J. M. Pluvier

South-East Asia from Colonialism to Independence

In the last thirty years the political map of South-East Asia has been largely redrawn (only Thailand remaining unaffected) and what were since the colonies of Western Europe and the United States have all achieved their freedom; the Philippines in 1946, Indonesia in 1948, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in 1955, Malaysia in 1957, and Singapore in 1963.

This book deals with the history of these countries in this period of political change. It outlines the situation as it was prior to the Japanese occupation of South-East Asia in 1942, describes the political developments which stemmed from this occupation, and attempts to bring together and to interpret in relation to each other and from a fresh viewpoint the various nationalist movements which eventually led the peoples of South-East Asia to independence.

Dr. Pluvier, a Dutch historian, has taught in the University of Malaya. He is now lecturer in Modern Asian history at the University of Amsterdam.

959
PLU.

PERKHIDMATAN ARKIB PERSEKUTUAN MALAYSIA
KOLEKSI
ARKIB
PINTAR

Acess. No: 293 141/78
Class. No:

SOUTH-EAST ASIA FROM COLONIALISM TO INDEPENDENCE

PERKHIDMATAN ARKIB PERSEKUTUAN MALAYSIA
KOLEKSI ARKIB PINTAR

Acess. No: 293 141/78
Class. No:

SOUTH-EAST ASIA
FROM COLONIALISM
TO INDEPENDENCE

South-East Asia from Colonialism to Independence

JAN PLUVIER

Lecturer in Modern Asian History
University of Amsterdam

KL - PM.

KUALA LUMPUR
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK MELBOURNE

Oxford University Press
OXFORD LONDON GLASGOW NEW YORK
TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON CAPE TOWN
IBADAN NAIROBI DAR ES SALAAM LUSAKA ADDIS ABABA
KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE JAKARTA HONG KONG TOKYO
DELHI BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI
© Oxford University Press 1974
First published in 1974
Second impression 1977

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of Oxford University Press.

Printed in Malaysia by Art Printing Works Sdn. Bhd., Kuala Lumpur
Published by Oxford University Press, 3, Jalan 13/3,
Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

Preface

The present volume deals with the process of decolonization in South-East Asia. As its starting-point 1940 has been chosen, the year Japan entered the area and also the first year of the most decisive period in South-East Asia's development from foreign rule to national emancipation. The book ends with the termination of traditional Western colonial domination.

The latter may seem quite an unwieldy criterion, since it entails breaking off the story on various dates, ranging from 4 July 1946 for the Philippines to 3 July 1959 for Singapore. As the struggle for political freedom constitutes the main theme of this book, it is reasonable, however, not to proceed beyond these limits.

There are a few exceptions to the general rules set by the subject theme and the chronological scheme. One is that several events are not discussed in any great detail when, by their nature, they belong to the next period rather than to the one in which they were taking place. On the other hand the story of political decolonization is not dealt with until its conclusion, that is: 1963 for British Borneo, 1963 or 1965 for Singapore, let alone the year *x* for Brunei or Timor, since the connexions with post-independence developments in neighbouring countries, particularly Malaya, are so close that it cannot possibly be treated as a separate subject.

As a result this book may create the impression of being incomplete and in a sense this is, of course, true. But so is the course of history. The only conclusion that might be drawn is that, in due time, a second volume may pick up the loose ends and bring the story up-to-date.

My thanks are due to Miss Jesse Bos who was kind enough to do the indexing.

Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, 1964–66
Soest, Netherlands, 1967–70

JAN PLUVIER

Contents

Preface *v*

Maps *xii*

Abbreviations *xiii*

I. THE COLONIAL ERA

1. The Western Regimes in South-East Asia 3

INTRODUCTION 3

COLONIAL POLICY 6

WESTERN ADMINISTRATION 10

INDIRECT RULE 12

THE NON-REPRESENTATIVE NATURE OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENT 15

2. The Process of Economic Modernization 22

WESTERN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY 22

THE ROLE OF THE CHINESE AND INDIANS 29

INDIGENOUS CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC PROGRESS 32

3. The Unfavourable Aspects of Western Economic Domination 37

DEPENDENCE ON THE WORLD MARKET 37

SUBORDINATION TO THE HOME COUNTRIES 39

THE PRIMACY OF WESTERN ENTERPRISE 47

4. The Penetration of Capitalism and its Social Consequences 56

FROM SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY TO EXPORT PRODUCTION 56

LAND-ALIENATION, TENANCY AND INDEBTEDNESS 58

DECLINE OF INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE AND HANDICRAFTS 63

FAILURE OF THE ATTEMPTS AT REDRESS 64

RURAL LIVING CONDITIONS 69

5. South-East Asia's Renaissance Movement 72
GENERAL BACKGROUND 72
THE EMERGENCE OF A 'NATIONALIST' ELITE 78
THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE RENAISSANCE MOVEMENT 79
THE ATTITUDE OF THE COLONIAL POWERS 82
THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM IN COLONIAL SOUTH-EAST ASIA 83
POLITICAL CHANGES IN SIAM 90

6. South-East Asia and Japan 92
JAPAN'S EXPANSION IN EAST ASIA 92
THE ECONOMIC PENETRATION OF JAPAN 98
ASIAN NATIONALISM AND JAPAN 101

II. THE JAPANESE CONQUEST

1. The Surrender of French Indochina 107
JAPAN'S NEW POLICY 107
THE PENETRATION INTO TONKIN 108
THE VIETNAMESE REBELLIONS 113
THE THAI-FRENCH WAR 117

2. Britain vis-à-vis Japan and Asian Nationalism 121
THE BURMA ROAD AND SINGAPORE 121
THE RADICAL ORIENTATION OF BURMESE NATIONALISM 124
POLITICS IN MALAYA 130

3. The Netherlands Indies: Japanese Pressure and Indonesian Nationalism 134
THE ECONOMIC NEGOTIATIONS 134
DETERIORATION OF DUTCH-INDONESIAN RELATIONS 138

4. The Occupation of Southern Indochina and the Policy of the United States 145
THE ECONOMIC ANNEXATION OF INDOCHINA 145
THE OCCUPATION OF SOUTHERN INDOCHINA 149
U.S.–JAPANESE RELATIONS 150
THE 'FREEZING' ORDER 154
POLITICS IN THE PHILIPPINES 156

5. The Conquest 163
THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR 163
THE OCCUPATION OF THAILAND 167
THE MILITARY POSITION OF THE WESTERN POWERS 170
THE CONQUEST UNTIL THE SURRENDER OF SINGAPORE 175

