligence structure, they opted for expansion of the Police Special Branch as by far the best-suited to the purpose (see Section V). Major reliance was placed on inducing defections (a key source of intelligence) and on other forms of psychological warfare (see Section IX).

### 5. Separating the Insurgents from the People

Correctly appreciating after a while that the jungle guerrillas would be decisively weakened if they could be cut off from their sources of support among the population, the U.K./GOM launched a series of major programs -- chiefly registration, resettlement, and food control -- to deny men and resources to the guerrillas (see Sections IV and VII). Perry Robinson calls resettlement "the operational turning point of the Emergency" and food control what "hit the bandits hardest. . . ."[6]

### 6. Satisfying Popular Aspirations

Wisely, the U.K./GOM sought to temper the adverse impact of such tough control measures by parallel efforts at improved economic and social services. Popular support was seen as essential to victory. A major rural development program was undertaken (see Section VII). At the same time, the British made every effort to bring the ethnic Chinese fully into Malayan political life, as a viable alternative to revolt. Phased steps toward independence further undercut the MCP contention that revolt was the only road to this goal (see Section VIII). In the second half of the Emergency, after the U.K./GOM had gained the upper hand, these efforts became their main preoccupation.[7]

## C. HIGH POINTS OF THE C-I RESPONSE

But all of the above evolved only over time, out of the U.K./GOM's growing realization that their initial C-I response was wholly inadequate -- as became evident during 1948-1950:

## 1. Initial Steps and Mis-steps, 1948-1950

When the rising tide of violence finally forced the U.K. High Commissioner to declare an Emergency in June 1948, the military was called on to support the civil power. Tough Emergency regulations were promptly issued, especially registration of all adults and permission for preventive detention without trial (see Section IV). Malcolm MacDonald, representing the British Cabinet as Commissioner General in Southeast Asia, played a dynamic role in galvanizing the federal authorities and having priority given to protecting rubber plantations and tin mines.[8]

Since the security forces were very thin on the ground, their buildup became an urgent need. First emphasis was placed on rapidly expanding the police and paramilitary forces. Various local guard forces organized by the rubber plantations and tin mines were put under police control as "special constables" or auxiliary police. By the end of 1949 their strength had risen to almost 18,000 regular police, 30,000 special constables, and 47,000 auxiliaries (see Section V). This helped free the military from static security missions for offensive jungle probes. Arrival of three Guards battalions from England helped beef up army strength in Malaya and Singapore to 32,000 by March 1950 (though not all was available for Emergency use).

There is little doubt, however, that in the early years both the top Federation authorities and the British Labour government underestimated the extent of the threat and took inadequate steps to meet it. In mid-1940 Major General Boucher, the General Officer Commanding Malaya District, told the Federal Legislative Council that "this is by far the easiest problem I have ever tackled. In spite of the appalling country and the ease with which he can hide, the enemy is far weaker in technique and courage than either the Greek or Indian Reds."[9] Two years later, the tide still had not yet turned. Though the mass uprising had fizzled, Harry Miller in his perceptive book grants that "the first three years of the war were largely three years of failure in the field."[10] Clutterbuck gives this description of the early years:

> By the spring of 1950, though we had survived two dangerous years, we were undoubtedly losing the war.

> The soldiers and police were killing guerrillas at a steady 50 or 60 a month, and getting 20 or 30 surrenders, but the Communists were more than making up for this by good recruiting. The soldiers were killing about six guerrillas for every man they lost in the jungle, but the hard-pressed police posts were losing more men than the Communists. The guerrillas were murdering more than 100 men a month, and the police seemed powerless to prevent it. There was a growing danger that the police and the civilian population would lose confidence in the government and conclude that the guerrillas in the end must win. The main reason why we were losing was that the guerrillas could get all the support they needed -- food, clothing, information, and recruits -- from the squatters. It was quite impossible to police and protect them. The squatter areas, insofar as they were governed at all, were ruled by the Communist parallel hierarchy, which the squatters accepted . . . the squatters had little to lose from a collapse of the established order and economy; and besides, they had no option but to pay "taxes" and provide food for the guerrillas. Thus, the Communists were fast building up their strength and their support, and at the same time, stocking up arms and ammunition by raiding or corrupting the village police posts.[11]

Other problems abounded. The GOM had not yet geared up fully from a peacetime tempo. Unified top-level command was lacking, little good intelligence was yet forthcoming, and guerrilla contacts were largely a hit-or-miss affair. Coordination between military and police was still poor in many respects (see Section VI).

## 2. The Briggs Plan of 1950

Recognizing the deterioration, the U.K./GOM agreed that someone had to be put in charge. London nominated Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs, who had retired in 1949 as commanding general in Burma and had much antiguerrilla experience, to be Director of Operations. Briggs proved an inspired choice. Both the organization he firmed up and the plans he developed were crucial to later success.

Having arrived in April 1950, Briggs developed what is known as the "Briggs Plan," a framework for C-I management and operations which, with later modifications, lasted throughout the Emergency. It was not

a "plan" in the formal sense, but rather a series of programs laid out by Briggs shortly after his arrival to:

a) *Separate the guerrillas from the people.* To this end, Briggs gave first priority to a massive scheme for resettling the 400-500,000 Chinese squatters in "new villages" where they could be better protected, more closely watched, and far better cared for (see Section VII).

b) *Formalize and strengthen the C-I management system.* He rationalized and gave formal sanction to the pyramid of informal "directing committees which had grown up at various levels."

c) *Strengthen intelligence as the key to antiguerrilla operations.* This role was given to the Police Special Branch (see Section V).

d) *Deploy the security forces on a primarily territorial basis.* Briggs favored distributing a brigade to each state and a company or so per district for small-unit operations instead of the heavy emphasis on large troop sweeps. He also built up the local plantation, mine, and village defense militia. In September 1950, for example, he directed that every village form a Home Guard (see Section V).

The efforts set in train by General Briggs marked the turning point in the Emergency, although many results did not show until after he retired in November 1951. The bulk of the resettlement was completed by 1952. Guerrilla-initiated incidents began a permanent decline in the second half of 1951, while security force contacts rose greatly by 1951 and kills equally so. But the war was still far from over. Life in the countryside remained largely disrupted, and the guerrillas were still a potent force. Their assassination of Sir Henry Gurney in October 1951 -- the symbolic high point of the insurgency -- brought under new scrutiny the whole question of how the war was being handled.[12] It galvanized the U.K./GOM into fresh efforts.

## 3. Turning of the Tide, 1952-1954

Spurred by the assassination, Winston Churchill (just elected Prime Minister again) sent his new Minister of Colonies, Oliver Lyttelton, to Malaya. Lyttelton's six chief recommendations were (a) unified control of civil and military forces; (b) reorganization and training of

the police; (c) increased educational effort, especially in the primary school, to help win the war of ideas; (d) improved protection of the resettlement areas; (e) an enlarged Home Guard, to include more Chinese; and (f) review of the Civil Service to insure that the best men were recruited.[13] General Sir Gerald Templer was appointed both High Commissioner and Director of Operations with in effect proconsular powers (see Section III).

Another step was to beef up the security forces even more. By the end of March 1952, army strength in Malaya alone (excluding Singapore) had reached 28,000, of whom 22,200 were fighting troops. It stabilized at around this level. By the end of 1951, police regular strength numbered 26,154, special constables 39,870, and part-time auxiliaries some 99,000. The special constables stabilized at about this level, but police expansion continued, and the Home Guard auxiliaries increased to a peak of about 200,000.

Until the end of 1951 U.K./GOM strategy had necessarily been defensive; in 1952 it swung over to the offensive. Jungle operations were intensified. Resettlement of the squatters had deprived the guerrillas of their main source of food and facilitated population control. Controls over food and other supplies were tightened. Indeed, by 1953 special food control operations in suspect areas became the dominant operational technique. Special efforts were made to improve the lot of the people in the "new villages" (see Section VII).

During 1952-1954 the backbone of the insurgency was effectively broken. Two-thirds of the guerrillas were wiped out. Terror incidents fell from 500 a month in 1951 to fewer than 100 by 1953, and total friendly casualties went down from 200 monthly to under 40. But the key to success was less the patrols and ambushes in the jungle than the tightening clamp on the MCP and its Min Yuen political and support organization, which forced the MCP to milk its guerrilla units to keep that organization going.[14] While the pervasive pattern of controls was hardly popular, major efforts were made to explain their impact and purpose. Indeed, strong incentives were provided to the people to avoid contact with the insurgents. Templer strengthened these in 1953 by instituting a policy of declaring "white areas," from which the Emergency

Regulations were lifted once insurgency in them had died down. Malacca was declared the first "white area" in September 1953.

## 4. Mopping Up, 1954-1960

By mid-1954 the new Director of Operations, General Bourne, saw the problem as one of preventing a stalemate in which -- if the guerrillas "lay low and kept their political and supply organization intact, the Emergency Regulations and military pressure would be relaxed, leaving the surviving guerrillas free to rebuild their offensive capacity."[15] Since the Briggs-Templer strategy of rolling up the insurgents from south to north had not proved too successful, Bourne modified it to one of destroying the insurgent organization in the weakest areas first, so that these could be declared "white" and troops could then be concentrated against the toughest "black" areas in western Malaya.

This strategy gradually worked, although subject to many complaints from planters and mine owners now chafing under the Emergency Regulations in black areas. By mid-1955, a third of Malaya's population lived in cleared "white" areas, and the security forces were gradually being phased down. Mass surrenders, triggered largely by two key defectors in 1957-1958, permitted overwhelming concentration on the few tough black areas left. None of these was finally cleared until 1958-1959.[16]

When the Emergency was officially terminated in July 1960, twelve years after it began, there were no more than 20 or 30 guerrillas left in Malaya itself. The Emergency Regulations were lifted everywhere, except for a few needed to guard against subversion.[17] To this day, however, Chin Peng and a group of diehard guerrillas still lurk across the Thai border, and are even beginning to operate in northern Malaya again.

The human toll over the twelve years was surprisingly low, though this reflects more the peculiar nature of the insurgency -- with its notable lack of large-scale engagements -- than its low intensity. Police and paramilitary casualties were almost double those of the military. Though civilian casualties were as high as both combined, their modest total reflects both U.K./GOM self-discipline in controlling the use of firepower, and the ultimate ineffectiveness of the insurgent terror campaign. Two-thirds of them were incurred in 1948-1951 (see Table 1).

## D. FINANCIAL COSTS OF THE EMERGENCY

A remarkable feature of the U.K./GOM effort was its relatively low incremental cost of under U.S.$800 million over the twelve-year span. Though complete figures are hard to come by and it is difficult to separate some Emergency costs from other outlays, enough is available to give the order of magnitude involved.

Table 1

CASUALTIES DURING THE EMERGENCY*

(June 16, 1948 - July 31, 1960)

| | |
|---|---|
| Insurgents | |
| Killed | 6,710 |
| Captured | 1,287 |
| Surrendered | 2,702 |
| Wounded | 2,810 |
| Total | 13,509 |
| Malayan police | |
| Regular police killed | 511 |
| Regular police wounded | 701 |
| Special constables killed | 593 |
| Special constables wounded | 746 |
| Auxiliary police killed | 242 |
| Auxiliary police wounded | 154 |
| Total | 2,947 |
| Military Forces | |
| Killed | 519 |
| Wounded | 959 |
| Total | 1,478 |
| Civilian Population | |
| Killed | 2,473 |
| Wounded | 1,385 |
| Missing | 810 |
| Total | 4,668 |

*Source: Edgar O'Ballance, *Malaya: The Communist Insurgent War, 1948-1960*, Archon Books, Hamden, Connecticut, 1966, Appendix 'A', pp. 177-178.

Malaya itself bore the lion's share of the costs -- almost three-fourths. This was a heavy burden, taking for example 40 percent of GOM outlays in 1952, 32 percent in 1953, 23 percent in 1954, and 17 percent in 1956, after the insurgency had declined. Emergency needs also had to compete with growing demands for reconstruction, improved social services, and economic development -- which further stimulated pressures for a low cost C-I strategy. Fortunately, Malaya's tin and rubber exports brought it a favorable trade balance every year of the Emergency. Through such good fortune, plus the careful management which helped hold down Emergency outlays, inflation was kept under control and the GOM was able to cope with Emergency as well as other demands.[18]

Fortunately, most annual incremental costs beyond normal GOM expenditures were carefully segregated as *Emergency expenditures*, especially after 1950. For the twelve-year period these add up to U.S.$486,702,428, which corresponds rather well to a *Straits Times* figure of $556,750,000.[19] GOM outlays rose gradually to a 1953 peak of about U.S.$89 million, then dropped to some $48 million in 1954, and declined gradually thereafter (see Table 2). These figures do not include the costs of economic and social development programs of more general benefit, which were carried in the regular federal budget.

Costs to the British Treasury have been given as £84 million, or U.S.$235 million. Of this, £68 million represented the incremental cost of maintaining troops in Malaya over normal cost at their home stations, and £16 million represented special U.K. grants to the GOM.[20] Most of these costs were incurred prior to 1955.[21] Australia and New Zealand probably paid for their own forces and gave other aid as well.

It is more difficult to break out U.K./GOM civil from military costs, but the former (including police and paramilitary forces) appear to have been at least twice as high as the latter. Indeed, on an incremental basis, total police and paramilitary costs alone appear to have been about as high as military costs.[22]

Table 2

ANNUAL GOM EMERGENCY EXPENDITURES*

(in U.S. dollars)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cost of Emergency to GOM, 1948-1956 | | $373,980,000 |
| 1948 - | 4,620,000 | |
| 1949 - | 16,500,000 | |
| 1950 - | 19,890,000 | |
| 1951 - | 51,150,000 | |
| 1952 - | 69,300,000 | |
| 1953 - | 89,100,000 | |
| 1954 - | 48,180,000 | |
| 1955 - | 40,260,000 | |
| 1956 - | 34,980,000 | |
| Cost of Emergency to GOM, 1957-1960 | | $112,722,428 |
| 1957 - | 40,194,388 | |
| 1958 - | 34,919,424 | |
| 1959 - | 23,828,826 | |
| 1960 - | 13,779,790 | |
| Cost of Emergency to U.K. Treasury, 1948-1960 | | $235,200,000 |
| Total: | | $721,902,428 |

*Annual figures are from GOM *Weekly Press Summary*, August 15, 1953; GOM *Annual Reports*, 1953-1956; and from GOM *Annual Estimates*, 1959-1962. All above figures are actual costs, however; estimates give the actual expenditures for the most recent year (e.g., the annual estimate for 1959, prepared in 1958, will use the actual emergency expenditures for 1957). Conversion is on the basis of Malayan $1.00 = U.S.$0.33.

## III. MANAGING THE C-I EFFORT

A special premium was placed on effective management by the very nature of a C-I response which required pulling together a wide range of civil and military efforts while avoiding more than minimum administrative disruption and facilitating a shift from U.K. to GOM leadership during the insurgency itself. This need -- like many others -- was not immediately recognized. But after a few years of floundering, the U.K. and the GOM found an answer notably different from that attempted in Vietnam. What they gradually developed -- first at lower levels and then at the top -- was an unusual civil/military form of unified management by committee. By all accounts, it played a key role in Malaya's successful counterinsurgency response.

