

DARK CLOUDS AT DAWN

A Political Memoir



**SAID
ZAHARI**

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiv
<i>Preface</i>	xvi
<i>Introduction</i>	xix
<i>Forewords</i>	xxiv
PART ONE	1
1. A Malay of Javanese Descent	3
My Brother Harun's Story	3
How I Got the Name Lias	5
Kampung Chari'an	6
Father's Death	7
2. Tiny World, Tough Life	9
My Little World in Kampung Kebun Bunga	9
A Hailam Couple	10
<i>Apek</i> , the Villagers' Friend	11
Hari Raya Aidilfitri	12
3. The Japanese Invasion	15
Life Changes	15
Japanese Bombs	16
Japanese Soldiers Enter Kampung Kebun Bunga	18
Learning <i>Nippon Go</i>	19
4. Japan's True Colours Exposed	23
Japan's Political Agenda	23
Germinating the Seeds of <i>Dokuritsu</i>	24
Japanese Imperialism Ends	25
5. Following the Fight Against Malayan Union	28
Quietly Following Politics	28
Mac Michael's Machinations	30

PART TWO	33
6. Into the World of Journalism	35
Tips from Keris Mas	35
The First Step	36
Meeting Yusof Ishak	37
Dahari Ali Buys Me Coffee	39
7. Joining the News Desk	42
With Salim Kajai and Mazlan Nordin	42
Salim Kajai's Mastery	44
A Glimpse of the Anti-Colonial War in Indochina	45
8. <i>Utusan Melayu</i> : A Thorn in Britain's Colonial Flesh	47
Tan Cheng Lock	48
Libel Suit Threat	49
"That Pink Newspaper?"	51
Aziz, the "Rat" Journalist	52
9. Working in Kuala Lumpur	54
Samad Ismail's Arrest	54
Moving Operations to Kuala Lumpur	56
Face to Face with Tunku	58
End of an Era	59
10. Editing the <i>Utusan Melayu</i>	62
Appointed Editor	62
Hamid Tuah and the Sungai Sirih Farmers	63
Dato' Razak Raps <i>Utusan Melayu</i>	64
Aziz Ishak and the Urea Fertiliser Issue	66
11. Hot Seat	68
Irian Barat (West Irian)	68
US Aggression Against Cuba	69
Patrice Lumumba	70
12. The <i>Utusan Melayu</i> Strike	73
Ibrahim Fikri and the <i>Utusan Melayu</i>	73
Banned from Entering Malaya	75

13. Samad Ismail and <i>Utusan Melayu</i>	77
Mysterious Exile to Jakarta	77
Not Me, Says Yusof Ishak	79
Who Was Really Afraid of Samad Ismail?	80
Down, But Not Out	83
P.S. in Albar's Letter	85
14. From <i>Berita Malai</i> to <i>Berita Harian</i>	88
Editor of <i>Berita Malai</i>	88
From <i>Utusan Melayu</i> to <i>Berita Harian</i>	90
Clash of Interests?	92
Inspiration from <i>Chapati</i>	94
15. Samad: My Guru?	96
<i>Sate</i> and <i>Mee Rebus</i>	98
My Dear Kak Midah	99
<i>Utusan Melayu</i> without Samad Ismail	101
Samad Ismail: A Communist?	102
PART THREE	105
16. Lee Kuan Yew Fears I Would "Drift"	107
Meeting Lee Kuan Yew	107
Lee Kuan Yew and the <i>Utusan Melayu</i> Strike	109
Lee Kuan Yew Fears I Would "Drift"	111
17. Alex Josey and Devan Nair	113
Lee Kuan Yew's Political Propagandist	113
Devan Nair: What a Disappointment!	114
18. Lee Kuan Yew's "Concern" for Me	116
Lee Kuan Yew's Offer	117
With Political Activists in Singapore	118
Allegation of Facts?	119
A "Communist" and a Colonial Stooge	120
19. Partai Rakyat Singapura	122
Joining Partai Rakyat	122
Ending Speculation	123
Offer to Join the BS Leadership	125