From the surrender of Singapore to the fall of Rangoon and Java 179
The cleaning-up operations 183

III. PART OF 'GREATER EAST ASIA'

1. General Aspects of Japanese Rule 191
Introduction 191
The treatment of Europeans and Eurasians 195
The treatment of Chinese and Indians 199
Japanese policy vis-a-vis the indigenous population 202
The Thakin attempt at nationalist revolution 204
Indigenous collaboration with Japan 206

2. The Japanese Military Administration 211
General characteristics of Japanese policy 211
Malaya 214
Indonesia: Triple A, Putera and M.I.A.I. 217
Burma: the Ba Maw administration 223
The Philippines: the Vargas administration 228
The mobilization of South-East Asia's youth 234

3. The Change of Tactics: 'Independence' and Reforms 237
The utilization of manpower: the romusha tragedy 237
The military auxiliary forces 240
The granting of 'independence' 242
Administrative reforms in Indonesia 248
Japanese policy vis-à-vis Indonesian nationalism: Masjumi and Djawa Hokokai 250
Administrative reforms in Malaya 254

4. The Vassal States 258
Japanese policy vis-à-vis Vietnamese nationalism 258
The policies of the Decoux regime 262
Thailand 266

5. Japan's Economic Domination 269
General aspects 269
Japanese exactions 272
The breakdown of South-East Asia's economy 274
Deteriorating living conditions 278

IV. THE NATIONALIST REVOLUTIONS

1. The Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Movements 285
South-East Asian discontent and restiveness 285

ARMED RESISTANCE 288
THE VIET MINH 290
THE MALAYAN PEOPLE'S ANTI-JAPANESE ARMY 298
THE HUKBALAHAPS 305

2. The Crumbling of Japanese Power 312
THE BATTLE OF IMPHAL-KOHIMA 312
NATIONALIST DISAPPOINTMENT AT BURMA'S 'INDEPENDENCE' 314
THE THAKINS' VOLTE-FACE: THE ANTI-FASCIST PEOPLE'S FREEDOM LEAGUE 318
PRIDI'S 'FREE THAI' AND THE DOWNFALL OF PHIBUN SONGKHRAM 322
THE INDONESIAN UNDERGROUND 325
THE KOISO DECLARATION 328
JAPANESE POLICY IN INDONESIA'S 'OUTER TERRITORIES' 330

3. The Final Months of Japanese Hegemony 334
THE LAUREL GOVERNMENT 334
THE RECONQUEST OF THE PHILIPPINES 336
THE LIQUIDATION OF FRENCH RULE IN INDOCHINA 339
JAPANESE-TYPE INDEPENDENCE IN VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND LAOS 342
THE BURMESE REBELLION; THE DEFEAT OF THE JAPANESE IN BURMA AND THE PHILIPPINES 346
THE PREPARATIONS FOR INDONESIAN INDEPENDENCE 349
THE 'GREATER INDONESIA' CONCEPT 355

4. South-East Asia's Revolution and the Allied Occupation 357
THE JAPANESE SURRENDER 357
THE PROBLEMS OF POST-WAR CONTROL 359
THE REVOLUTIONS IN INDOCHINA AND INDONESIA 362
THE BRITISH AND CHINESE OCCUPATION 366
THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM 371
THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE INDONESIAN REPUBLIC 375

V. ATTEMPTS AT COLONIAL RESTORATION

1. Renewed Contacts with the Colonial Powers 381
INTRODUCTION 381
THE PHILIPPINES: COLLABORATION AND INDEPENDENCE 382
COLONIAL RESTORATION IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS 386
BRITISH POLICY IN BURMA AND THE OPPOSITION OF THE A.F.P.F.L. 389

THE MALAYAN UNION AND MALAY OPPOSITION 394
BURMA'S DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE 396
THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA 401
SARAWAK AND NORTH BORNEO 404
THAILAND: THE TREATIES WITH BRITAIN AND FRANCE 405

2. Negotiations and Colonial Divide-and-Rule 409
THE AGREEMENTS OF HANOI AND LINGGADJATI 409
DETERIORATION OF FRENCH-VIETNAMESE AND DUTCH-INDONESIAN RELATIONS 413
THE CONSOLIDATION OF HO CHI MINH'S GOVERNMENT 418
THE SJAHRIR CABINET AND THE ABORTIVE COUP D'ÉTAT 420
THE FAILURE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS 424
THE MALINO POLICY 427
THE COCHIN CHINA 'FREE STATF' 431

3. The First Phase of the Wars of Independence 434
THE FIRST DUTCH MILITARY ACTION 434
THE RENVILLE AGREEMENTS 437
PREPARATIONS FOR A FEDERAL INDONESIA 438
THE WAR IN VIETNAM 441
THE 'BAO DAI SOLUTION' 443
THE SETTING UP OF THE VIETNAMESE COUNTER-GOVERNMENT 446

VI. THE END OF EUROPEAN DOMINATION

1. Social Revolutionary Aspects 455
THE ROLE OF COMMUNISM 455
THE VIETNAMESE REPUBLIC DURING THE WAR OF NATIONAL LIBERATION 459
THE MALAYAN EMERGENCY 467
THE HATTA CABINET AND MADIUM 475

2. The Triumph of Indonesian Nationalism 482
THE SECOND DUTCH MILITARY ACTION 482
THE END OF DUTCH RULE 486

3. The French Debacle 491
DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA 491
THE PAU CONFERENCE AND THE BATTLE OF CAO BANG 495
THE DE LATTRE PERIOD 497
THE CRUMBLING OF FRENCH POWER 502
THE PATHET LAO AND THE LAO DONG 504
NATIONALISM IN CAMBODIA 507

THE EVENTS OF 1953 510
DIEN BIEN PHU 519
THE GENEVA ARMISTICE 524

4. The British Withdrawal 530
THE TEMPLER PERIOD AND THE FAILURE OF THE COMMUNIST REBELLION IN MALAYA 530
MALAYA TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE 532
THE FINAL PHASE OF COLONIAL RULE IN MALAYA AND SINGAPORE 542

Bibliography 549
Index 563

Maps

1. SOUTH-EAST ASIA UNDER WESTERN RULE, 1939 xvii
2. THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA, 1941–1942 xviii
3. THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA, 1942–1945 xix
4. SOUTH-EAST ASIA, 1945–1950 xx
5. FRENCH INDOCHINA, 1945–1949 xxi
6. FRENCH INDOCHINA, 1950–1954 xxii