Rather than exclusively British, it was a combined U.K./GOM conflict management, which became progressively Malayanized as Malaya moved toward independence -- in a remarkably smooth transition. True, such factors as the long and intimate U.K./GOM relationship, the existence of a viable civil-administrative structure, and the limited extent of the insurgency made evolution of such a management structure far more practical than it would have been in South Vietnam. It is interesting to speculate whether, if the insurgents had been able to mount a greater military threat (as happened in Vietnam), a more military chain of command would have been established.

### A. WEAKNESS OF INITIAL COMMAND STRUCTURE

Inherent in the Malayan C-I effort from the outset was an apparent understanding that its direction would remain under the civil government structure at every level and would not be delegated to any special command. With some modification, this principle remained in effect throughout the Emergency. In keeping with traditional British practice, the military was subordinated to the civil power.[1] When the Federation declared an Emergency, the military was called on in effect to support the police. At no time during the Emergency did the senior British military hierarchy in the Far East -- or in Malaya itself -- have directing authority over operations (see Section VI).

On the other hand, when the Emergency first arose, there was no central planning or directing organization to deal with it. After Sir Henry Gurney became High Commissioner in October 1948, he put in direct charge of the Emergency effort the senior GOM civil servant, Chief Secretary M. V. del Tufo. In July 1948 Mr. W. N. Gray, a senior policy officer who had been Inspector General of the Palestine Police, had been brought in to direct the police and auxiliary forces. Presumably the police were in charge. But the task of expanding the police manyfold turned out to be a full-time job for Gray,[2] and the military commanders took the lead in operations. Informal directing committees rapidly developed at state level, usually composed of the chief police officer, the British adviser to the local sultan, the sultan's prime minister, and the local army commander.[3] Similar civil-military "committees" emerged at district level, usually with the civilian District Officer in the chair.

This system did not work well initially. As noted, the police and other civil elements were often too thin to shoulder the burden until they had been considerably beefed up. Police-military cooperation left a good deal to be desired in 1948-1950.[4] Intelligence was weak or wholly lacking. Funds were also scarce, since tin and rubber export prices were depressed. By 1950 these obvious weaknesses and the rise in terrorist incidents led the British Defence Coordinating Committee (Far East) to find the overall C-I direction unsatisfactory and to recommend that a civil coordinating officer directly under the High Commissioner be put in charge. It is significant that the committee focused at once on the management problem, something to which the United States has devoted far less attention during its long involvement in Vietnam.

## B. THE BRIGGS REORGANIZATION

In order to maintain the principle of civil control, the GOM asked London for someone who was at least nominally a civilian, and London nominated the recently retired Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs to the unusual post of Director of Operations (DO) under the High Commissioner. Briggs' role was to be not one of command but rather a form of

operational control. He was "to plan, to coordinate, and direct the anti-bandit operations of the police and fighting forces."[5] The police and armed forces could still appeal his decisions to the top civil or military authorities.

The unusual management structure which Briggs set up or strengthened to integrate C-I direction reflected what was practical at the time. One observer says that he brought what might be called "joint thinking" into the direction of the Emergency effort.[6] Another notes how:

> . . . he saw that what was wanted to deal with the peculiar nature of the Malayan Emergency was a new alignment, a new integration of the Army, and the Police with the civil administration. This was not a new idea but the credit is due to Briggs for picking it up and giving it a local habitation and a name. . . .
>
> To my mind, the integration of these three services -- an experiment in which Malaya has been a pioneer -- has a significance which goes far beyond the Malayan Emergency in which it has proved its success. I think it contains the secret, not only of the successful conduct of this sort of semi-civil war, but also the secret of the defence of communities -- especially of under-developed communities -- against penetration, against subversion.[7]

## C. THE WAR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SYSTEM

As formalized by Briggs, the war executive committees were the operational nerve centers controlling and coordinating all facets of C-I operations at state and local level. This system reflected not only the particular needs of the Malayan situation but the oft-remarked British ability to run things by committee, in which coequal representatives of different services or departments have displayed an unusual capacity to reach firm policy decisions.

At the top of the Malayan committee pyramid, Briggs created in April 1950 the *Federal War Council*, which formulated overall policy and allocated resources. Briggs initially presided, but soon the High Commissioner himself took over to give the Council more authority. It also included the Chief Secretary, the Federation Secretary of Defense, the Police Commissioner, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) Malaya,

and the Air Officer Commanding (AOC) Malaya. Later others were added. But Briggs, with a small staff, played the key role. To underline his civilian status, he wore civilian clothes.

Each of the nine Malay states had a counterpart *State War Executive Committee* (SWEC). Its chairman (always a civilian) was the Mentri Besar, the Malay grand vizier or prime minister to the local sultan. It included the senior civil servant (usually the British adviser to the state government), senior police officer, and senior soldier (usually a brigade commander), plus an executive secretary seconded from the MCS. The Special Branch head and the Home Guard Officer were usually present. Others often attended, such as deputies, staff officers, civil officials, planters, and other local community representatives. Thus most important operations of government were represented, reflecting Templer's later dictum that the regular operations of government could not be separated from those of the Emergency. The SWECs met weekly or biweekly, but each had a smaller *operations subcommittee* which met more frequently. It usually included at least the chairman, the senior military and police officers, and the local Special Branch head.

At district level a similar *District War Executive Committee* (DWEC) was formalized, chaired by the District Officer -- the senior civilian. The senior police officer and the battalion commander or his deputy were members. The Special Branch officer and later the local information officer were added. Other officials attended as needed, and eventually prominent local leaders became unofficial members. At the lowest level, a company commander normally would establish his command post in the local headquarters of the police to facilitate coordination.

At Briggs' direction, each SWEC and DWEC created as its nerve center an *operations room*, manned by the military and the police on a 24-hour basis to bring together and display relevant intelligence and operational data. Each morning the key members of the SWEC or DWEC would gather at the operations room for what was known as "morning prayers" to review the situation and direct any action required.

It is significant that the SWECs and DWECs were action bodies, composed of commanders and executives, not staff officers. They took

a wide range of civil as well as military decisions, which were recorded in minutes and disseminated up and down. SWECs and DWECs ordered police and military operations, controlled food supplies, set curfews, handled resettlement decisions, laid on information and psychological warfare operations, and the like. They also served as a device for prompt coordination among a variety of agencies and interests, which facilitated quick response. Equally significant, these committees served as vehicles for the review and exchange, on a regular and continuing basis, of all available information from all civil and military agencies concerned with the Emergency. As a means of keeping everyone fully informed at each key operating level, they proved an invaluable device. Lastly, they forced top civilian officials to participate in counterinsurgency direction instead of confining themselves mostly to normal administration. This also meant that military and police decisions were constantly subject to review by senior civil officials who were aware of any political implications they might entail.

Yet there were still many flaws in the 1950-1951 organization, especially at the top:

> No important decision could be carried out until it had been ratified by eleven state and settlement governments, the federal government, and the government of Great Britain -- thirteen in all. The military director of operations had too limited an authority and was hampered by the civil officials. They had a "business as usual" tendency to carry on their normal work as if the revolt did not exist, and only assist the Director of Operations as they feel disposed to.[8]

Briggs' lack of command authority over military and police also created problems, particularly vis-à-vis the Commissioner of Police.[9] In his own final report, he apparently stressed how these limitations on his powers affected his ability to get particularly the police to move. Indeed, in a farewell interview he publicly declared that he had not been wholly satisfied with his powers and that this had led the GOM to promise that his successor would be given greater ones.[10] Briggs furthermore had to refer decisions to the High Commissioner through the civilian Chief Secretary. Additional delays and confusion were caused by the fact that the armed services and other agencies often issued

separate instructions to their SWEC representatives. Bureaucratic habits, civil and military, died hard. As the *Straits Times* summed up the situation:

> The original problem was that there was no Director of Operations, and even no conception of the strength of the Communist challenge. It was a long time before there was effective cooperation between the police and the military, and a longer time still before the Government could bring itself to appoint a Director of Operations. When General Briggs came out there was reason to believe that the war at last would be fought as it should be fought. Yet when General Briggs left Malaya just over a month ago, he revealed that he too had never had the authority he needed.[11]

## D. TEMPLER'S MANAGEMENT CHANGES

The assassination of Sir Henry Gurney and Winston Churchill's election victory -- both in October 1951 -- set the stage for the next major management changes. Churchill thought that the loss of Malaya in 1942 had been partly due to divided control.[12] When he sent Minister of Colonies Lyttelton to Malaya, the latter's first recommendation on his return was to unify civil-military control under one man.[13] Chosen was General Sir Gerald Templer, the former Vice Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Churchill told him, "Ask for power, go on asking for it, and then -- never use it."[14] In February 1952 Templer was appointed to the merged posts of High Commissioner and Director of Operations, with strengthened powers. As High Commissioner he was in charge of the civil authorities, while as senior military officer he was empowered to issue direct operational orders to the armed forces in Malaya. Divided command at the top was thus unified.

Templer reorganized his office under two deputies. General Sir Rob Lockhart (who had briefly replaced Briggs as DO) became Deputy Director of Operations and in effect his chief of staff. D. C. McGillivray, a veteran Colonial Office official, was named Deputy High Commissioner to assist Templer on the civil side. A clean sweep of other senior personnel also took place. Police Commissioner Gray had retired at the end of 1951; to replace him, Templer borrowed A. E. Young, the Commissioner of Police of the City of London. Chief Secretary del Tufo also

retired, apparently since his position had been drastically changed by Templer's new powers. The Director of Intelligence resigned as well, and his post was reorganized (see Section V).

One of Templer's first acts was to issue a thirty-four-word directive:

> Any idea that the business of normal civil government and the business of the Emergency are two separate entities must be killed for good and for all. The two activities are completely and utterly interrelated.[15]

To reinforce his point, he then merged the Federal War Council with the Federal Executive Council (the High Commissioner's "cabinet"). This further integrated the civil-military direction. A smaller group of members met more frequently -- usually weekly -- and was called the Director of Operations Committee. Chaired by the DO, it included the senior service commander, the police commissioner, and the Director of Intelligence, as well as the Secretary of Defense and Chief Secretary of the GOM.[16]

However, Templer's chief contribution was in dynamic leadership and driving energy rather than in his management changes. He merely improved upon the basic structure already created by Briggs. But he fully used his unique powers to galvanize the C-I response, transferring officials or officers who didn't measure up. He was constantly on the move around the countryside, leaving much of the day-to-day management to his two deputies. In his capacity as Director of Operations Templer used a remarkably small staff (as had Briggs). It never exceeded nine officers: a brigadier, four officers of lieutenant-colonel rank (soldier, airman, policeman, and civil servant), and their four assistants. Four or five of them were usually with him when he traveled.[17]

## E. TRANSFER OF POWER: 1954-1957

By mid-1954 it was clear that the GOM had gained the upper hand, and Templer was able to return home. Since the improved situation made it unnecessary to continue his unique post as both civilian and military proconsul, normal Commonwealth practice was resumed. His civilian

deputy, Sir Donald McGillivray, became High Commissioner, and Lieutenant General Sir Geoffrey Bourne became Director of Operations subordinate to McGillivray. Bourne retained more operational power than Briggs had had, however; he was made clearly senior to the army and air commanders in Malaya (indeed he prepared their efficiency reports).

To conform to Malaya's transition toward independence, Bourne expanded the now effectively functioning SWEC/DWEC by adding local civilian officials and dignitaries. In October 1954 he added five important politicians to his Director of Operations Committee. In January 1955 this widening of membership was extended to the SWECs and DWECs. Such Malayanization was also deemed essential to prevent the new political leadership then emerging in Malaya from being able to escape responsibility for tough counterinsurgency decisions. Thus the SWECs and DWECs became important instruments in the gradual transfer of power to local leadership.

Also to this end, the top-level Director of Operations Committee was revamped in March 1956 as an *Emergency Operations Council*, and placed under the chairmanship of Tungku Abdul Rahman (Malaya's top political figure) in his new capacity as Minister of Internal Defense and Security. The DO became its executive officer, responsible to it for the day-to-day conduct of operations and with operational control over all security forces allotted to them.

Though the Emergency dragged on for three years after independence, few more management changes were made except for further Malayanization. All war executive committees had Malayan chairmen. Most senior Malayan army and police officers remained British, but they were now servants of (and paid by) the GOM. As one such officer has noted, all were "responsible to elected Malayan ministers, with no channel at all, either open or secret, to London."[18] They served as executives or commanders, not as advisers, but subject to the direction of the Malayan government at all levels. Of course, British and Commonwealth forces, while under the operational control of the DO, were financed by their own governments. They had a right of appeal from the DO's orders to their own higher authorities, but this was never used.

At times during the latter phases of the Emergency, the DO actually commanded troops. When in June 1956 the Federation Army was created, the DO doubled in brass as its first commander.[19] When Malaya became independent, however, the two jobs were again separated, so that the head of the new army could concentrate on building it up. But in 1959 the then DO (General Sir James Cassells) suggested that there was no further need for separation, and they were once more joined.[20]

In sum, the highest direction and operational conduct of counter-insurgency throughout the 1948-1960 Malayan Emergency were on both a joint civil-military and a combined British-Malayan basis. Call it war direction by committee if you will, but the fact is that it worked. It provided a viable managerial device for integrating U.K./Commonwealth and Malayan efforts and for pulling together all the multiple strands of C-I operations.

## IV. ENFORCING THE RULE OF LAW

Of great value to the counterinsurgency effort was the British reputation for impartial administration and fair-minded justice. While the U.K./GOM enforced strict controls and occasionally took ruthless measures, it was done within a recognized framework of rule of law and subject to frequent public debate. Throughout the Emergency the U.K./GOM acted under a clear legal mandate, for the most part scrupulously observed, which carefully spelled out what the security forces could and could not do.

"A state of emergency is quite different from martial law," by which the military takes over governing powers.[1] This never occurred in Malaya, even locally. The civil authorities retained power, and civil courts retained jurisdiction. There were no military courts. When the Emergency was declared in June 1948, it was given force and effect by a series of drastic special laws (Emergency Regulations) promulgated by the federal legislature. "As revised in 1949 and amended in 1953, they ran to 149 pages, covering subjects as diverse as possession of firearms, powers of arrest and detention, control of food supplies, and clearing of undergrowth."[2] They provided the legal framework for the whole C-I effort, and helped greatly in breaking the links between the insurgents and the people.

### A. REGISTRATION OF THE POPULATION -- ID CARDS

Perhaps most important among the special laws was a nationwide program to register everyone over twelve years old. (The MCP made considerable use of children as couriers and spies.) The program got off to a slow start, but by March 1949 some form of identity card had been issued to everyone registered -- some 3,220,000 persons. Originally each Malay state or settlement had its own registration form, but in June 1950 a uniform ID card for the Federation was decided upon, and a Federal Registration Department created to carry out the scheme.[3] Each ID card bore the holder's photograph and thumbprint plus other data.[4] The scale of the effort is apparent from the fact that from 1950 (the first year that full statistics were reported) through 1956 some

1,059,956 new cards and 1,855,865 replacement cards were issued. Every time a person moved, his ID card had to be changed (as happened 1,887,136 times in the period 1953-1956).[5] Cancellations because of death, departure from Malaya, etc. were also meticulously handled. To provide citizens with incentive to protect their ID cards, they were required for a variety of purposes -- such as food rations, space in a "new village," and building permits.

