

MALAYSIA—A COMMENTARY

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*To
My Father*

Preface

This is a first-hand account of the exciting story of the birth of Malaysia, its troubled infancy, Singapore's exit from the Federation and the consequences of the concept for the countries involved—Malaya (now Malaysia), Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.

As *The Statesman's* Special Correspondent in South-East Asia and the Far East for five years, I had the opportunity of assessing the joys and the sorrows Malaysia brought about, the sorrows ultimately outweighing the advantages the concept might have had.

I was based in Singapore, but travelled often to the other capitals to report on the moods of the countries involved and the motivations of their dramatis personae. I talked to the leaders of Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines and to the Sultan of Brunei.

The value of the book is in recreating those tempestuous days. I have refrained from rewriting my impressions. The epilogue is an attempt to relate the past to the present. In so far as this account contributes to the understanding of a momentous event in South-East Asia, whose importance for India and the world hardly needs stressing, it will have served its purpose. It is an Indian account of an Asian happening.

I am grateful to *The Statesman* for permitting me to use material first published in it.

S. Nihal Singh

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