Abbreviations

A.B.D.A. (-command)	American-British-Dutch-Australian
A.F.P.F.L.	Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League
B.F.O.	Bijeenkomst Federaal Overleg. Federal Consultative Council
B.D.A.	Burma Defence Army
B.E.A.	Burma Executive Administration
B.I.A.	Burmese Independence Army
B.M.A.	British Military Administration
B.N.A.	Burma National Army
B.P.A.R.	Barisan Pemuda Asia Raya. Greater Asia Youth Corps
B.P.F.	Burmese Patriotic Forces
D.M.H.	Dong Minh Hoi, short for: Viet Nam Cach Menh Dong Minh Hoi, League of Vietnamese Revolutionary Organizations
D.R.V.	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
D.S.A.	Dobama-Sinyetha Asiayone, a coalition of Dobama Asiayone (= We Burmans Association) and Sinyetha (= Poor Men's) Party
F.D.R.	Front Demokrasi Rakjat, Popular Democratic Front

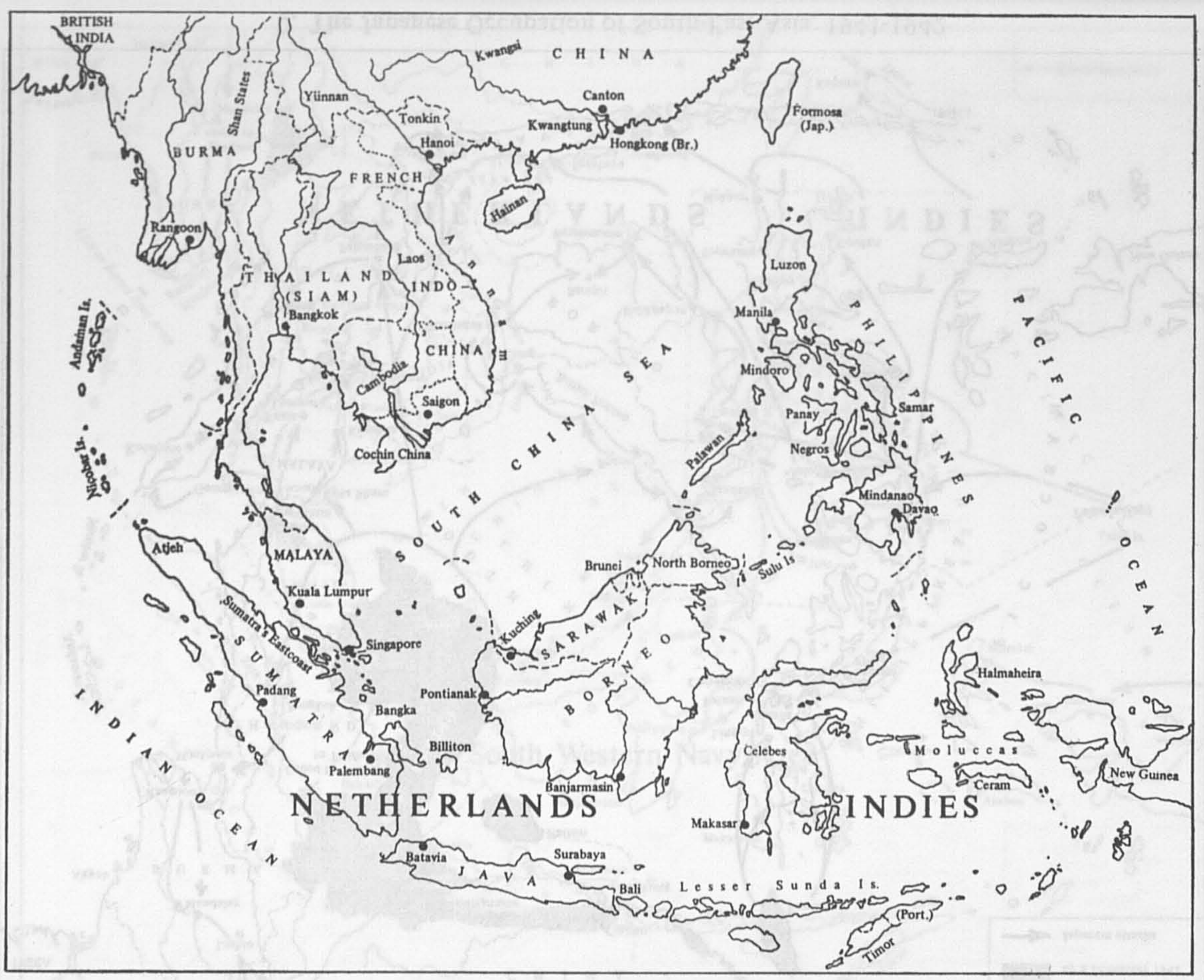
F.M.S.	Federated Malay States
Gapi	Gabungan Politik Indonesia, Indonesian Political Federation
Gerindo	Gerakan Rakjat Indonesia, Indonesian People's Movement
Hukbalahap	Hukbo ñg Bayan Laban sa Hapon, People's Anti-Japanese Army
I.I.L.	Indian Independence League
I.M.P.	Independence of Malaya Party
I.N.A.	Indian National Army
Kalibapi	Kapisanan sa Paglilingkod sa Bagong Pilipinas, Association for the Service of the New Philippines
K.M.M.	Kesatuan Melayu Muda, Young Malay Association
K.M.S.	Kesatuan Melayu Singapura, Malay Association of Singapore
K.N.I.P.	Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat, Central Indonesian National Committee
K.R.I.S.	Kesatuan Ra'ayat Indonesia Semenanjong, People's Union of Peninsular Indonesians
K.M.T.	Kwo Min Tang
Lao Dong	Viet Nam Lao Dong Dang, Vietnamese Workers' Party
Makapili	Makabayan Pilipinos, League of Patriotic Filipinos
Masjumi	Madjelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia, Advisory Council of Indonesian Muslims
M.C.A.	Malayan Chinese Association
M.C.P.	Malayan Communist Party
M.D.U.	Malayan Democratic Union
M.I.A.I.	Madjlisul Islamil A'laa Indonesia, Indonesian Supreme Council for the Islam
M.I.C.	Malayan Indian Congress