This registration/ID card program proved highly effective over time in helping to separate the insurgents from the population, especially in the squatter villages. It facilitated frequent police identity checks, often by having an early morning cordon thrown around an entire squatter settlement. The insurgents tried to disrupt the system by terror, forgery, and destruction of ID cards (in 1950 and 1951, for example, 151,450 cards were seized or destroyed).[6] When the insurgents made workers in the rubber plantations and rice paddies a special target and took away their cards, the GOM frustrated this by collecting the cards at the village gate when the workers went out into the fields and issuing tallies until they returned. Most important, the system made it very difficult for the guerrillas to live in the villages or even to circulate freely outside the jungle.[7]

## B. OTHER KEY EMERGENCY REGULATIONS

Other important provisions permitted detention without trial; the right to search and arrest without a warrant; imposition of curfews; imprisonment up to ten years for knowingly possessing MCP documents or assisting MCP propaganda; a ban on the MCP itself; the right to shoot on sight in specified "black areas;" resettlement from and to specified places; and food control. All these powers, adequately enforced, played a key role in forcing the insurgents into the jungle, weakening their links to the people, and impeding their activities.

But not all were equally wise. Perry Robinson sees as one of the "major mistakes" the early 1949 Emergency Regulation imposing up to the death penalty for "consorting" with terrorists. He points out that many Chinese could hardly avoid consorting in a sense when protection was inadequate.[8] This regulation was suspended in August 1952. The

Regulations were applied, however, within the limits of widely publicized and careful safeguards, including judicial review and appeal. For example, a Public Review Board of independent citizens examined each case of detention-without-trial (at first once a year and later every six months) and heard appeals.[9] As an area was declared "white," certain Emergency Regulations were suspended.

Another severe law allowed levying collective punishment against people of an uncooperative village or town, though this was done only a few times. After Gurney's assassination, the GOM closed the nearby small town of Tras and incarcerated all its two thousand inhabitants.[10] In 1952, after a nearby ambush had killed the British district officer and eleven others, Templer himself imposed a strict twenty-hour house curfew and reduction of the adult rice ration by more than half on the town of Tanjong Malim. This lasted two weeks, till information was forthcoming from the people.[11] The regulation was repealed in 1953 as unfair to innocent members of the population.

The MCP, its front organizations, and the MCP-dominated labor union federation were declared illegal in July 1948, and some 600 party members were arrested in an initial police sweep. MCP control over the trade unions has been undermined earlier in 1948, when the Trade Union Ordinance was amended to require all union officers to have served at least three years in the industry which the union represented. Union federations were limited to those within a single industry. This effectively quashed the MCP-dominated Pan-Malayan Trade Union Federation. Many unions collapsed when their erstwhile leaders decamped to the jungle with union funds.

## C. DETENTION AND BANISHMENT

Two of the most powerful and most controversial control measures were Emergency Regulations 17-D and 17-C, permitting detention of suspect persons and the deportation of noncitizens. During the early days, when it was especially difficult to distinguish ordinary civilians from MCP terrorists or Min Yuen members, large numbers of suspect Chinese were incarcerated in inadequate detention facilities under Regulation 17-D. The process of sorting them out through interrogation took a long

time. By the end of 1948 some 5,100 people were being held on detention orders; by end-1949 the total had risen to 8,500.[13] It peaked in 1951 at 11,000. But by mid-1955 there were only 1,200 hard-core persons under detention. Rehabilitation camps were established, including a special one at Taiping in Perak for those who were not hard-core cadre but merely supporters. They were taught civilian trades, and few if any ever regressed.[14] By 1957 some 34,000 people had been detained at one time or another.

Even more dreaded was Emergency Regulation 17-C, which allowed the GOM to deport noncitizens to their country of origin. It was a powerful weapon because few Chinese were citizens. According to one account, 26,000 were deported to Mainland China before the Communist takeover there put an end to the practice.[15] During 1950 alone 3,773 detainees (and 3,324 dependents) were repatriated to China and 73 to India.[16] This regulation also was repealed in 1953.

## V. KEY ROLE OF THE POLICE IN SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE

A notable feature of the U.K./GOM counterinsurgency effort was the primary role assigned from the outset to the police. Their importance was stressed by both Briggs and Templer, the two senior military officers who were the chief architects of this effort. In fact, the police and the paramilitary forces under their aegis fielded far more men and had a far larger hand than the military in providing local security, thus helping to free the troops for the offensive role (in which the police participated). The police also played a key role in enforcing the rule of law so essential to separating the insurgents from the people. Policemen suffered far more total casualties (2,947) than did soldiers (1,478) during the Emergency; of the regular police alone, almost as many were killed (511) as military men (519).

But perhaps the greatest single police contribution was the gradual development of a police intelligence system which became the eyes and ears of the entire C-I effort. Brigadier Clutterbuck terms the police "the decisive element" in dealing with the Malayan insurgency; they provided the "security and intelligence" for which "the army was a support but not a substitute."[1]

### A. BUILDUP OF THE REGULAR POLICE

The 10,000 regular federal police were weak and 2,000 understrength in 1948; the force had not yet been rebuilt to its prewar standards. Moreover, despite the polyglot nature of Malaya's population, the police were mostly Malay with a small number of British officers. Chinese speakers were sadly lacking; in 1947 the force had only 24 Chinese inspectors and 204 policemen.[2]

When the Emergency was declared in 1948, among the first major steps was to expand the police force rapidly and to create large paramilitary forces. But quantity was easier to get than quality, and it took some time before training and equipment could catch up. By end-1948 regular strength had reached over 15,000; by the end of 1952 it had risen to some 28,000 -- including 2,488 Chinese. To create an

effective communications network, the army provided the police with radios, etc., while trainers and operators were lent by the army, navy, and RAF.[3]

Numerous problems persisted, however, so that, when Templer brought in Young as Police Commissioner in 1952, the force was completely reorganized. An extensive new training program was developed, with emphasis on basic civil police duties and good relations with the populace. A new Police Training College opened in October 1952.[4] Full-time regular police and special constables were cut back in 1953, when falling rubber prices forced a GOM fiscal retrenchment, and stabilized at around 20,000. By 1959 only about 7,000 were regarded as engaged in Emergency duties.[5]

## B. POLICE ROLE IN LOCAL SECURITY AND ANTIGUERRILLA OPERATIONS

Though the police played the major role in local area security from the outset, initially they were woefully ill-equipped for a task of this magnitude. The main task of the police was, of course, in the populated areas. In the early days the weakly manned village police post became a favorite target of guerrilla groups. But these posts were to be quickly strengthened. Gradually the local security force in each Chinese village came to be a police post of ten to twelve Malay constables, supported by a part-time Home Guard of about thirty-five men, of whom normally five were on duty patrolling the perimeter at night (see below). Most villages also had a Chinese Special Branch sergeant.[6] By 1951 the police had become able to take over many local security roles from the army.

In 1949 the police also formed their own platoon-size "jungle squads" for jungle patrolling -- a total of 253 by the end of that year.[7] These men later were organized into a Police Field Force of about three thousand, specially trained to man posts in the deep jungle. The police conducted a significant proportion of total patrols and ambushes, perhaps as many as a third of the total. Their effectiveness was comparable to that of the army; in 1955 their kill/contact ratio of 0.65 was equal to that of the Malay infantry battalions and compared to the 0.85 average of all infantry battalions. In 1954 all regular police

except the Field Force and Special Branch reverted to mostly normal police duties.[8]

## 1. The Special Constables

To reinforce the police in their local security role, two major paramilitary forces were raised. In 1947-1948 tin mines and rubber plantations had organized their own local guard forces. These were regularized as special constables under the police force and increased to 29,700 by end-1948. But training was a serious problem. It was largely done at first by mobile army teams, but then was taken over by some five hundred British police sergeants from the recently demobilized Palestine Police. The number of special constables rose to 40,000 by end-1951.[9] Templer stabilized them at about this level and greatly improved their training. Their chief role was local protection of mines and plantations. As security improved, many of the special constables were later organized into *Area Security Units* of twenty-one men whose primary task was enforcing food control, and *Police Special Squads* whose role was reconnaissance and patrol for the District Special Branch Officer. By 1958 special constables had been reduced to 22,000 -- including 894 women searchers. They were completely phased out in 1960.

## 2. The Home Guard

In the early days, many exposed Malay villages (kampongs) had formed their own part-time village guards. Other groups were formed to guard plantation compounds. Under police auspices, they were furnished with old weapons; they were called auxiliary police. By the end of 1948 they numbered about 17,000 and by end-1949 about 47,000. In September 1950 General Briggs created the volunteer, part-time Home Guard as part of his squatter resettlement program, as much as a political move to commit the ethnic Chinese to the government as to get them to help protect their own homes. It was unarmed, and was put under a Federal Civil Defense Commissioner.

In late 1951 the Home Guard was further formalized and its role expanded. By the end of the year it had reached 99,000 men, of whom three-fourths were kampong guards and other auxiliaries who had been

absorbed. A retired major general was made Inspector General; each state also had its Home Guard Officer. The District Officer in each district was put in overall charge, and given an inspector, under police discipline and paid from police funds, to supervise the local Home Guard. But it operated under the police; the Home Guard Officer dealt only with recruiting, training, and administration. A three-phase training program was launched, in the final phase of which the guards could be armed -- usually with shotguns.

Apparently the Home Guard was regarded as increasingly useful, especially as guerrilla strength decreased, By 1953 some 50,000 Chinese were serving in it, mostly in the new villages, in addition to about 100,000 Malays and aborigines protecting some 2,200 of their own villages. Their performance was apparently such that Templer thought they could begin relieving the police of purely defensive duties. They were reorganized into a *static* and an *operational* Home Guard. The former had arms for one-third of its men, and was eventually to replace the police in village defense (the normal pattern was around thirty-five men in each village, five of them on duty each night). The latter was uniformed and organized into twelve-man armed sections for part-time use in a more active role.[10] Weapons and other training was provided by mobile instructor teams.

By the end of 1955 some 152,000 Home Guard members had become fully responsible for local defense of 173 out of the 410 "new villages" as well as for other villages. By 1956 there were 450 "operational sections," while overall strength began to be phased down. In 1958 the full-time Home Guard professional staff from Federation down to district level, including instructors, numbered only 419 out of a total reduced by then to 68,000 men. By end-1959 the situation had so improved that the Home Guard could be demobilized.

## C. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICE INTELLIGENCE -- THE ROLE OF SPECIAL BRANCH

Usable, timely C-I intelligence is hard to come by, and the experience in Malaya proved no exception. In the early period the counter-insurgency effort was largely flying blind. There also seems to have been a failure to appreciate the significance of intelligence and how

to go about getting it.[11] For example, all too often insurgencies tend to be measured by their external manifestations -- incidents, attacks, terrorism, and sabotage -- at the expense of the less obvious and far more complex evidence as to organization and key personnel. This is particularly true of military intelligence, and understandably so, since it is enemy activity with which the military have to deal. Thus, a lull in insurgent activity has often been misinterpreted as reflecting a decline in insurgent capabilities when, in fact, it may only have meant regrouping for a new phase.

Since in Malaya the C-I effort was regarded as primarily a civil one, the intelligence role was assigned to the police. In the British colonial tradition, the task of keeping tabs on potential subversives at local as well as national level had long been a function of Police Special Branch -- usually a small, elite professional group. A Federation-wide Special Branch had been established in Malaya as long ago as 1919.[12]

But in 1947-1948 Special Branch was in as bad shape as the rest of the police. During the short-lived Malayan Union, it had even been taken out of the police and put in the new Malayan Security Service as its local political intelligence arm; only the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) was left in the police. But the two functions could not be separated in an insurgency where criminal terrorism and political subversion were part of the same problem. So in August 1948 a Malayan Special Branch was reestablished under the Deputy Commissioner of Police as one of two branches of the CID.[13]

In the early days of the Emergency good intelligence was a sometime thing. The military had to rely largely on their own resources. Guerrilla contacts were mostly hit-or-miss affairs. Information was still lacking on suspect Chinese, and the clandestinely organized MCP made a special effort to keep its activities secret. Little was known about the MRLA order of battle or command structure. A critical weakness was the lack of competent Chinese linguists who could develop information in the clannish and self-isolated Chinese community, and a special effort was made to recruit more talent. (The lowest rank in Special Branch was sergeant; most members were senior NCOs, warrant officers,

or commissioned officers.) A Chinese contingent was created in Special Branch. But routine surveys and patrols, not targeted operations, were the best source of kills and captures in 1948-1950.

Briggs noted the lack of intelligence as a key weakness and stressed improvement. Resettlement and other measures taken under his aegis also helped develop intelligence leads. The Special Branch staff was strengthened at all levels. SWECs and DWECs always had the local Special Branch officer as an unofficial member, which greatly facilitated coordination of operations with intelligence. But in 1950-1951 "the difficulty was mainly the creation and training of adequate staff to handle intelligence."[14]

It remained for Templer to give intelligence first priority and to reorganize its direction for this purpose. Prior to this time the head of Special Branch apparently doubled in brass as chief intelligence officer on Briggs' staff, and so was heavily weighed down with line duties. In April 1952 Templer made the post of Director of Intelligence a purely staff post, in which the Director was responsible to Templer for coordination and supervision of both police and army intelligence. To handle this job Templer brought in Mr. John Morton, an experienced civilian who was chief of MI-5 in Singapore. A small combined intelligence staff was created to assist him.

Morton clearly delimited the respective intelligence functions of the military and the police. Special Branch was given primary responsibility for intelligence on the insurgents. All military-generated raw intelligence such as captured documents, and any prisoners or defectors, were sent to Special Branch for exploitation. The military handled only local and immediate combat intelligence for their troops in the field (aside from aerial photography and other air reconnaissance). The regular British secret intelligence agencies, MI-5 and MI-6, played no significant role. In recognition of its enhanced function, Special Branch was separated from the CID in April 1952. But it always remained a comparatively small elite group; in 1954, for example, it had only 459 men on Emergency duties.

Under this system the military did not develop a separate major intelligence structure but rather satellited on the police. To help

provide the necessary linkage, some thirty "special military intelligence officers" were attached to Special Branch at various levels. They worked as liaison officers and expediters, collecting operational intelligence as it passed through Special Branch channels, putting it in militarily useful form, and seeing that it reached the troops promptly. Another link was provided by having the operations room of the SWECs and DWECs manned jointly by police and by intelligence sections of the brigades and battalions operating at state and district levels.

Several authorities have noted the problems involved in coordinating the police and military intelligence roles. Perry Robinson says, "it was very difficult in the early years for the Police to present the results of their Intelligence in a form the Army could use, and very difficult for the Army to appreciate the value of what the Police called Intelligence. . . . It was not easy; no subject has caused so much exasperation or so many major rows as the problem of getting the right sort of Intelligence and making the right sort of use of it."[15] But the point is that the system worked. As Brigadier Clutterbuck put it, "this was essentially a Special Branch war, and . . . they did win it."[16]

That British senior officers absorbed this lesson is also evident from remarks by the Director of Operations in the later Borneo confrontation with Indonesia, Lieutenant General Sir Walter Walker:

> I am a great believer and a very strong supporter of Special Branch. When a properly established and fully manned special branch is on the ground then, in my view, military intelligence should be the servant and not the master of special branch. Why is this? It is for the simple reason that special branch officers and their staffs, and their agents, live in the country, speak the language and know the people. Indeed, they are of the people, whereas army intelligence staffs are here today and gone tomorrow and are continually rotating. To my mind it is a cardinal principle that reliable intelligence depends entirely on continuity at every level.[17]

Indeed, reflecting the peculiar nature of the Malayan insurgency problem, penetrating and building up intelligence on the insurgent structure became the predominant goal. Security force operations were frequently designed primarily to facilitate such penetrations. Sometimes operations were laid on to drive the guerrillas into areas where Special

Branch already had established agents. Its weekly Intelligence Summaries grew steadily more detailed. Looking back on 1948-1957, the Director of Operations reported that the great majority of successful contacts with the guerrillas came to be brought about as a result of Special Branch work.[18] By 1957 Special Branch had a dossier on almost every individual guerrilla who was left.