20. Problems Within the Party	127
Ideological Deviation	127
The PRS in Lim Chin Siong's Eyes	129
21. The Fate of <i>Partai Rakyat</i> in Singapore	132
Lee Kuan Yew's Hatred of the PRS	132
Alarming Trend in the PRS	133
Outlining a New Direction	134
22. The "Plen" and <i>Partai Rakyat</i>	136
The "Plen's" Directive	136
Anti-Colonial United Front?	138
Crying Over Spilt Milk	141
23. The Communist Bogey	144
The Domino Theory	146
Azahari and <i>Partai Rakyat Brunei</i>	147
British Sabotage of PRB Plans	148
24. From Malaya to Malaysia	150
Malaya after Merdeka	150
Sukarno Must be Toppled	151
PRB's Reaction to Malaysia's Project	152
The PAP Splits into Two	153
25. Reaction to the Malaysia Plan	154
Speech at a University in Singapore	154
Tunku Goes to England	156
Opposition to the Malaysia Plan	157
Indonesian Confrontation	159
The Death of "Maphilindo"	161
Tunku Avoided the British Trap	162
26. My Friend Lim Chin Siong	165
27. Lee Kuan Yew Weeps	173
Crocodile Tears?	173
Tunku's Strange Dream	174

PART FOUR

28. A Dream Destroyed	179
Home After the Meeting	179
Arrested	180
29. The Long, Long Night	182
Writing Verses in Prison	182
The Long Night of 17 Years	184
"We're Taking Him Just for a Little While"	185
Solitary Confinement and Torture	186
"Agent of a Foreign Power"	190
30. Threatened	192
Interrogation by Ahmad Khan	192
Restless	194
31. Transferred to Changi Prison	196
"E Hall"	196
Discrimination	197
Headline News	198
General Elections	198
Defeat for Democracy!	199
Learning Mandarin	201
Ideological Debate	203
32. Talking Through the Wall	205
What a Way to "Chat"!	207
33. Douglas Hyde	210
Joining Poh Soo Kai in MSP	210
34. Letter from Lord Goodman	215
A Letter from Lord Goodman	217
35. Exiled to Pulau Ubin	220
"What Would You Like for Lunch?"	220
The "Batin" of Pulau Ubin	221
An "Island Prison" in the Sun	223
Rot in Prison? Never	224

Freed on Hari Raya Eve	226
Retrospection	227
The Family Lives On	228
PART FIVE	229
36. My Wife Salamah	231
Salamah Abdul Wahab	232
"Ragby Ball"	234
A Child "Born Unfree"	236
37. Salamah Hospitalised	238
"Are You Crazy?"	239
China, the Sleeping Giant	240
38. A Young Gurkha Friend	243
"Are You Okay?"	243
Visiting Sal at the General Hospital	244
Tearful <i>Jumpa</i>	245
Visiting 1000-Year Old Mosque in Beijing	247
39. Quarrelling with the Prison Officers	249
What's there to Check?	250
Yin Chang Ding's Mother	250
Chang Ding was Betrayed	252
40. Farewell, My Beloved Mother	253
"My Son, When'll You be Released?"	253
My Mother Joked with Me	255
Shattering News of Mother's Death	256
Happy Days of Yesteryear	256
PART SIX	259
41. Visiting Old Friends in Indonesia	261
We Drank <i>Kpoi Tubruk</i>	263
42. <i>Utusan</i> After the Strike	266
Mahathir Revoked Tunku's Order	266
I'am Not a Journalist, Says Ibrahim Fikri	267

Political vs. Press Powers	266
Johan Jaafar's Sudden Resignation	269
PART SEVEN	273
43. An Unerasable Communist Stigma	275
"Is Cik Said a Communist?"	275
Cynical Three-Pip Prison Officer	276
Propaganda a la Dr. Gobbels	277
44. Covering the Baling Peace Talks	280
Who Started the Emergency?	280
British Political Agenda	281
Tunku's Political Strategy	282
Chin Peng's Letter to Tunku	283
Shouts of "Merdeka" Everywhere	284
Saw Chin Peng at Close Range	285
Special Branch Infiltration	287
45. Peace, Finally, in Haadyai: A Victory For All Sides	289
Thirty Three Years Later	289
CPM After the "Baling Talks"	290
The Role of the 10th Regiment	292
The End of the Armed Struggle	293
Lim Chin Siong and the CPM	294
"Joining" the CPM Queue	296
<i>Epilogue: Meeting Chin Peng in Bangkok</i>	298
<i>Appendix: Poems from Prison</i>	303