M.N.P.	Malay Nationalist Party
M.P.A.J.A., M.P.A.J.U.	Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Union
M.R.I.	Madjelis Rakjat Indonesia, Indonesian People's Council
M.R.L.A.	Malayan Racial Liberation Army
P.A.P.	People's Action Party
Parindra	Partai Indonesia Raya, Greater Indonesia Party
P.C.I.	Parti Communiste Indochinois, Indochinese Communist Party
Pesindo	Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia, Indonesian Socialist Youth
Peta	Tentara Pembela Tanah Air (in Malaya: Ayer), Army for the Defence of the Fatherland
Phuc Quoc	Viet Nam Phuc Quoc Dong Minh, League for the Liberation of Vietnam
P.I.I.	Partai Islam Indonesia, Indonesian Islamic Party
P.K.I.	Partai Kommunis Indonesia, Indonesian Communist Party
P.M.C.J.A.	Pan-Malayan Council of Joint Action
P.M.F.T.U.	Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions
P.N.I.	Partai Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian Nationalist Party
P.P.	Persatuan Perdjuangan, Fighting Front
P.S.I.	Partai Sosialis Indonesia, Indonesian Socialist Party
P.S.I.I.	Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia, Indonesian Party of Islamic Associations
Putera	Pusat Tenaga Rakjat, Centre of People's Power
P.V.O.	People's Volunteer Organization
S.E.A.C.	South-East Asia Command

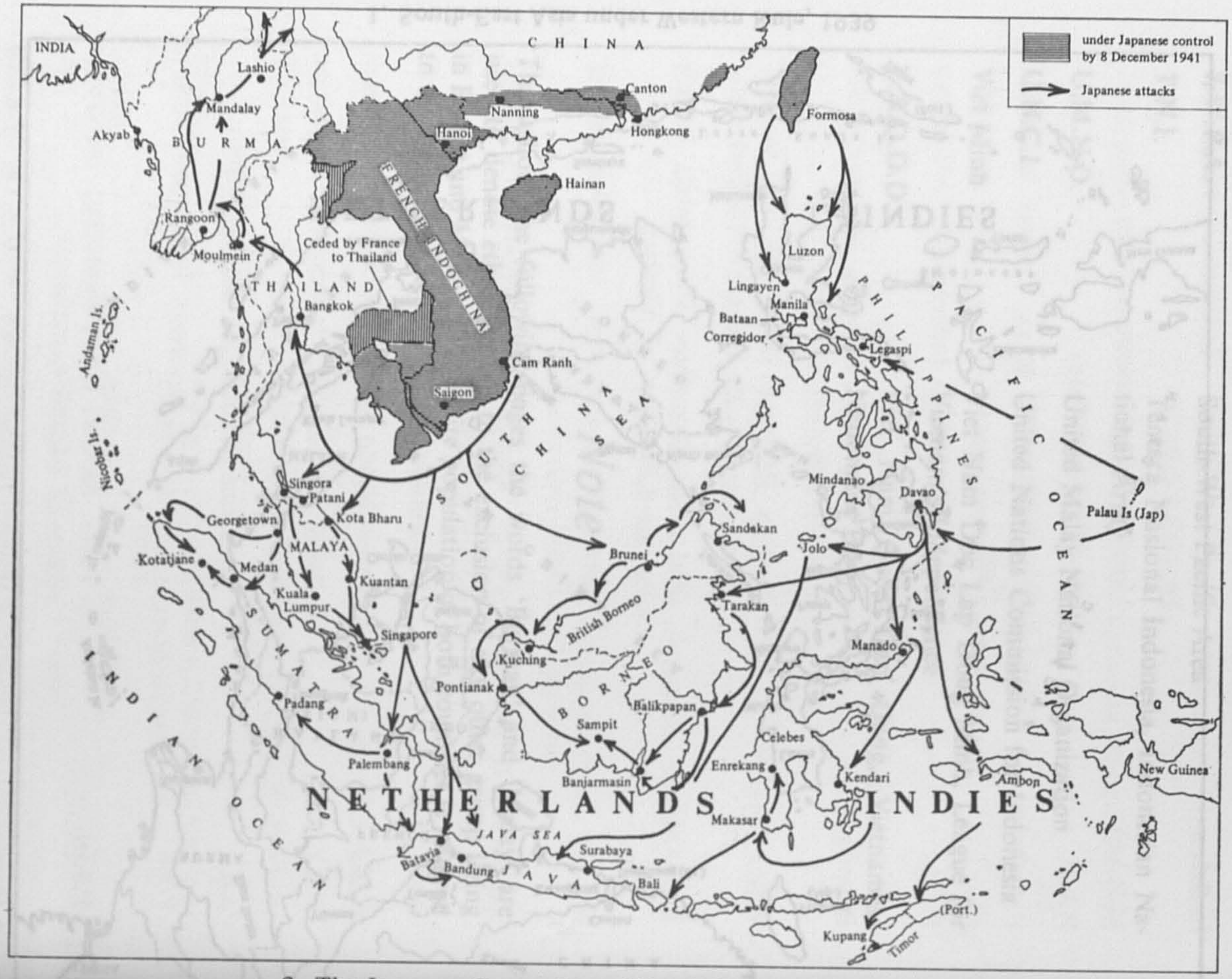
S.I.	Sarekat Islam, Islamic Association
S.O.B.S.I.	Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia, All-Indonesian Trade Union Federation
S.W.P.A.	South-West Pacific Area
T.N.I.	Tentara Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian National Army
U.M.N.O.	United Malay National Organization
U.N.C.I.	United Nations Commission for Indonesia
Viet Minh	Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh, League for Vietnam's Independence
V.N.Q.D.D.	Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, Vietnamese Nationalist Party