Great stress was laid on captured or defecting insurgents, to exploit them for intelligence and psychological operations. Morton created an interrogation center staffed largely with ex-insurgents. As other measures took effect, the flow of intelligence from the ethnic Chinese population gradually increased and permitted much better targeting of security force operations. Many surrendered enemy personnel (SEPs) were successfully turned into agents and informers (see Section IX). In 1953 a Special Operational Volunteer Force was formed of SEPs, to go out on operations along with police or army units. It came to have about 300 SEPs in fifteen squads.[19]

## VI. THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

While the very nature of the Malayan conflict, the impact of British tradition and practice, and political-economic constraints all placed limits on the military's role in countering MCP insurgency, even this limited role was nonetheless essential to success. Especially in the early years, the police and paramilitary forces were wholly incapable of coping with the guerrillas unaided. During this period the military largely had to substitute for them in static security missions. But as these uncongenial tasks were gradually taken over by police and auxiliaries, the military could turn increasingly to offensive pressures on the guerrillas in the jungle.

Even so, the most striking feature of the military role in the Malayan Emergency is its atypical character. Instead of being a full-scale multiservice effort, it was mostly an army show. Instead of operating as a cohesive, integrated military force under their own high command, units were dispersed and used in support (and under the overall direction) of civil authority. Tactically, they never operated as divisions, and infrequently even as brigades or even battalions, but mostly in dispersed company and smaller units. Instead of having their own intelligence, they depended mostly on that from the police. While many problems and frictions occurred, it is impressive that the military proved so adaptable. Equally striking was their eventual mastery of jungle warfare; in a small-unit war of patrol and ambush they beat the guerrillas at their own game.[1]

### A. SIZE OF THE U.K./GOM FORCES

The small size of the regular military forces involved is also notable. Up through 1951 the army alone probably had fewer fighting men than the insurgents. When the Emergency began, there were only 5,784 combat troops in Malaya, plus 5,660 service troops. Their backbone was eleven understrength infantry battalions -- six Gurkha, three British, and two Malay. These forces were on peacetime T/O, and not until early 1951 were they allowed war strength (around 800 men per battalion).[2] Combat reinforcements were quickly brought in from the

adjacent Singapore base area, which throughout the Emergency also provided essential logistic support.

In early 1952 the number of fighting troops in Malaya reached over 22,000 -- including twenty-three infantry battalions -- out of a total of under 30,000. They stabilized at around this level -- at end-March 1956 there were 22,500 combat troops in Malaya out of a 31,400 total. They were then phased down, until by 1960 strength had declined again to under 20,000 (of which 14,000 were combat troops).[3]

Of the combat units involved, perhaps the workhorses were the six Gurkha battalions which stayed throughout. British battalions rotated in and out; the three in Malaya in 1948 grew to seven by end-1949 and to a dozen in 1952. The Commonwealth was represented by Australian and East African battalions, a Fiji battalion, and a New Zealand SAS unit. A Royal Marine commando brigade (battalion equivalent), an SAS regiment, and part of a parachute regiment served at various times. Dyak and Iban tribesmen from Borneo -- recruited after 1948 to serve primarily as jungle trackers with infantry patrols -- were organized in 1953 into the Sarawak Rangers.[4]

A special effort was made to build a Malayan army. The two Malay Regiment battalions existing in 1948 were gradually increased to nine in 1956. Parts of them were formed into a new Federation Regiment on a multiracial basis (unfortunately few Chinese volunteered). Cadets and officers were sent to the United Kingdom for training. A Federation Army was formed in 1956. Also created were a Royal Malayan Navy and an RAF Regiment (Malaya). All three formed the nuclei for Malaya's armed forces after independence. By the end of the Emergency, the Malayan army's nine battalions provided roughly half the infantry still deployed.

## B. CONTROL OF MILITARY FORCES

It is noteworthy that at no time during 1948-1960 did the higher military echelons in Malaya (division and above) formally control military operations through the military chain of command. The highest British military authorities in the Far East (located in Singapore) were the three commanders-in-chief of the land, sea, and air forces. Together they formed the Chiefs of Staff Committee (FE). Under Far

East Land Forces (FARELF) were *inter alia* a Singapore Base District and a Malaya District, both administrative commands. An RAF command parallel to Malaya District also existed. The largest tactical formation was the 17th Gurkha Division. After 1952 the 1st Federation Division was formed to provide a nucleus for the new army of Malaya after independence, and in 1956 the Federation Army became an administrative entity.

But the primary role of all these headquarters was to train, administer, and support the forces allocated to the Emergency, and to plan and prepare for possible wartime contingencies in which the divisions would be reassembled. In the early days, when Federation police headquarters had primary responsibility for Emergency operations but were not up to overall management, GHQ FARELF and GOC Malaya played an informal operational role. But this changed when Briggs and especially when Templer took over. In U.S. parlance, the military retained command of troops and were responsible for their administration, training, and support. But operational control was in the hands of the elaborate network of war executive committees. Military resources were allocated by the military commands at the request of these civil/military directing bodies. Of course, GOC and AOC Malaya participated in these decisions as members of the Federal War Council, as did brigade commanders at SWEC level, and battalion or often company commanders at DWEC level.

The intermediate division commands almost never played a tactical role. Two abortive attempts to give such a role to a division commander by making him Deputy Director of Operations were abandoned because a division-level headquarters simply did not fit into the SWEC/DWEC territorial command system. A British major general, when asked about the role of a division commander in Malaya, replied that "As far as I can see, the only thing a divisional commander has to do in this sort of war is to go around seeing that the troops have got their beer!"[5] Only on the air side did the AOC Malaya in fact retain operation control over his assets, because of the need to allocate and supervise them centrally. He exercised this control through a Joint Operations Center.

As might be expected, difficulties arose at various times from such a command structure. Police and military modes of operation are quite

different, to say the least, which produced complex problems of coordination and often friction. Miller cites how as of 1950,

> Coordination between the Army, the police, and the administrative officers was not as close as it should have been. The Army had never felt comfortable in their role of supporting the civil power; they were soldiers, many of them said, fighting with one hand tied behind their backs. They were irritated by the slow, methodical tactics of the police. For their own part, the police were becoming irritated with the Army's superior attitude.
>
> Operations were carried out on a basis of compromise between police and military methods. There was always divided authority on any large-scale operation involving troops and police. There was the inevitable clash between the soldier trained to deal with the enemy by all means within his power in the quickest possible time, and the policeman trained to act only after the fullest investigation and after convincing himself that he had got the right person.[6]

Also, as one brigadier observed of the early days, "no soldier wants to play second fiddle to a police force indefinitely that has demonstrated its inability to maintain law and order. . . ."[7] Despite these strains and stresses, police-military collaboration eventually worked out surprisingly well.

One unusual British military contribution was the creation under GHQ FARELF of a British Operations Research Section (FE) which between 1953 and 1957 produced some exceptionally valuable analyses of operational patterns. Among other things, these demonstrated that battalions which did well in marksmanship competitions also did well in ambushes, that advance information was crucial to the success of patrols and ambushes, and that jungle firing was ineffective at more than 100-yard range and was best done at no more than 20 yards.[8]

## C. TACTICAL EMPLOYMENT OF ARMY UNITS

While many problems were encountered, what stands out about the tactical employment of military forces in Malaya is the extent to which, though organized World War II-style for conventional operations, they for the most part adapted quickly to the atypical demands of small-scale

jungle war.[9] Luckily a high proportion of commanders and troops had had jungle warfare experience in Burma in World War II, which stood them in good stead.

From the outset the army in Malaya was offensive-minded and sought to avoid being tied down. The first years must have been quite frustrating for military forces that were tied down partly to police-type local security work under civilian control and partly to tactical formations broken up and allocated territorially, and were mostly dependent on inadequate police intelligence for their eyes and ears.

But even when they were freer to operate offensively, their dominant mode of employment was atypical. They never were deployed as divisions and only infrequently as brigades or even battalions, but operated rather from "company bases" in platoon-sized or even smaller units. Small patrols and ambushes were the dominant, and certainly the most successful, tactical mode, especially after the MRLA guerrillas broke up into small units. Platoons or sections were normally rotated on the basis of twenty days in the jungle and ten days out.

Early emphasis was placed on systematic training for jungle operations. Marksmanship, junglecraft, and patrolling were stressed. A FARELF Training Center was created for individual and unit training. Advance echelons of newly arriving battalions flew out in advance to be trained as instructors for their units. Each battalion was given two months' initial training on the average before operational deployment.

The issue of *large- vs. small-unit operations* was a perennial one. In the early days, especially until new commanders learned the peculiar nature of Malayan jungle warfare, the army usually made the mistake of operating in too large formations. As Brigadier Clutterbuck himself attests, "the predilection of some army officers for major operations seems incurable."[10] Battalion- and even brigade-size task forces were often employed for jungle sweeps in 1948-1949, but seldom resulted in many kills or captures. Frequent changes of commanders and personnel slowed the learning process.[11] Also, the insurgents began operating in smaller groups, and in accord with Maoist doctrine usually withdrew rather than stand and fight for long. Systematic patrolling and small ambushes got better results. So, in October 1951, General Briggs laid

down the principle that large-scale operations should be forsworn in favor of small ones acting on intelligence. His successors all shared this view. The most successful battalions almost invariably employed it.

By 1953, *food denial* -- starving the guerrillas out -- became the chief basis of military as well as other C-I operations (see Section VII). By stringently clamping down on the leakage of food to the guerrillas in a given area over perhaps many months, troops and police could drive them to risk coming out of hiding and thus exposing themselves to ambushes and patrols. Such techniques were gradually refined. Sunderland describes the unusually large and highly successful fifteen-month Operation GINGER in 1958-1959 in Perak State. It utilized an infantry brigade group of five battalions, a squadron (troop) of the Special Air Service, a troop of armored cars, two artillery batteries, and an engineer battalion, plus 1,899 police, Home Guard, etc. -- a total of over 4,200 men. The ratio was about 20 to one. Little happened for about three months, but in the ensuing twelve months 222 guerrillas gradually were killed, captured, or surrendered.[12]

## D. ARTILLERY AND AIR SUPPORT

The military contribution in Malaya was predominantly from the army, and among army components it was chiefly an infantry war. Only two armored car units were used, mostly to patrol the roads. More surprising, only six two-gun troops of 25-pounder artillery were employed up to 1955, plus a few 5.5" guns. After 1955, nine two-gun troops were used. Instead of being sited in static positions, they were almost invariably attached to battalions on operations. Not until September 1957 was the millionth round fired off into the jungle. Compared to Vietnam, such small-scale artillery support is striking.

Air support was on but a modestly larger scale, except for air supply. Clutterbuck felt that "offensive air strikes . . . were the least important of all in Malaya" and "probably did more harm than good."[13] On the other hand, Colonel J. R. Shirley, who headed a British operations research team in Malaya during 1949-1951, recalled no evidence that air sorties had ever killed anyone but thought they had an undeniable

psychological effect.[14] There simply weren't many good targets in the deep jungle where small guerrilla groups were widely dispersed. Inhabited villages were never bombed, strafed, or shelled. The combat aircraft available were mostly those assigned to Malaya and Singapore for more conventional contingencies. In 1957, for example, Malaya Air Command had one squadron of heavy prop-driven bombers and three squadrons of jet fighter bombers. Monthly ordnance expenditures peaked in 1951, averaging in January-September over 600 tons of bombs and over 1,700 rockets. A few successful bombing raids, one killing fourteen guerrillas and another ten, were made in 1956-1957.[15] But only 33,000 tons of bombs were dropped throughout the Emergency.[16]

*Air supply*, however, was indispensable. It gave the security forces an enormous advantage over the guerrillas in jungle operations. Only one squadron of eight transports was used for the purpose until December 1953, when a second was added. The monthly average of supplies delivered by air rose from around 13 short tons during the Emergency's first year to a peak of 324 short tons during 1955.

Casualty evacuation and air insertion, mostly by helicopter, were also important -- not least to troop morale. Only between two and five small helicopters were available until 1954, when they were increased to two or three squadrons. Assault landings were not used, lest they prevent surprise. Other important uses of air were photo and visual reconnaissance, air observation of artillery fire, communications, and leaflet drops. Herbicides for spraying of guerrilla food plots in the jungle were first used in Malaya -- though on a small scale. A comprehensive photo survey was completed early in 1953. Voice broadcasting to the guerrillas was also employed (see Section IX).

When SWECs and DWECs wanted air support for an operation, they could call on a mobile team of air planners. But Air Officer Commanding Malaya kept centralized control of air assets, and all bids for their use were channeled to a central Joint Operations Center set up next to HQ Malaya Command. The overall impression is one of imaginative use of a small but flexible air component.

## VII. SEPARATING THE INSURGENTS FROM THEIR POPULAR BASE

In retrospect it is abundantly clear that one of the most effective U.K./GOM counterinsurgency techniques was the breaking of the links whereby the insurgents drew support from part of the Chinese community, especially the squatters. Aside from security force operations aimed at enhancing local security in populated areas while driving the guerrillas back into the jungle, this was done through a series of carefully coordinated civil programs: (1) registration, travel control, curfews, ID card checks; (2) resettlement of the great bulk of the squatter population in protected new villages; (3) pervasive food and drug controls in "black" areas to deny the guerrillas access to food supplies; (4) accelerated social and economic development; (5) steady movement toward self-government and independence (see Section VII); and (6) public information and psywar programs designed to keep the population fully informed of what was under way (see Section IX). Each of these programs reinforced the others. Moreover, all were conducted within the framework of a rule of law which carefully spelled out what the government and security forces could and could not do.