Note

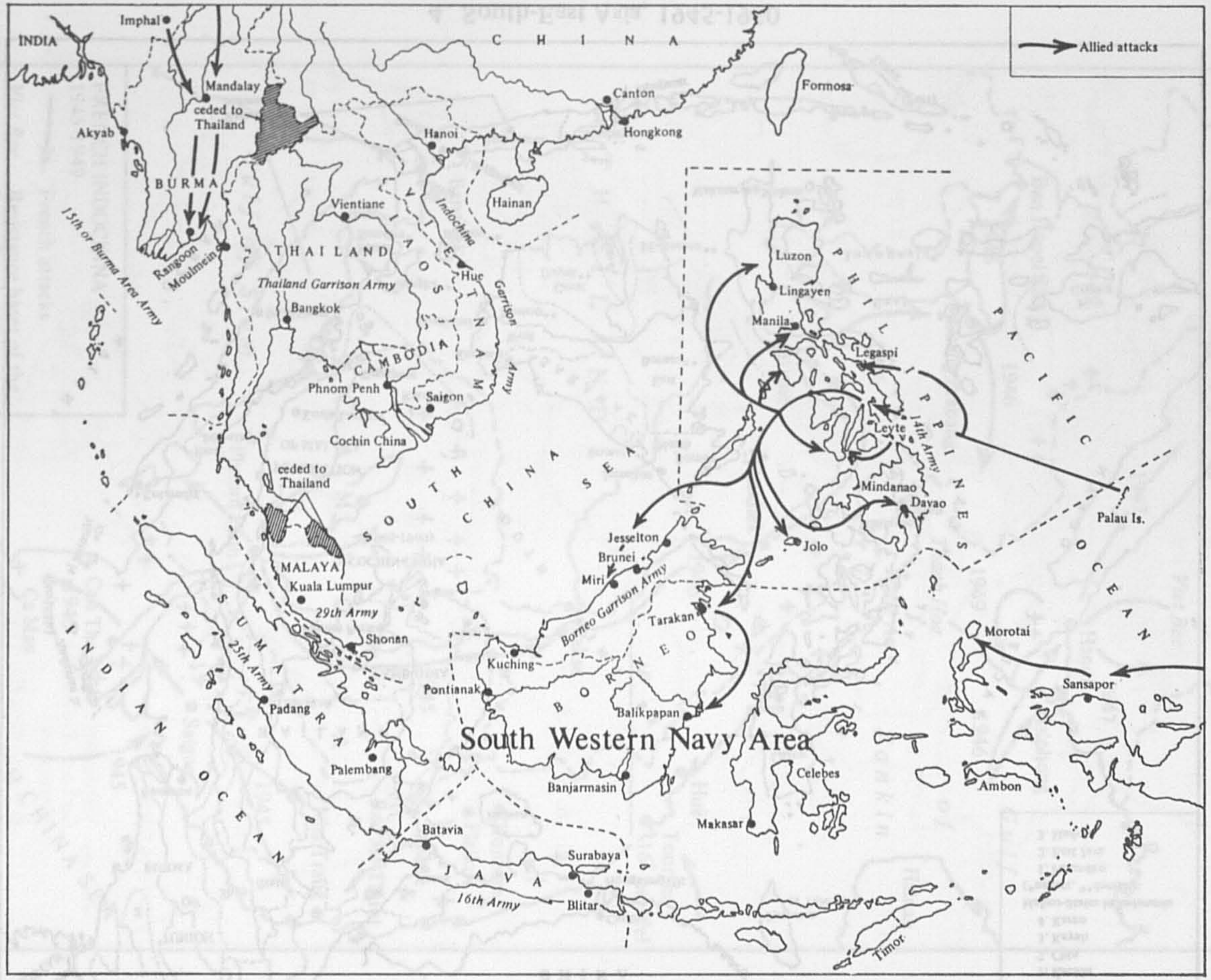
Throughout the following pages the words 'Burman' and 'Malay' are used to denote ethnic groups to the exclusion of any other group living in Burma and Malaya. The entire population of both countries is referred to as 'Burmese' and 'Malayan'.



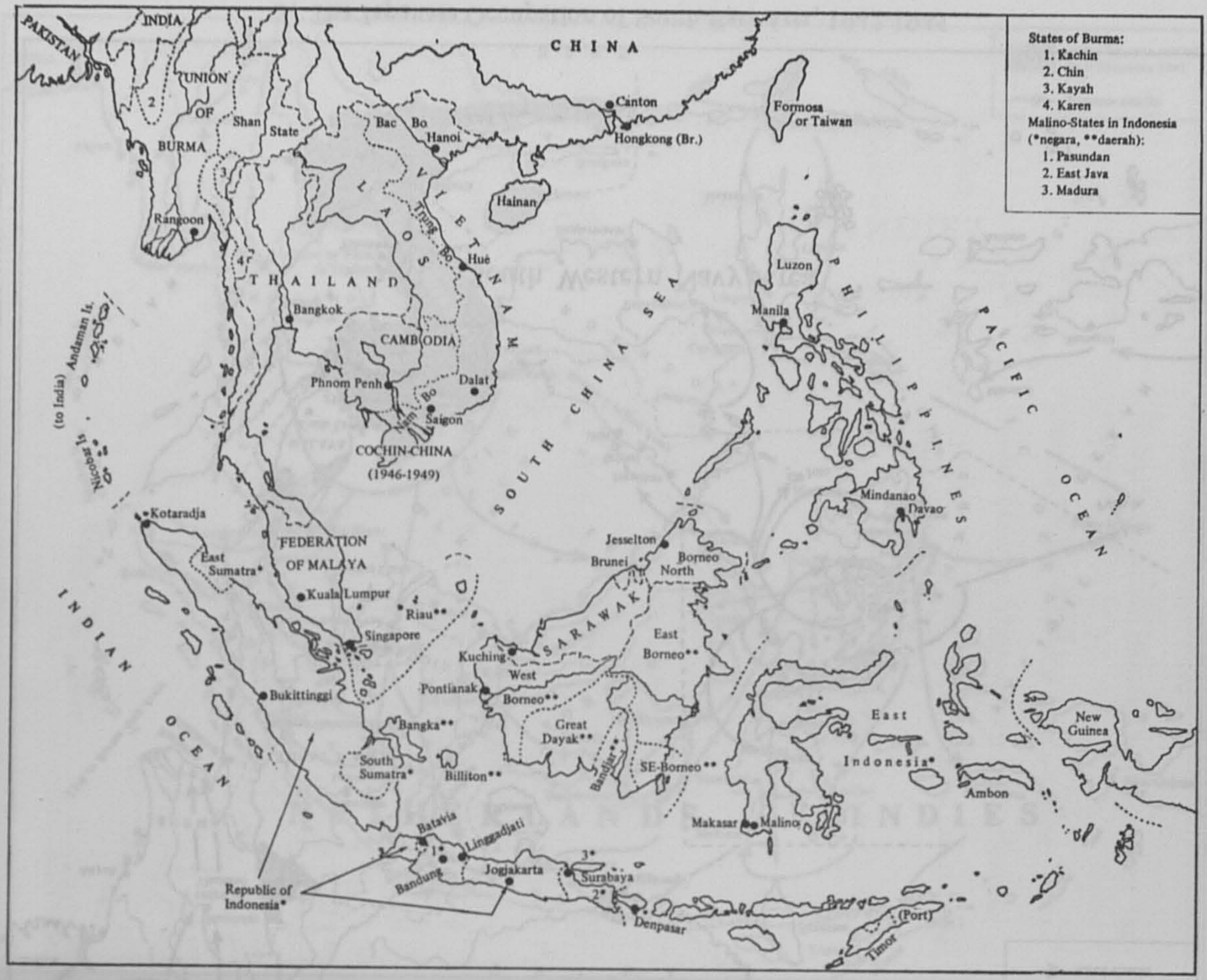
1. South-East Asia under Western Rule, 1939