This multifaceted civil/military effort is well illustrated by this account of Templer's first address to the Federal Legislative Council in March 1952:

> He began by saying that the Emergency could not be overcome by military measures alone, but must be fought on the social, economic, and political fronts as well. He spoke of the steps necessary to build up a united Malayan nation -- such as an extension of citizenship rights to more non-Malays, the formation of a Federation Army, improvements in social services and education and the betterment of the economic position of the Malays. At the same time he outlined his plans for increasing the efficiency of the Police. Referring to political progress, he said that self-government must be built up from the bottom and local elections would have to be well established before elections to State and Federal Councils could be held.[1]

These programs reflected a dual strategy of control and accommodation -- control of those people and resources which could fuel the

insurgency and accommodation to those popular aspirations which were seen as helping rob the insurgency of its political appeals. This has been loosely called the carrot-and-stick approach. Great emphasis was placed on the former. Indeed, it was Templer who is believed to have first used the phrase about winning hearts and minds. He is cited as saying that "the answer [to the terrorists] lies not in pouring more soldiers into the jungle, but rests in the hearts and minds of the Malayan people."[2] But the enhancing of social, economic, and political opportunities was part of a carrot-and-stick approach designed at least partially to offset the adverse impact of a system of pervasive C-I controls. In this sense, the U.K./GOM approach fits as well into the Wolf-Leites model of how to cope with insurgency by organization and effective coercion as it does into the alternative model which they dub "hearts and minds."[3]

## A. RESETTLEMENT OF THE SQUATTERS

The crucial support being provided the insurgents by sympathizers or the coerced among the half-million Chinese squatters who lived largely unadministered along the jungle fringe quickly led the U.K./GOM to focus on how to break this link via regrouping or resettlement. But action was slow in coming, as land titles (a touchy issue under the jurisdiction of the various state governments) were involved. The Malay-dominated state governments were reluctant to appropriate funds or give up lands reserved for Malays to take care of Chinese squatters. A federal committee with state representation was formed, a report was made, proposals were approved, and the necessary Emergency Regulations were passed -- but nothing very concrete had happened by the time Briggs arrived in April 1950.[4]

Briggs quickly agreed that the squatters and rubber tappers had to be relocated so that the guerrillas could not feed on them. He favored resettling the squatters in self-contained communities of about one thousand each, in which entry and exit could be strictly monitored and strict curfews enforced during night hours. Each settlement would be wired in, with entry only by special gates; if necessary, watchtowers, pillboxes, and floodlights would be provided. Each settler would get title to the land he tilled, and a sixth of an acre for his house and

garden plot. But every effort would be made to see that the communities did not degenerate into mere detention camps. Schools, dispensaries, markets, electric light, and other facilities would be provided. Water would be piped in.

The success of the program was owing largely to careful planning and meshing of the efforts of many government agencies under strong central management.[5] Planning and execution was under the DWECs, but had to be approved at state level. Land was purchased in advance, and fortunately plenty of unused land was available. Actual resettlement was carried out as a military operation; surprise was essential so that the insurgents would not be forewarned. After an area was cordoned off by troops at first light, people were moved as short a distance as was consistent with security. Compensation was paid on the spot for anything (like growing crops) which could not be moved. If the squatters were moved more than two miles, a five-month subsistence allowance was paid while they raised new crops.

Resettlement's success was also owing to the fact that, in strong contrast to the later Strategic Hamlet program in Vietnam, it was carried out without undue haste. By the end of 1950 only 82 new villages with 117,000 people were complete or close to completion, and 58 more were in the pipeline. By end-1951 the number had risen to 429 villages with 395,000 people. By the end of 1952 there were 509 new villages with a population of 462,000.[6]

A select group of 430-odd resettlement officers, largely educated young Chinese, gradually were recruited to shepherd the new villages. Many were seconded from the Forestry, Game, Mines, and Survey departments, which were all but closed down anyway owing to insecurity in the countryside. An assistant resettlement officer, initially a European but later often a specially trained young Chinese, lived in the village as liaison with the government and to ensure adequate "aftercare" -- the provision of improved services.[7] Local protection was initially provided from a police post established in each new village while a Home Guard was being trained. Then the Home Guard gradually took over. By 1955 about a quarter of the new villages had become responsible for their own defense. Still later, the Home Guard too was phased down to a largely

standby basis as the area became secure. Equally important, the new villages were progressively accorded local self-government (see Section VIII).

In 1951 the GOM also developed a program to regroup the 650,000 rubber estate and mine workers. Locales that were capable of being protected were simply wired in and given additional protection, but in some cases workers had to be moved to resettlement areas like the squatters. Costs were shared between government and the employers according to an agreed formula. GOM costs for both programs over a three-year period are given officially as about $20 million.

Mistakes were made, especially in the early stages of the program, when some squatters were forcibly moved before adequate plans had been developed to settle them elsewhere. Many problems also arose over land tenure. Nor were the people happy about being uprooted. But they came to prefer the new villages, and almost none moved back to the old areas when these were later declared "white." Meanwhile, resettlement and regrouping greatly facilitated protection of the rural population, bringing it under effective GOM administration and separating it physically from the insurgents. Its success is suggested by the sharp drop in guerrilla-initiated incidents: As the program was completed, incidents fell from a 1951 average of over five hundred a month to around one hundred a month in 1953, though this drop is attributable to other factors as well.

By the end of the Emergency, around 530,000 people -- over a tenth of the population -- had been resettled in some 557 "new villages." Most were Chinese, but the Malays were not neglected; no fewer than 139 new villages were established for them (see Table 3). Moreover, many of the new villages were in fact satellites of existing villages and towns (72 out of 139 Malay, and 198 out of 399 Chinese).[8] In sum, resettlement not only helped the C-I effort greatly but served as an instrument for local development and a means of integrating much of the rural population into Malayan society. Though sooner or later some form of resettlement probably would have had to be undertaken anyway to bring the squatters under normal administration, the effect of the Emergency was to force the government to carry out the bulk of the

Table 3

NUMBER OF NEW VILLAGES BY SIZE OF POPULATION: 1959*

| State | Population: Under 1000 | 1000-1999 | 2000-4999 | 5000-9999 | 10,000+ | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Malay** | | | | | | |
| Johore | 5 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 27 |
| Kedah | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Kelantan | 16 | 4 | 1 | - | - | 21 |
| Negri Sembilan | 6 | 1 | - | - | - | 7 |
| Pahang | 26 | - | - | - | - | 26 |
| Perak | 43 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 45 |
| Selangor | 7 | 2 | 2 | - | - | 11 |
| Trengganu | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Total | 125 | 9 | 5 | - | - | 139 |
| **Chinese** | | | | | | |
| Johore | 43 | 25 | 26 | 6 | - | 100 |
| Kedah | 11 | 11 | 7 | - | - | 29 |
| Kelantan | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Malacca | 17 | - | - | - | - | 17 |
| Negri Sembilan | 20 | 8 | 5 | - | - | 33 |
| Pahang | 28 | 11 | 8 | - | 2 | 49 |
| Penang** | 3 | 3 | 3 | - | - | 9 |
| Perak | 29 | 27 | 33 | 12 | 3 | 104 |
| Perlis | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Selangor | 15 | 16 | 14 | 6 | 2 | 53 |
| Trengganu | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 3 |
| Total | 169 | 102 | 97 | 24 | 7 | 399 |
| **All Races*** ** | | | | | | |
| Johore | 69 | 27 | 27 | 6 | - | 129 |
| Kedah | 14 | 12 | 7 | - | - | 33 |
| Kelantan | 16 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 22 |
| Malacca | 17 | - | - | - | - | 17 |
| Negri Sembilan | 26 | 9 | 5 | - | - | 40 |
| Pahang | 56 | 11 | 9 | - | 2 | 78 |
| Penang** | 3 | 3 | 3 | - | - | 9 |
| Perak | 80 | 29 | 34 | 12 | 3 | 158 |
| Perlis | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Selangor | 23 | 18 | 17 | 6 | 2 | 66 |
| Trengganu | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | 4 |
| Total | 308 | 114 | 104 | 24 | 7 | 557 |

*Source: Data from the Malayan Christian Council, *A Survey of the New Villages in Malaya*, rev. Kuala Lumpur, 1959, pp. 21-46, as cited by Maynard Weston Dow, *Counterinsurgency and Nation-Building: A Comparative Study of Post-World War II Antiguerrilla Resettlement Programs in Malaya, The Philippines and South Vietnam*, University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1965, p. 64ff.

**Including Wellesley Province.

***This table includes 7 Indian, 4 Thai, 2 Senoi, 2 Javanese, and 4 new villages of unknown racial composition. It excludes 28 new villages which had already been closed down.

resettlement in a matter of months rather than years, and it has changed the face of Malaya.[9]

## B. FOOD CONTROL PROGRAMS

Close control of food and such other essentials as medicines was soon recognized as a valuable C-I measure, but as in the case of resettlement, some time elapsed before it was systematically applied. Not only was Malaya a rice deficit area, but the insurgents could not sustain themselves in any numbers in the jungle without external food supplies. Rice and food caches early became a major target of security force operations, and some controls were applied under the Emergency Regulations.

Yet not until June 1951, when squatter resettlement and growth of the police made it feasible, did General Briggs lay on a sweeping Federation-wide system of food and drug control, aimed at breaking the logistic links between the jungle guerrillas and their support in the populated areas. The system was administered by the SWECs and DWECs, which were allowed considerable local option. In "black" areas it involved strict rationing of certain foods at state discretion, village gate checks and curfew hours (also on roads), spot checks, careful inspection of road and rail traffic at checkpoints, mobile food-check teams, and strict accounting for all stocks and sales of specified foods and supplies. Food cans were even punctured when sold to prevent their being stored. Sales could be made only to people with ID cards, and records had to be kept for inspection in food-restricted areas.[10]

Curfews were an integral part of the system of control over movement of vehicles and people, the security forces assuming that anyone or anything moving after curfew was to be shot on sight -- and to kill. The basic control document was the "food stuffs movement permit," which was used not only for food but for other materials and for hardware. At first such permits were issued only at district; as the system became more refined, food control offices were established at village level and the permits were issued there.

By 1953 Templer, refining the Briggs Plan, decided that the security forces should focus their efforts on the guerrilla supply parties operating near the jungle edge to force the insurgents to commit resources to

defending their supply organization, thus making them vulnerable.[11] The guerrilla could not long exist -- much less operate -- on the natural food found in the deep jungle, which gave only an unbalanced diet. Nor could he live for long off the jungle aborigines -- who were subsistence farmers with little or no surplus -- except by confiscation and terrorist tactics which incited resentment and retaliation. Lastly, he could not cultivate any substantial area in the jungle without detection from the air.

In order to force the insurgents to make supply their major concern, the GOM turned to sizable food denial campaigns as the preferred form of security force operations. By July 1953 no less than 77 such operations had been mounted in the state of Negri Sembilan alone. "For the remaining years of the Emergency," says Sunderland, "patrol, ambush . . . inspections, cordon, and watch-and-ward activities associated with food denial became the major occupations of the Security Forces," replacing the earlier futile large-scale jungle sweeps.[12]

Sunderland gives a good account of some of the larger food control operations. He draws an analogy to a naval blockade. Briefly, each operation was preceded by weeks of secret planning and rehearsal. Choosing a proper target -- one small enough for adequate deployment of the security forces available yet large enough to enforce denial of food to the guerrilla on a sufficiently punitive scale -- was of primary importance.[13] Adkins states:

> Actually food denial was found to be too strong a word because it was almost physically impossible to deny food over large areas. This could be done only in small tightly controlled communities and even then seepage of small to even large amounts of food stuffs did occur.[14]

It did not take much "seepage" to feed a guerrilla who could subsist on a daily ration of a handful of rice. But he could store without detection only about six to eight weeks' supply, and the number of people, time, and effort involved in a "food lift" from village to jungle edge to deep jungle was such as to make the lift vulnerable to discovery.

Once the target was chosen (on the basis of careful intelligence), regulars moved out before dawn; by first light soldiers surrounded

every village in their assigned areas. A heavy investment of police and soldiers was required to make the cordon effective. The system also demanded efficient and honest local administration. Food stocks over a certain specified amount were confiscated, and food rationing was instituted (sometimes at subsistence level), with strict accounting of all inventory, and sales limited to specified food and supplies. Sales could be made only to people with ID cards at shops where they were registered, and records had to be kept subject to inspection in food-restricted areas.

The police performed essentially police functions -- maintaining checkpoints at village gates, inspecting road and rail traffic, and supervising and controlling the central cooking of rice in community kitchens (the rice was all stored by the government). This technique of community cooking as a control mechanism was based on the fact that cooked rice spoils in twenty-four hours in the tropical climate and thus could not be stored for any period of time. According to Adkins, however, central cooking was used in only a few, widely separated instances. It was apparently expensive in terms of manpower and required a high degree of control.

Meanwhile, the enlarged security forces would mount constant patrols and ambushes to keep pressure on the guerrillas, forcing them to keep on the move and making them vulnerable to ambush, destroying cultivated areas deep in the jungle, etc. The Home Guard protected and patrolled the perimeter of the "wired-in" villages.

All this took time. Seldom were there early results, as it was often months before the pressures told. Until the operation ended (some lasted for a year or more), every vehicle and every man, woman, and child in the village would be searched each time they left the village. (The authorities took great care not to offend local sensibilities; for example, only women searched the female villagers under the Emergency Regulations.)

Since food control was essentially unpopular (although in time it came to be appreciated as a blind behind which the people could refuse food to the guerrilla), an intense and continuing public relations program was conducted in each village. The people were told in advance

what was expected of them, and the reasons for the imposition of the controls; the need to impose them was blamed on the guerrillas. Finally, they were promised that the controls would be lifted when the area was considered cleared of insurgents, there was little or no contact with the enemy, and the people had demonstrated a willingness to cooperate with the security forces by informing on the insurgents. The area would then be declared "white," under Templer's carrot-and-stick approach.

In 1956 an Emergency Food Denial Organization (EFDO) was created under the new Ministry of Defense and Internal Security to standardize and provide overall supervision of the food control effort.[15] It had food control officers on the SWECs and DWECs. But in 1958 the EFDO itself consisted of only 151 professionals and about 200 clerks; the actual conduct of food denial checks and operations was handled by the police and military under direction of the DWECs.

Over time, this complex of food and resource controls together with the food denial operations seem to have done a great deal to sap insurgent strength. It forced the guerrillas to expose themselves to patrols and ambushes, and eventually to surrender in increasing numbers under the pressure of hunger. The SEPs citing hunger as their reason for surrendering rose from none in 1949-1951 to 29 percent in January-February 1955. Those citing a corollary reason -- hopelessness -- increased from 21 to 36 percent over the same period.

## C. DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

During the first few years the disruption caused by the insurgency probably had an adverse net effect on Malayan social and economic development. Various development projects had to be postponed because of diversion of resources to Emergency purposes and because of insecurity in rural areas.[16] Gradually, however, as it gained the upper hand, the GOM accompanied the controls imposed on the people with a series of programs designed to improve their lot. Of course, such programs were greatly facilitated by the availability of funds from the tin and rubber exports, which made Malaya unusually wealthy among Southeast Asian nations. While the programs were intended primarily to help lead Malaya as a whole toward viability and stability, they also were

designed with C-I benefits in mind. The "new villages" themselves were perhaps Malaya's greatest socioeconomic development project during 1948-1960.

Overall development was guided by a broad Federation Development Plan, which was drafted in 1950 and incorporated in the Colombo Plan for South and Southeast Asia. It was mostly locally financed, but received some help from the Colombo Plan donor nations, especially the United Kingdom. Included was a $200 million electric power program managed by an autonomous Central Electricity Board.[17]

One innovation was the Rural Industrial Development Authority (RIDA), begun on an experimental basis in 1950. It was designed mostly to help the Malay community; indeed a key aim was to meet the Malays' demand that they be helped to overcome their economic backwardness vis-à-vis the Chinese. From its inception it was based on the principles of self-help and response to local initiative.[18] It would assist local efforts, not dominate them. One of its major activities was the promotion of cooperatives, which the GOM encouraged. Some 2,123 had been formed by 1956. As early as 1953 RIDA was judged to have proved itself sufficiently to be converted from a government department to an autonomous corporation, backed by an annual subvention ($4.4 million through 1954) and a $3.3 million GOM loan but designed to be mostly self-financing.[19] RIDA established Development boards in every state and district, and in some places village boards, to which funds were allocated. Though a relatively small-scale activity in the early years, it probably had a positive psychological impact out of all proportion to its modest resources. After independence its activities were greatly expanded by the GOM, and the famous "Red Book" -- a detailed rural development plan made up according to a standard format by each district's rural development committee -- was one of the results.

Much attention was also paid to rejuvenation of the Malayan labor movement. When the Emergency was declared and the MCP banned, the MCP-dominated labor movement -- which had used strikes so effectively in 1946-1948 -- all but collapsed. The number of unions fell from 389 to 162, and membership declined by half.[20] There were many reservations about rebuilding incautiously what might again become a major threat.

But with the advice of union officials brought over from England, a Malayan Trades Union Congress was formed in 1950. By 1956 union membership again exceeded that of 1947, though 62 percent of the members were Indian and only 16 percent Chinese.[21]

The full panoply of measures undertaken by the GOM with British advice and assistance is too much for discussion here; moreover, as already noted, many were aimed at general development, even though they also helped limit the insurgency's appeal. In this category fall the rapid postwar expansion of the educational system, greatly improved health services, social legislation limiting hours of work and regulating interest rates to prevent usury, public housing, and the like.[22] The essential point is that this wide range of improving services played a major role in creating a climate in which it was increasingly difficult for insurgency to gain popular appeal.

## D. DEALING WITH THE ABORIGINES

Until the Emergency little was known about most of the aborigines living in the deep jungle. Their numbers (which may be over 100,000) were grossly underestimated. But after 1951, as the insurgents retreated further into the deep jungle, they would persuade or force the aborigines to grow food for them, act as warning scouts, and serve in other ways. At one time, it was estimated that as many as 12-15,000 aborigines were under insurgent influence.[23]

The U.K./GOM response was quite different from that often taken by the GVN toward the much larger Montagnard population in South Vietnam. The small GOM welfare staff which worked with the aborigines was elevated to a government department in 1950 and was greatly increased. As Templer put it, "The control of aborigines in deep jungle will be achieved by taking protection and administration to them rather than resettling them in new areas."[24] Starting in 1952, police-manned deep-jungle forts (often air-supplied) were created to provide protection to the aborigines. Programs were developed to improve their living conditions and safeguard their rights. Over time these proved quite successful. Indeed, a small aborigine strike force of some three hundred was later established, which killed more guerrillas in the last two years of the Emergency than did all the rest of the security forces put together.[25]

## VIII. STRATEGY OF POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION

At the same time that it helped Malaya deal with insurgency, Britain helped it move toward enfranchising its citizenry, self-government, and then independence -- all in the brief space of ten years.[1] This would sooner or later have occurred in any case as part of the general postwar decolonization process which broke up the British Empire. But it is doubtful that Malaya would have moved as fast if there had been no insurgency. Sunderland cites John Morton, Director of Intelligence under Templer, as saying that the GOM could not have won without the positive political theme of a greater Malaya and that the U.K./GOM leadership saw its job as bringing the nationalist movement to the fore.[2] By deeds as well as words, the British managed to convince most of the people that Malaya was on the road to early independence. The visible progress in this direction -- culminating in August 1957 -- certainly helped limit the insurgency's appeal.

So too did simultaneous British efforts to settle the difficult communal problem created by the existence of large unfranchised Chinese and Indian minorities. Liberalizing the citizenship laws was seen by the British as essential to bringing these minorities into Malayan political life. Fortunately the felt need to counter the insurgency by stressing the benefits of responsive government also led the Malays to be more responsive to this endeavor and caused the Chinese community to be more interested than it would otherwise have been.

But it was the British rather than the Malays who initially forced the pace. Violent anticolonialism was notably absent among the Malays. The Malay aristocracy was in no hurry for independence. The rajahs of the various states held, in theory at least, all political power. No one had ever voted in an election. Moreover, it was Malayan resentment against the United Kingdom's pushing through enfranchisement of Chinese and Indians as well as Malays which caused the demise of the short-lived Malayan Union of 1946-1948.

It also led, in 1946, to formation of Malaya's first large political party, the United Malay National Organization (UMNO), a conservative grouping formed by wealthy Malays to oppose the Malayan Union. In turn

a Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) was formed in 1949 both to agitate for improvement of Chinese status and to compete with the Communists for the allegiance of the Chinese community. Malcolm MacDonald encouraged its formation in order to help undermine the MCP's appeal. The MCA proved successful in this respect; it and UMNO came to form the political base of an emerging independent GOM.[3]

## A. BROADENING THE BASE OF GOVERNMENT: 1951-1954

The 1948 *Federation of Malaya Agreements* between Britain and the eleven Malay states and settlements provided that "progress should be made towards eventual self-government" and that as soon as feasible legislative organs would become composed of elected members.[4] As the first step, a Federal Legislative Council was created with a majority of nominated "unofficial" members. The same was done with the eleven state/settlement councils. In contrast to the prewar councils (which had been advisory though influential), the new councils passed all laws and financial measures. In April 1951 six unofficial members of the Federal Legislative Council became in effect ministers responsible for various civil government departments, replacing the senior civil servants who had theretofore run them.

London's directive to General Templer in February 1952 stressed that Malaya should in due course become both "a fully self-governing nation" and a united one.[5] To this end Templer laid stress on developing the electoral process, and on enfranchising the Indians and Chinese. A compromise law in September 1952 extended federal citizenship to 50-60 percent of the Indians and Chinese.

In encouraging the parallel development of political responsibility through elected governments, of which Malaya had no experience, the British started at the local level. A federal ordinance of September 1950 provided for elections to municipal and town councils and later to rural boards. The first town elections were held in early 1952. The rural process began with appointment of village committees to handle local affairs. Then, in May 1952, legislation was passed for electing village councils in the Malay kampongs and in the "new villages" created by the resettlement policy. By 1955 more than 50 percent of the villages

had elected local councils with an average 75 percent turnout at the polls. In the words of one student, this program "accelerated political change in Malaya and helped prepare it for self-government."[6]

Next came elections to state legislative councils, which were proposed by Templer in November 1952 and took place in 1954-1955, replacing the nominated unofficial members. The sultans became in effect constitutional rulers.

The electoral process also helped stimulate the development of political parties and coalitions. To contest the first municipal council election in January 1952 (in the capital of Kuala Lumpur), an alliance was formed between UMNO and the MCA. Later joined by the Malayan Indian Congress, this became Malaya's dominant political party -- the Alliance Party. In 1953 it demanded an elected majority in the Federal Legislative Council and independence within three years. In 1954 it demanded a fully elected federal legislature.

## B. SELF-GOVERNMENT, THEN INDEPENDENCE: 1955-1957

Templer was unwilling to go this far, but decided that the Federal Legislative Council would have an elected majority of 52, and 46 nominated members.[7] In the July 1955 federal election the Alliance Party swept into 51 of 52 elected seats. Though far more Malays than Chinese or Indians voted in proportion to their numbers, all the non-Malay Alliance candidates (15 Chinese, 1 Indian, and 1 Ceylonese) were elected. The Council's 98 members comprised 50 Malays, 26 Chinese, 12 Europeans, 7 Indians, 2 Ceylonese, and 1 Eurasian.

As majority party leader, the Tungku became Federation Chief Minister of an Executive Council (cabinet) composed of six Malayan and three Chinese ministers heading government departments, and five British officials. All were responsible to the legislature within its sphere. Though the High Commissioner retained his legal right of veto under the 1948 Federation Agreements, he never exercised it.

At a London conference in early 1956, the Tungku won further changes. Now all members of the Executive Council except the Attorney General and Chief Secretary became Malayan ministers (including Defense and Internal Security). This last raised an interesting problem of putting British

troops under the authority of a Malayan minister. The solution was to leave the troops under the command of the British general serving as Director of Operations, but he would act (as before) under the general policy guidance of the top war council chaired by the Minister of Defense.

Many other thorny issues, especially communal ones, were resolved by a bargaining process before independence. A hard-fought compromise provided most Chinese and Indians with the franchise. The Chinese also won support for Chinese schools. On the other hand, numerous preferences were still allowed the dominant Malay community. The rajahs would become constitutional rulers and real power would reside in elected legislatures.

When independence was formally achieved on August 31, 1957, the administrative and legislative machinery was thus already in place and functioning. Hence little administrative change actually took place, except that remaining British officials became employees of an independent GOM. Though Malaya was the last country of South and Southeast Asia to become independent, it did so on a more stable and efficient administrative base -- despite communal divisions -- than most of the others.

## C. MALAYANIZATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION

It proved a significant factor for stability that the basic political-administrative structure of the Federation was not radically altered by the sweep toward self-government and independence; it had been progressively Malayanized already. As early as 1948, most of the lower levels of the Federation administrative structure, and many of the higher, were occupied by local nationals. The highest level of the Malayan Civil Service numbered about 300, of whom 36 were Malays. The bulk of the larger Malayan Public Service (including the police) was local, though most of its higher positions were still held by Britons. In all there were about 2,500 British officials, mostly civil servants and police officers. A special problem was created by the limited number of Chinese.

Malayanization was accelerated during 1948-1957. Numerous students were sent to British higher schools. Entry into the Civil Service was liberalized in 1951. Over the period, the higher Civil Service ranks were progressively filled by local nationals as qualified men became available. The process was a gradual one. By June 1954 there were 107 Malayans to 161 British in the highest level of the Civil Service alone.[8] At the 1956 Malaya Constitutional Conference in London, a definite schedule was drawn up for the gradual withdrawal of remaining British personnel and their replacement by Malayans.[9] A Committee on the Malayanization of the Public Service was formed, with the Tungku as Chief Minister chairing it, to fill vacant posts and replace over time some 1,800 senior European personnel. In 1956 the entire Civil Service (all levels) numbered 106,600 of whom 61,000 were Malays, 29,000 Indians, 13,000 Chinese, and the rest largely Eurasians.[10]

By the time independence arrived in 1957, most district police officers, infantry company commanders, and middle-level civil servants were already Malayans, largely owing to a crash training program concentrated on these levels in 1955-1957.[11]

## IX. INFORMATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

As part of their emphasis on multiple counterinsurgency techniques, the U.K./GOM gradually came to make extensive use of carefully designed information programs. These proved indispensable to explaining the "carrot-and-stick" approach. The purpose was to ensure that ample word on GOM activities reached all the people, on the principle that such knowledge could be a potent C-I weapon. Of course, for such information to be credible, it had to be accurate and reflect positive real-life acts. This was the case in Malaya, where progress toward damping down the insurgency, improving living conditions, and achieving self-government provided ample grist for the government propaganda mill.

Psychological warfare against the insurgents, aimed chiefly at weakening their morale and encouraging surrenders, was also extensively used. It became a major function of the information services. Leaflets dropped over jungle areas were the means most frequently employed. Often quite sophisticated appeals were made, and a well-publicized reward system paid off handsomely. When Templer, in retrospect, "rated the information program as almost on a par with intelligence in combatting guerrillas. . . ,"[1] he doubtless also had these psywar aspects in mind.

Also interesting is how the U.K./GOM used their Emergency powers to keep a low profile on their protracted C-I effort both in Malaya and abroad. Strict censorship was enforced on the local media. The international press was provided with minimal access to news and services, and military communiqués were kept as uninformative and unexciting as circumstances allowed. As a result, not only was British domestic criticism of the war relatively low, but little international interest was aroused. Hence the MCP was unable to generate much significant leverage on London, a factor reinforced by its lack of any overt international sponsorship -- a very different situation from that in Vietnam.

### A. INFORMATION PROGRAMS

As in other aspects of the Emergency, it took some years for the information program to hit its stride. From the beginning the U.K./GOM

saw the need to explain the rationale for the pervasive network of Emergency procedures to the affected population. In 1949 alone some 3.75 million copies of local newspapers and 50 million leaflets were distributed; public address trucks also reached 200,000 people a month by late 1949.[2] But for the first two years of the Emergency there was no information service and no coordinated antiguerrilla information campaign. In June 1950 a service was organized at the Federation level, with representatives in every state and increasingly in the districts.

Templer did much to strengthen information and psychological war. He brought in to head it in 1952 Mr. A. D. C. Peterson, who had psywar experience in Southeast Asia Command during World War II. All relevant activities were brought under his control. In 1953 Information became a full-fledged government department. Support of all media was provided by this one department. Information officers served on the SWECs and DWECs.[3] In 1955 Peterson was succeeded by the first Malayan to become head of a federal administrative department.[4]

Peterson regarded his aim as being "to detach the honest anti-colonialist from the Communists. . . . He believed that an information campaign had to have something to sell and that nationalism filled this need." This theme helped him to recruit young, progressive men who, after a six-week course, would go out into the villages and preach nationalism, using well-equipped mobile vans with a wide variety of equipment. By November 1958 there were ninety mobile vans and four boats, enough to permit field information officers to visit around a million people -- one-sixth of the population -- each month. These mobile field officers and their teams concentrated on the rural areas, especially the new villages, and mixed their information function with tailored psywar themes under the guidance of the local DWEC.[5]

Among other techniques a Malayan Film Unit produced topical movies; troops of SEPs would "satirize" guerrilla life; three radio stations produced programs in various languages and dialects; weekly and monthly newspapers were produced, besides booklets, pamphlets, and a multitude of press releases for the local vernacular press. Emergency expenditures of the Information Department from 1952 to 1960 were only $1.5 million, a comparatively modest sum compared to the impact achieved.[6]

Perry Robinson notes this disproportion, commenting that the total annual cost of the Information Services was less than that of one jet fighter, and that allocating only a little more to psywar might have achieved even greater results.[7]

As part of the process of political education, the GOM also devised "civics courses." Selected local representatives were taken as GOM guests to visit government departments, hear lectures, and see demonstrations. Some 3,600 people attended civics courses in 1953 alone.[8]

## B. PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

Although Peterson in retrospect saw the information program as more important to the C-I effort,[9] the government also put emphasis on psychological warfare aimed at the insurgents themselves. It not only made life as hard as it could for the insurgents but then proceeded to harry them in their loyalties, and (carrying this approach to its logical conclusion) made it as tempting as it could for them to surrender.

The primary objective of GOM psychological warfare was to increase the surrender rate.[10] But there were a number of obstacles to doing so. Insurgents feared the treatment they might be accorded after surrender. They also faced some danger in surrendering, for if they did not follow recognized procedures they might be shot by the security forces in the very act of giving themselves up. Psywar programs addressed themselves to both these problems, stressing the good treatment they would receive and giving specific instruction on how to surrender.

Secondary GOM psywar aims were to increase the tensions between the MRLA's leaders and its rank and file, and those between the MRLA and the Min Yuen, its covert supporters in the villages. Such efforts would no doubt have been far less effective if the British had not promised independence to the country, and begun as early as 1951 to make that promise into a commitment visible in the villages.

Psychological warfare functions were part of the work of the Information Services, which drew heavily on clues provided by Special Branch. The best psywar material was written by a Malayan Chinese team led by C. C. Too, which included several ex-insurgents.[11] The army was not allowed to establish its own information or psychological warfare

service. However, a special Psychological Warfare Section was attached to the Director of Operations staff to plan operations against the insurgents in the jungle, while the Information Services remained responsible for carrying out the actual programs under the aegis of the DWECs and SWECs.