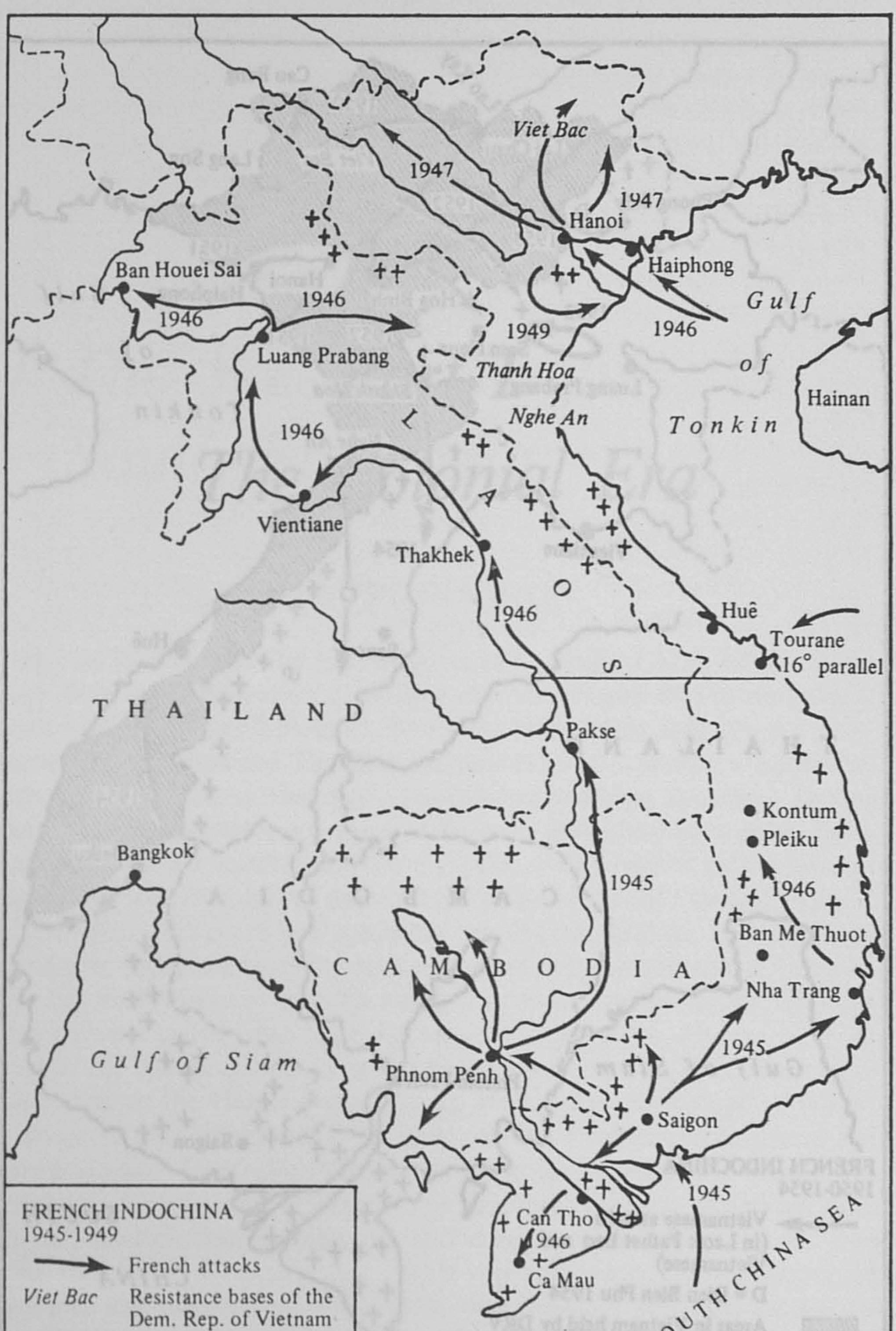
2. The Japanese Occupation of South-East Asia, 1941-1942