The size of these programs may be judged by the fact that in 1956 alone they included the recording of 639 separate voice messages, and more than 2,200 sorties by aircraft broadcasting these to insurgents in the jungle.[12] The main means of direct communication with the insurgents was the leaflet -- thousands of which were dropped over suspect jungle base areas, promising amnesty to those who surrendered and telling about those who had already done so and others who had been killed. More general "strategic" themes were also used. Out of more than a hundred million leaflets dropped in 1956, one series of twenty million announced the outcome of the truce talks between Chin Peng and the Tungku, and the end of the GOM amnesty offer. Another series of ten million stressed the end of the amnesty and drew attention to the coming Chinese New Year and thoughts of family reunion. A third series of ten million warned that the coming of independence in the following year would in no way alter the determination of the government and people to destroy the MCP and to end terrorism.[13] The MPLA decreed the death penalty for anyone in its ranks found even picking such leaflets up.

## C. THE REWARDS-FOR-SURRENDER PROGRAM

The heart of the government's psychological warfare was its rewards-for-surrender program. This addressed itself to the fact that killing an insurgent was -- at least by any rational standards -- exorbitantly expensive. Bribing insurgents to surrender, or others to provide information which would lead to their capture, was much cheaper. So bribes and rewards were set at levels which made them quite handsome by any standards. For bringing in an insurgent alive, they ranged from U.S.$28,000 for the Chairman of the Central Committee, down to $2,300 for a platoon leader and $875 for a soldier (see Table 4).

Table 4

SCALE OF REWARDS FOR DEFECTION OR CAPTURE IN MALAYA*

(U.S. Dollars)

| Group | Approximate Political or Military Rank | Malaya Bring in Alive, 100% |
|---|---|---|
| A | Chairman Central Committee | $28,000 |
| B | Presidium Member | $22,700 |
| C | Central Committee Member | $18,200 |
| D | Province Secretary<br>Regimental CO | $16,000 |
| E | Province Current Affairs Member<br>Front Chairman<br>Battalion CO | $ 8,750 |
| F | Province Committee Member<br>District Secretary | $ 6,300 |
| G | District Assistant Secretary<br>Company CO | $ 4,550 |
| H | District Committee Member<br>Assistant Company CO | $ 2,800 |
| I | Platoon Leader | $ 2,300 |
| J | Cell, Squad Leader | $ 1,600 |
| K | Ordinary Party Member<br>Soldier or Class A Laborer | $ 875 |

*Source: Stephen Enke, *Vietnam's "Other" War*, Tempo 66 TMP-112, General Electric Company, Santa Barbara, California, December 1966, p. 14.

For information which led to the capture or killing of such officials by the authorities, the rewards averaged about 78 percent of these figures. When an agent brought about the capture or killing of two or more insurgents, these sums were cumulated. For one coup in which an agent's information concerning an insurgent camp led to an air strike that killed fourteen out of sixteen insurgents, the agent was awarded his bonus for all fourteen -- a total of U.S.$20,000. According to an officer who knew of the incident, the agent became "no doubt a very prosperous man with his own business in Hong Kong or Singapore."[14]

The high scale of these rewards provoked some criticism that the entire approach was immoral. As one Australian soldier remarked, terrorists who were caught were treated like murderers, while those who surrendered were "treated like kings."[15] Even the smallest of the rewards -- $875 -- could have represented a lifetime of a worker's savings, but it would have been foolish to have made them any lower. For the dilemma which they were intended to resolve was that of money plus such safety as the government could provide versus no money and such safety as the insurgents could provide. Above a certain level the amount of money was often less important than the defector or informer's estimate of which side could protect him or hide him better from the other. Until the government could provide a defector or informer the protection he needed, the program got nowhere. But once it could do so -- and make this clear to the insurgents -- the program not only neutralized a large number of insurgents who might otherwise have continued fighting, but it also provided Special Branch with a large flow of intelligence (full cooperation with the police was the price of the reward).

The program thus began to pay dividends only slowly, and of course it was the totality of pressures exerted on the insurgents -- not just psywar and rewards -- which led to the growing toll. In the last half of 1948 only 56 insurgents surrendered. In 1949 the total increased to 251, but in 1950 it declined to 147. In the three following years it rose again to 201, then to 256, and in 1953 to its high of 372 (compared to 73 captured, 291 wounded, and 947 killed in that year).[16] During the twelve years of the Emergency, a total of 2,702 insurgents surrendered, compared to 6,710 killed and 1,287 captured. However,

this total leaves out of account those who were captured, wounded, or killed on the basis of defector intelligence. It also ignores the profound effect which surrenders had on morale in the insurgents' camps, especially when SEPs were used for shrewd psywar appeals.

One observer calls the SEPs "the most potent propaganda weapon in the Emergency."[17] Statements by SEPs urging the insurgents to surrender were recorded and broadcast over the jungle treetops from planes; these "voice flights" were so effective that 70 percent of the SEPs said that they had some role in shaping their decision to surrender.[18]

To stop the rot the MRLA high command went to extraordinary lengths to maintain control of their followers. Checks, controls, and inquisitions multiplied; sentries watched sentries; watchers watched everyone. It will never be possible to calculate the loss of productivity which followed. But it seems safe to conclude that the program played a far larger role in the defeat of the insurgency than the total number of SEPs might indicate. It may not be quite true, as one writer has asserted, that "the war was won by bribing the rank-and-file Reds to give up."[19] But rewards undoubtedly advanced the cause of winning it.

## X. MALAYA AND VIETNAM: A COMPARISON IN RETROSPECT

By now the key features of the Malayan counterinsurgency effort seem almost self-evident: (1) deliberate use of a long-haul, low-cost strategy employing a wide range of civil, police, and military programs; (2) their knitting together by an unusual civil/military and U.K./GOM management structure; (3) dominant emphasis on breaking the links between the guerrillas and their popular base, especially among the Chinese squatters; (4) great emphasis on the right kind of intelligence; (5) a carrot-and-stick approach combining tough controls in black areas with a major campaign to win "hearts and minds"; and (6) extensive use of information and psywar programs. Though all this took considerable time to develop, it met the ultimate test.

No one element was decisive. Success was achieved by the meshing of many civil-military programs, each of which interacted with the others. If there was one element on which all others depended it was the increasingly effective Police Special Branch intelligence. But without improving local security and growing cooperation from the population such intelligence gathering would have been far more difficult. Improving local security, largely a police effort, freed the army to go after the insurgents in the jungle, which it did with growing success. Resettlement of the squatters, plus effective population and food controls, made it more and more difficult for the guerrillas to get support. Development programs, social services, and the move toward popular enfranchisement and political independence won increasing rural support. And all these programs were effectively integrated by a unified British-Malayan management system at all key levels -- another essential ingredient of success.

All this did not spring full-blown from the head of Zeus, but resulted from a painful trial-and-error process over time. For the first few years the government effort was confused, inadequate, and lacking in direction, and it looked as though the U.K./GOM were losing. Yet the leadership showed flexibility and adaptability in learning from its mistakes and evolving a more successful C-I response.

Nonetheless, why did it take twelve years? The early mistakes took time to rectify. Many programs also needed years to achieve full impact. Moreover, the U.K./GOM opted deliberately for a long-haul, low-cost strategy largely dictated by financial constraints. In any event, would doubling the military effort in 1948-1950, for example, have produced much more than a doubling of the number of soldiers stumbling blindly about in the jungle? Better intelligence was the key, and this took time to develop. Clutterbuck avers that "if we had had in 1948 the Police Special Branch intelligence system that we had built up by 1954, the insurgency might never have gotten into its stride and would certainly have been ended more quickly."[1]

Combined U.K./GOM management during the Emergency was so successful that it was again promptly put into effect when Indonesian "confrontation" pressures developed on Borneo some six years after Malaya's independence. The threat from Indonesian cross-border operations looked ominous for a time. When the United Kingdom came to the aid of Malaya (now Malaysia), both parties were quite conscious of Malaysia's newfound political sensitivities as a sovereign nation.[2] By mutual agreement a British Director of Operations was again appointed, responsible to both Kuala Lumpur and London. Great stress was also laid on a multifaceted civil/military strategy. The first DO described his primary aim as being to prevent this small conflict "from escalating into open war"; to do this "it was vital to win not only the opening rounds of the jungle battle but at the same time the psychological battle in the kampongs of the up-country tribal people." His first principle was "to win the battle for hearts and minds. . . . It is because by winning over the people to your side you succeed in isolating your opponent from supplies, from shelter and from intelligence."[3] This strategy proved quite successful, though Indonesian guerrilla raids never reached critical proportions.

But the intriguing question with respect to drawing useful lessons for application elsewhere is how much the U.K./GOM's success can be attributed to the approaches they developed and how much to the special circumstances which limited the insurgency threat in Malaya, and later Borneo, and gave the U.K./GOM decisive advantages on which they capitalized. While both factors obviously are significant, do such special

circumstances give the lessons of Malaya only limited transferability to quite different situations -- such as Vietnam?

## A. UNDERLYING DISSIMILARITIES BETWEEN MALAYA AND VIETNAM

Perhaps the best way to bring home this issue to an American audience is to compare the Malayan C-I effort briefly with the more ambiguous U.S. experience in Vietnam. The Vietnam conflict has been going on for some dozen years now, and the Malayan Emergency also lasted twelve years. Certain aspects of the two conflicts are sufficently similar to permit comparison, and even the differences may prove instructive.*

It must be acknowledged that in many respects the United Kingdom confronted a quite different and more manageable situation in Malaya than did the French and then the Americans in Vietnam. Indeed, some observers argue that Malaya and Vietnam are so dissimilar as to make comparisons invalid. Bernard Fall has asserted that "any comparison between British victories in Malaya and the situation in Vietnam in the 1960s is nothing but a dangerous delusion, or worse, a deliberate oversimplification of the whole problem."[4] R. O. Tilman takes a similar view.[5] However, both critics focus more on the differences between the two countries and their insurgencies than on the different C-I approaches employed. In fact Fall's own critique of U.S. performance clearly suggests that what the British did in Malaya is far more in tune with his own thinking than what the United States did in Vietnam.

But there is little doubt that the Malayan insurgency was far more limited in nature, scale, and external support than was Vietnam after 1961 or 1962. First, its popular base was almost entirely limited to a portion of the ethnic Chinese minority; it never caught on among the dominant Malay element or even the Indians. The Viet Cong (VC) insurgency had far broader and deeper popular roots.

Second, the ethnic Chinese guerrillas in Malaya never received any significant outside aid. In contrast the VC insurgents had the inestimable advantage of nearby out-of-country sanctuaries, extensive outside logistic and personnel help (plus many thousands of South Vietnamese regroupees), and after 1964 increasing infiltration of North Vietnamese regular troops.

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*Since this study covers only Malaya, the points made on Vietnam are drawn from reports still in preparation.

Third, the two insurgencies differed greatly in the degree of their legitimacy as seen through the eyes of the target population. With considerable success, the VC portrayed themselves as the heirs of the anticolonial revolution against the French, which had succeeded in liberating North Vietnam by 1954. The Malayan CP tried hard to do the same, but was never able to exert a comparable nationalist appeal -- not even to most ethnic Chinese. Steady progress toward Malayan independence robbed the MCP of credibility for its claim that violent revolution was the only way to achieve it.

Fourth, the VC benefited greatly from the feeble and often oppressive nature of GVN administration in the countryside. In neither popular appeal nor effectiveness could it compete effectively with the VC's own rural shadow administration. In Malaya, on the other hand, the U.K./GOM could rely on a viable and increasingly effective political/administrative structure, which had been largely rebuilt during 1946-1948. Rural administration never broke down in Malaya as it did in Vietnam. At the center, too, the government in Kuala Lumpur was at all times far more stable, effective, and responsive than that in Saigon. Thompson calls this political/administrative contrast "perhaps the greatest advantage which Malaya had over South Vietnam."[6]

Fifth, the United Kingdom had the inestimable advantage of being long and firmly entrenched in Malaya and enjoying a solid reciprocal relationship with its local rulers. This permitted Britain to provide effective leadership in the crucial stages under a Malay political umbrella. British troops participated from the outset too. While the GOM was being Malayanized, U.K. personnel operated from within the GOM structure, greatly simplifying the problems of joint administration and command. Thus there was no question of imperialist intervention. Indeed, one of the keys to Britain's success was the skillful manner in which it disengaged politically while fighting an insurgency. In contrast, the United States in Vietnam played a role till 1965 that was mostly advisory, and thereafter maintained an uneasy coalition relationship with a nation it treated as a sovereign ally.

Last but not least, largely because of these underlying differences, the VC insurgency grew to a scale far outstripping the Malayan --

whereas the latter had begun declining in strength after the first few years. Of course, this must also in part be attributed to U.K./GOM success in containing the insurgency, as opposed to GVN/U.S. inability to do so. In any event, by 1962-1963, the VC insurgency had grown far larger and the GVN far weaker than had the insurgency in Malaya at its peak.

Thus the most valid comparison would be between Malaya 1948-1954 (when the insurgency peaked and was defeated) and Vietnam 1958-1962 (when it was still essentially a rural insurgency). Malaya is far less comparable to the later period in Vietnam, when a quasiconventional war was superimposed on the continuing rural insurgency and especially after North Vietnam and then the United States began intervening with regular forces. Almost inevitably, it now appears in retrospect, the focus on the "big-unit" war tended to crowd out focus on C-I programs. Not until mid-1967, after the United States had prevented a VC takeover and recaptured the initiative, was a counterinsurgency-oriented pacification program of any scale launched in Vietnam.

On the other hand, the differences between Malaya and Vietnam should not be allowed to obscure what U.S. Army Chief of Staff General H. K. Johnson called "the many similarities."[7] Especially if we compare the early periods in both cases, these similarities are striking. Both insurgencies pursued a Maoist strategy aimed essentially at the political objective of undermining the existing government. Both were organized on the Maoist pattern. Both were rural-oriented, and utilized remote and inaccessible jungle base areas.[8] Both stressed high ideological discipline and élan. Nor were the disparities in strength so great. Insurgent strength measured against total population in Malaya in 1948-1951 with its Min Yuen support organization was roughly comparable in size to that in Vietnam during 1958-1961 and maybe even including 1962. And the GOM was not very much stronger vis-à-vis the insurgents in the early phase than was the GVN. Diem's position looked pretty solid in 1958-1959.

Another often ignored similarity is that the insurgents had the early initiative in both cases. We have seen how the early U.K./GOM response was confused, unwieldy, and inadequate. Good intelligence was

equally lacking. The large Malayan "squatter" areas were as virtually unadministered as remote areas in South Vietnam. For the first two or three years it looked as though the U.K./GOM were losing. But here we come again to a major difference. The U.K./GOM gradually contained the insurgency and then broke its back within four years, while in Vietnam the insurgency gradually grew to almost unmanageable proportions. Why was this?

## B. DIFFERING APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

Granted that many of the reasons for these contrasting outcomes lie in the factors already mentioned, not least of them the internal weakness of the fledgling GVN and the mistakes of Ngo Dinh Diem. But to what extent can they also be attributed to the different approach taken by the GVN/U.S. as opposed to the U.K./GOM? Put another way, if the GVN/U.S. in Vietnam had followed an approach more like that followed successfully by the U.K./GOM in Malaya, might the outcome -- at least during the pre-1965 period -- have been significantly different?

For the two C-I approaches were of course quite different, particularly in the extent to which each relied on *military* means. In part this is owing to varying perceptions of the threat. The U.K./GOM, recognizing the limited scope of the insurgency (and its lack of outside support), opted to deal with it via a mixed strategy employing civil and police as much as military resources. The U.S. and GVN, influenced by the Korean War and Ho's victory over the French, worried far more during 1955-1960 over a conventional attack by North Vietnam. They devoted the bulk of their resources to military preparations against this external threat. Though insurgency developed instead, their efforts to meet it remained predominantly military, a tendency which grew further in the early sixties as rural insurgency developed into quasi-conventional war.

After 1964-1965, of course, any adequate U.S./GVN response had to be largely military, but this only reinforced the trend toward concentration on its more conventional military aspects to the neglect of other key aspects of the insurgency. The "big unit" war dominated the Vietnam stage.

This led to the second striking difference between the two C-I approaches -- the notable disparity between the proportion of total effort which the U.K./GOM devoted to nonmilitary measures and that which the U.S./GVN allotted to similar measures, especially in the period before the Hanoi-backed VC military threat grew almost unmanageable. True, many small-scale efforts were undertaken in Vietnam, some of them directly inspired by Malaya. But not until 1967-1968 did the GVN/U.S. begin devoting major resources to what we termed a "pacification" program on a scale and with a priority more commensurate with the need. Only after our massive military effort had contained but failed to defeat the insurgency did we come to treat programs such as pacification as an indispensable corollary to our military response. And in terms of the proportion of total GVN/U.S. response allocated to it, it remained a poor second to the continuing investment in the big-unit war.

Granted that this weighting of the GVN/U.S. response was largely dictated by the exigencies of the situation. Nonetheless, in hindsight there seems to be much that was done in Malaya that might have been usefully stressed more heavily in Vietnam -- with suitable adaptation to the local scene. It is painful to read British critiques of U.S. performance in Vietnam in the light of Britain's own experience in Malaya. One example is a seminar of friendly and experienced senior observers held by the Royal United Services Institution in February 1969. While conscious of the disparities between the two situations, its members, perhaps inevitably, tended to criticize the United States for neglecting such keys to earlier U.K./GOM success as: intelligence on the insurgent organization, the police in general and Special Branch in particular, effective and responsive local administration, the winning of rural support, and integrated civil/military conflict management at all levels.[9]

Only partly explicable by the more limited nature of the threat is the much greater reliance in Malaya than in Vietnam on police and paramilitary forces. Particularly in the 1955-1961 period, when the VC threat was mostly rural and guerrilla, strengthening the Civil Guard and the Self-Defense Corps in the GVN, plus a good police force, might have provided a more suitable response than building up ARVN. Proposals and even some modest efforts were made to this end. In 1961 the British

Advisory Mission, for example, made establishment of a truly professional national police its first recommendation to Diem. Moreover, Civil Guard and Self-Defense Corps were increased from under 100,000 to some 180,000 by end-1963.[10] But both the ARVN generals and their MAAG advisers were far more attuned to meeting a threat of conventional North Vietnamese invasion across the DMZ, which never occurred in the way anticipated.

Lack of an effective C-I intelligence system in Vietnam, in such strong contrast to Malaya, is also attributable partly to the failure to build up police instead of military intelligence. Sir Robert Thompson argues that "no government can hope to defeat a communist insurgent movement unless it gives top priority to, and is successful in, building up such an organization."[11] U.K./GOM lack of one was a serious handicap in the early Emergency years, just as the growth of an outstanding Police Special Branch was crucial to later success. By the same token inadequate GVN/U.S. attention to the right kind of counterinsurgency intelligence has been a critical handicap even to the present day.[12] The British Mission recommended in 1962 that C-I intelligence be put under the police to replace the plethora of ineffective intelligence groups then existing, but again the military decided the issue. True, the problem in South Vietnam had proved far more difficult to remedy, but early adequate focus on it could not have helped but produce better results by now.

In Vietnam as well as in Malaya various efforts were made to break the links between the insurgents and the people through better local security for the villages, population and resource controls, resettlement, food denial, and the like. In fact, a conscious effort was made to apply Malayan experience in Vietnam. The attempt proved as unsuccessful in Vietnam, at least till very late in the day, as it had proved successful in Malaya. One example was the overambitious 1961-1963 "strategic hamlet" program, based largely on the Malayan experience but executed with striking differences. Thompson, who recommended the resettlement program, summarizes the reasons for its failure:

> As we have seen, the major weakness in the Vietnamese implementation of the strategic hamlet programme was that it had no strategic direction, with the result that strategic hamlets were created haphazardly all over the

> country, and in no area was there a really solid block of them. This led to a situation where, instead of the hamlets on the perimeter of the advance forming the front line against the Viet Cong, almost every single hamlet was itself still in the front line and vulnerable to Viet Cong attack. The second weakness was that military operations, particularly in the Mekong Delta, were not designed to support the advance of the strategic hamlet programme. The third weakness was that no real effort was made to separate the population in the strategic hamlets from the Viet Cong by eliminating their agents and supporters inside the hamlets, or by imposing controls on the movement of people and supplies. Even if some more overt Viet Cong agents and supporters moved out of a strategic hamlet at the time when it was established, they subsequently had no difficulty in re-penetrating the hamlet, continuing subversion and maintaining their organization and infrastructure.
>
> Basically, the Vietnamese seemed unable to understand that the establishment of strategic hamlets would accomplish nothing unless the other necessary measures were taken to achieve their three objects: of protection, of uniting and involving the people, and of development, with the ultimate aim of isolating the guerrilla units from the population. Not only with regard to strategic hamlets but in other fields as well, the Vietnamese tended to confuse the means with the end. It took over three years to establish 500 defended Chinese villages in Malaya. In under two years in Vietnam over 8,000 strategic hamlets were created, the majority of them in the first nine months of 1963. No attention was paid to their purpose; their creation became the purpose in itself. A similar attitude prevailed with regard to defence posts. Hundreds of these had no function in the insurgency other than to defend themselves. This inability to think a thing through applied even to *coups d'état*. Governments could be overthrown with increasing frequency without previous thought as to what should replace them or what policies should be adopted.[13]

As even British critics admit, such efforts were far more difficult in Vietnam, partly from sheer lack of adequate administration to carry out such programs under a firm rule of law.[14] It is hard to overestimate the importance of a viable administrative base to an effective C-I response. C. C. Too, the brilliant head of the Psywar Section of the Malayan Ministry of Internal Security, called good local administration "the first essential."[15] While the U.K./GOM started with the advantage of a more viable and effective local structure, they also paid far more attention to strengthening it continuously than did the U.S./GVN in Vietnam.

In gaining popular support through effective, equitable government and by satisfying popular aspirations, the Malayan experience was far more successful than the Vietnamese. In Malaya, of course, the dominant ethnic population was pro-British from the outset; moreover, the United Kingdom was in the driver's seat and could set the pace, whereas in Vietnam the United States was repeatedly frustrated in its efforts to move the GVN. Also, the recurrent U.S. attempts to encourage broadening the base and enhancing the appeal of the GVN were subordinated to the needs of a shooting war, which were often seen as requiring stability rather than risky change in Saigon.

The same held true in the field of information and psywar. Here too Britain did not have to deal with a separate government which it chose to treat as sovereign. The U.K./GOM psywar and rewards-for-surrender programs were notably successful, especially in luring high-level defectors who were put to good use. The Chieu Hoi program in Vietnam, again recommended by the British Mission, has had considerable success since its 1963 inception in garnering over 190,000 ralliers, but most of these have been quite low-level. Rewards for key enemy cadre were not used on any scale till 1971.

A last, striking difference between the two C-I approaches is that in Malaya all the many facets were pulled together by a unified U.K./GOM civil/military management on a scale which the United States never even sought in Vietnam. True, despite all the talk of its being a "U.S. puppet," the GVN regime was sovereign -- and the U.S. role till 1965 was primarily one of advice and logistic support. Diem jealously guarded his independence, and our ability to sway him (or for that matter his successors) was limited -- though we didn't try very hard. Moreover, at least till 1965 the United States felt that assumption of more than an advisory role might lead to overcommitment -- an irony in the light of what happened later.

Even after massive U.S. intervention, however, little attempt was made to do more than coordinate the U.S. and GVN efforts. At times we almost seemed to be fighting two separate wars. As General Westmoreland has pointed out, there were many legitimate disadvantages to a single combined command, not least that it would have been a step backward

from the political aim of strengthening the independence of South Vietnam.[16] But from the standpoint of improving the C-I effort, is there much doubt in retrospect that some form of combined war direction would have done much to overcome one of the crucial flaws -- the spotty nature of ARVN military leadership? The author, who served in the top U.S. management in Saigon, believes that some form of combined war direction could have helped greatly; in fact, he suggested it in 1966 and 1967. He also believes that, despite the great political sensitivities involved, the GVN would have accepted such proposals. Sir Robert Thompson had even earlier suggested a sort of Director of Operations on the Malayan model. Nor was civil/military management ever unified on either the U.S. or the GVN side, except late in the day and then only in the pacification field.

## C. SUMMING UP

But whether a C-I approach more like that applied successfully in Malaya would have been as effective in Vietnam must remain an historical "if." Certainly, the enormous disparities between the two situations underline the dangers inherent in any comparison. Certainly, the threat in Vietnam also grew to proportions far transcending that in Malaya. Moreover, the underlying weaknesses of the GVN may have been so fundamental that no C-I effort, however well constructed and managed, could have overcome this handicap. Here lies another crucial variable on which opinions differ sharply. From a U.S. standpoint, would it ever have been possible during or even after the Diem period to get adequate performance out of the GVN?

But such a negative view may be overly influenced by American disillusionment with our tragic involvement in Vietnam. Even granting the disparities between Malaya and Vietnam, both the U.K./GOM and the U.S./GVN confronted quite similar C-I needs -- especially in the early phases. Both made similar initial mistakes. While the C-I approaches later evolved by the British to rectify these errors would have required modification for the Vietnamese environment, greater U.S./GVN emphasis on similar approaches would at the least have led to a less costly C-I effort. It is even conceivable that -- if carried out consistently --

this could have made a decisive difference, *especially in the early years!* And the contention that the GVN was incapable of such an effort is partly contradicted by the GVN's ability to mount the belated pacification program of 1967-1971 -- an essentially Vietnamese effort, though heavily supported by the United States.[17]

Indeed, the at least qualified success of the 1967-1971 pacification program is itself perhaps the most compelling evidence that our Vietnam response would have benefited from greater and earlier emphasis on certain features crucial to U.K./GOM success in Malaya: (1) a more balanced civil/police/military effort, rather than one so overwhelmingly military; (2) unified conflict management at all key levels; (3) far greater emphasis on the C-I type of intelligence and on efforts to root out the directing cadre of the insurgency; (4) more focus on breaking the links between the insurgents and the population, rather than so much on military operations against elusive enemy forces; and (5) far greater stress on outbidding the insurgents for popular support -- not so much by massive economic development as by effective, equitable, and responsive government operating under a rule of law. Most of this was attempted in one way or another in Vietnam, but only as a secondary aspect of a primarily military C-I response.

In any case, by 1964-1965 Vietnam had become a different ball game, a quasi-conventional war superimposed upon insurgency which required far more than what had sufficed in Malaya. The United States felt compelled to intervene militarily to prevent a GVN collapse and restore the situation to a point where a major civil-military "pacification" effort could belatedly be set in train. But all things considered, it is hard to fault Clutterbuck's implicit judgment that, if the GVN with U.S. support had managed to do in 1958-1963 what the GOM backed by Great Britain did so well in 1948-1953, the Vietnam war might have taken on a quite different cast.[18] The British and Malayans learned from their early mistakes. Did we instead reinforce ours?

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Special mention should also be made of a series of classified Rand Reports prepared for DOD/ISA by Riley Sunderland: RM-4170-ISA, *Army Operations in Malaya, 1947-1960* (U); RM-4171-ISA, *Organizing Counterinsurgency in Malaya, 1947-1960* (U); RM-4172-ISA, *Antiguerrilla Intelligence in Malaya, 1948-1960* (U); RM-4173-ISA, *Resettlement and Food Control in Malaya* (U); and RM-4174-ISA, *Winning the Hearts and Minds of the People: Malaya, 1948-1960* (U), all classified Secret and dated September 1964. Their impressively comprehensive and detailed analysis of how the U.K./GOM coped with the Emergency has been used extensively for background purposes, but because they are classified, only unclassified references from them have been cited.

## I. THE INSURGENT MOVEMENT

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12. Cf. Mountbatten, "Post Surrender Tasks," *op. cit.*, p. 301; Donnison, *op. cit.*, pp. 385-386; A. H. Peterson *et al.*, eds., *Symposium on the Role of Airpower in Counterinsurgency and Unconventional Warfare*, The Rand Corporation, RM-3651-PR, July 1963, pp. 4-5. Chin Peng's OBE was revoked soon afterwards.

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4. Mills, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-160.

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6. *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

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8. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

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16. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

18. Mills, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-210.

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2. *Annual Report 1947*.

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15. Cf. Dan Kurzman, *Subversion of the Innocents: Patterns of Communist Penetration in Africa, the Middle East and Asia*, Random House, New York, 1963, p. 437.

16. Data from *Annual Report 1956*, p. 452.

17. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

18. Edgar O'Ballance, *Malaya: The Communist Insurgent War: 1948-1960*, Faber and Faber, London, 1966, p. 151.

19. Kurzman, *op. cit.*, p. 437.

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1. R. E. Clutterbuck, "Communist Defeat in Malaya," in *Military Review*, Vol. 43, No. 9, September 1963.

2. Sir Claude Fenner, IG of Malayan Police, 1963-1965, in RUSI Seminar, pp. 5-6.

3. Lt. Gen. Sir Walter Walker, *ibid.*, p. 5.

4. Bernard Fall, *The Two Vietnams*, Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., New York, 1967 (2d rev. ed.), pp. 342 and 340*ff*.

5. R. O. Tilman, "The Non-Lessons of the Malayan Emergency," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 2, No. 8, August 1966, pp. 407-409.

6. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

7. Clutterbuck, *The Long, Long War, op. cit.*, p. ix.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-9.

9. See RUSI Seminar.

10. Gen. W. C. Westmoreland, *Report on the War in Vietnam, 1964-1968*, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C., 1970, p. 77.

11. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

12. Clutterbuck, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

13. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-142; see also Chapter 11 on "Strategic Hamlets."

14. Clutterbuck, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

15. Lecture of C. C. Too in *C-I Case History: Malaya, 1948-60*, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, RB-2, November 1, 1965.

16. Westmoreland, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

17. A detailed treatment of this effort will be part of the author's forthcoming Rand report on "The Impact of Institutional Constraints on U.S./GVN Performance in the Vietnam War."

18. Clutterbuck, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-76.

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# THE MALAYAN EMERGENCY IN RETROSPECT: ORGANIZATION OF A SUCCESSFUL COUNTERINSURGENCY EFFORT

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