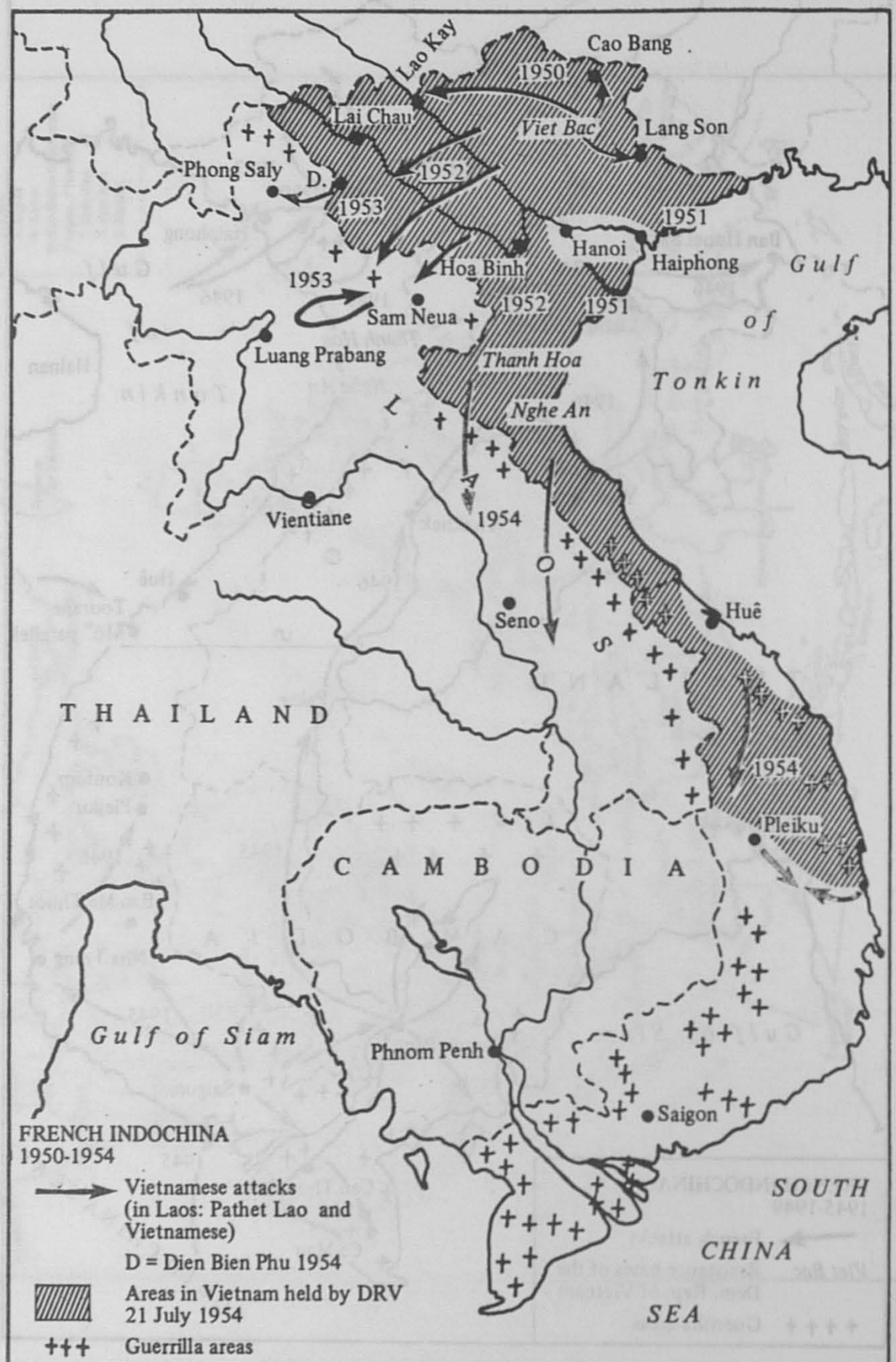
3. The Japanese Occupation of South-East Asia, 1942-1945



4. South-East Asia, 1945-1950



5. French Indochina, 1945-1949



6. French Indochina, 1950-1954

Part I

The Colonial Era

1 The Western Regimes in South-East Asia

INTRODUCTION

THE year 1940 was the last year of peace in South-East Asia, but it was the *Pax Britannica*, *Neerlandica*, *Gallica* and *Americana* of colonial domination. Of the region's close to 150 million inhabitants only 10 per cent — those of Siam (renamed Thailand the year before) — were not under foreign rule. Everywhere else, native sovereignty had been abolished. During the process of Western expansion indigenous states had been either liquidated and placed under direct colonial rule, or deprived of their sovereign rights and subordinated to the supreme authority of the colonial empires. Thus, Great Britain was responsible for Burma, Malaya and the three territories which made up her part of Borneo; France controlled Vietnam, the Laotian provinces and Cambodia, administratively united into the Indochinese Union; the huge Indonesian archipelago, known in those days as the Indies, was ruled by the Netherlands, and the Philippines were dependent on the United States. Lastly, Portugal possessed half of Timor.

Some of South-East Asia's peoples, like the Filipinos of Luzon or the Javanese, had been under foreign rule for some centuries; others, the Atjehnese for example, for only a few decades. Although European merchants, missionaries, adventurers and conquerors had been in the area from the sixteenth century onwards, it was only since the mid-nineteenth century, and particularly after 1870, that Western activities led to the establishment of colonial empires. This change in the orientation of Western policy was caused by the economic revolution which transformed the West European countries and the United States into modern industrialized powers. In the preceding centuries European overseas expansion had mainly been the result of the purely mercantile demands of commercial

capitalism, or — in the case of Spain — of religious missionary zeal, but the acceleration of Western penetration into the region was brought about by the far more exacting requirements of Western industrial capitalism. Raw materials were needed for Western industries, markets were demanded for Western manufactured goods, and opportunities sought for Western capital investment. Mistrusting each other's intentions and fearing competition, the Western powers no longer limited themselves to taking possession of a few enclaves, but they set out in a determined way to bring South-East Asia completely under their control. By about 1910 they had succeeded: only Siam, situated between Burma and Indo-china, managed to maintain her independence by cleverly exploiting British-French antagonism.

During the period from roughly 1870 onwards, the region could only develop along lines conditioned by alien interests and within the limits set by foreign governments. Yet, as was evident in the case of Siam, political domination was not the only and certainly not the determinant feature of modern colonialism. Primarily the result of economic factors, Western control was far more an economic phenomenon, and in 1940 South-East Asia was indeed entirely subordinated to and intensively exploited by the economic interests of the industrialized world. Charac-terized by economic submission and, apart from Siam, by foreign rule, the six decades of modern colonialism clearly stand out as a distinct period in the history of South-East Asia.

Western colonialism was still a powerful force in the region in 1940. As the economy of the West European nations and the United States continued to be based on industrial capitalism, the same fundamental factor which in the mid-nineteenth century had been responsible for bringing about the colonial situation, contributed to its preservation until the late 1930s. In this respect the policy of the United States, which had been to put the Philippines on the road towards political independence, was not an exception, since it did not lead to a termination of American economic control. Similarly the industrial and financial groups which, around 1870, had been pushing their governments into following a course of colonial expansion, were in 1940 still sufficiently influential in their countries' political establishments to prevent a policy incompatible with their interests and demands from being adopted.

The colonial interests in Europe as well in the United States were capable of asserting their will during the entire period not only because of their economic power and political preponderance, but also because public opinion in the home countries was almost completely unaware of any major economic or social problem in the colonial territories. There was only a slight awareness of South-East Asia's potential wealth, its economic significance and its climate, and even less of the historical and cultural background of the subject peoples or the conditions under which they

were living. Instead there existed quite a few ineradicable fallacies about the benefits colonial rule offered to the passive, indolent natives who were without sense of responsibility and who were under Western tutelage for their own good. Combined with the feelings of national pride with which the possession of large colonial empires inevitably inspired the Western nations, this general ignorance of the essential problems gave the leading groups with interests in the colonies virtually a free hand. Neither were the colonial interests restrained by the political parties in the home countries. Among the few organizations which had more or less well-defined colonial programmes, some, for example the communists or other tiny social-revolutionary groups, were hardly influential in a bourgeois Western society, while others, such as the social democrats, from the moment they entered a cabinet, were not inclined to push matters to extremes. On the whole political parties left the framing of colonial policy to the so-called experts, that is, to the colonial interests themselves. One of the most nefarious consequences of the Western politicians' general indifference was their habit of occasionally subordinating colonial problems to petty party politics. Given these circumstances it did not make much difference to the South-East Asian peoples whether Great Britain was under a Conservative or a Labour cabinet, whether the right, the centre, or left was in office in Paris, whether a Republican or a Democrat was president of the United States or which delicate party combination was ruling the Netherlands. Throughout the entire period of modern colonialism no political party in any home country has ever been able to persuade a government essentially to modify its colonial policy.

That the problems of South-East Asia were dealt with, in the last resort, by economically interested pressure groups operating with the help of uninterested politicians and against a background of an indifferent and uninformed public opinion, contributed to the immutable nature of colonial policy as far as its ultimate objectives were concerned: the protection of Western economic interests and the preservation, in whatever form, of Western political control or influence. Yet, in spite of this fundamentally inflexible purpose, colonial domination lacked homogeneity in its outward appearances. Discounting Spain and Portugal, during the period of modern colonialism four Western nations shaped South-East Asia's destiny, and they did so in different ways. Thus there were various degrees of political subordination, different forms of economic exploitation and social interference, and widely divergent policies towards education, religion and cultural issues. Colonial policy, as outlined in theory and put into practice by each of the Western powers separately, was not static, moreover, but subject to an evolution in the course of which several reforms were carried out. It is true that such changes did not affect, at any rate not intentionally, the fundamental principle of ultimate Western control. However significant and revolutionary in character some reforms occasionally seemed to be, they were

related only to minor issues or to a shift of emphasis, and in most cases they amounted to nothing more than introducing new and more effective methods of maintaining Western domination or, at least, safeguarding Western influence. Yet, in the 1930s South-East Asia's development was gradually leading towards a future in which the colonial nations were bound ultimately to lose their unique position.

COLONIAL POLICY

Of all Western nations in South-East Asia the United States was outwardly the most unorthodox in her approach to colonial problems. This was partly due to the traditionally anti-colonial sentiments of public opinion in a country which had been a colony itself. After becoming a colonial power in 1898 by taking the Philippines from Spain, the United States did her utmost not to look like one. The main indication of a different attitude seemed to be America's policy of leading the islands to independence, this being the result of the belief that any people not sufficiently mature for self-government could be trained in this respect. This conviction became the guiding principle of United States rule in the Philippines. There was, of course, no substantial departure from the actual colonial situation as long as the Philippines were politically and constitutionally a dependency of the United States. American policy, moreover, was not characterized by an even tempo: under Governor-General Francis B. Harrison (1913–1921) the development towards emancipation accelerated tremendously, but under Leonard Wood (1921–1927) there was a tendency to slow down. A more remarkable ambiguity of the American course was the fact that it prepared the Philippines for independence in a political sense while it produced an entirely opposite effect in the economic sphere. While gradually liberating the Philippines politically but at the same time ensuring the continuation of their economic control, the Americans followed a policy which might differ from that of some European colonial nations, but which was fully in agreement with the methods of United States imperialism traditionally applied in the Caribbean and South America. There was also the expectation in American political circles that the United States, by setting this example of rapidly preparing the Philippines for independence, might be able not only to keep the islands within the American sphere of influence, but also to extend that influence over other South-East Asian territories should European domination come to an end.

Whatever its ambiguities and ulterior motives, American policy in the Philippines showed some novelties in tackling the political problems of colonial responsibility. The first important American reference to Philippine independence having been made as far back as 1900, the United States was ahead of the other colonial powers in this respect, and she

continued to be so in spite of an occasional retardation of the development. As a first representative body, composed entirely of Filipinos, the Philippine Assembly was officially inaugurated in 1907. The enlargement of Filipino influence in the administrative branch of government was confirmed by the Jones Law of 1916, which granted a substantial amount of internal autonomy. The penultimate step towards independence was set when the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934, while still preserving United States sovereignty over the islands, virtually replaced American colonial rule by American supervision for a transitional period of ten years. The Filipinos were given the right to draw up their own constitution, which came into force on the same date, 15 November 1935, when the so-called Commonwealth of the Philippines as a nearly independent political structure was officially established.

However, American policy was not as unique as has often been described. In its essence British colonial policy was not much different although in its outward appearances, its tempo and its attitude towards politically undeveloped native societies, it fitted in better with the image of traditional colonialism. The British, too, held the view that their position and influence in the territories making up the British Empire would be best guaranteed by adjusting their rule to the realization that the colonial situation was not likely to last indefinitely. As a result their policy, like that of America, aimed at an ultimate relinquishment of the formal attributes of political domination, and anticipating this, they set out to prepare the colonies for self-rule and independence. But the exact moment for adopting a course of genuine emancipation differed in each colony, for it depended on factors emerging in the indigenous society of each territory. Furthermore the British were proceeding in a far slower and far more cautious way than the Americans, in order not to spoil the experiment by introducing too sweeping reforms in too rapid a succession. This was bound to create the impression that they were trying to drag their feet and at times they indeed managed to cause delays: after all, the colonial pressure groups were far stronger in the British context, comparatively speaking, than those few economic and political power-factors with interests in the Philippines were in the United States. A great amount of tension and misunderstanding occasionally marred relations between Great Britain and her colonies, but whenever the British government had come to the realization that her policy with regard to a particular colony should be guided by the concept of political emancipation, she consistently outlined a course of training the indigenous elite groups in the art of governing their country according to Western methods, while simultaneously providing the colony, step by step, with the means of acquiring self-rule.

India was the test-case of British colonial policy, and Burma, for the greater portion of the period a part of India, was greatly affected by developments there, although as the Cinderella province she was occasion-

ally a few years behind in gaining constitutional reforms. That the British were able, initially, to proceed in a hesitant and tentative way was mainly due to the absence of any vigorous demand for a representative government, but as soon as this changed British policy was rapidly amended. When attempting to exclude Burma from the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms for India, in 1918, the colonial authorities were faced by such a fierce and sudden explosion of Burman nationalist indignation that they had to draw up a new constitution which, in 1923, introduced a semblance of a parliamentary regime. The governmental system was still characterized by a complicated scheme of dual responsibility, named 'Dyarchy', in the executive sphere, which placed severe limitations on the actual exercise of power by the Burmans themselves, but this was changed in 1935, once again in the wake of constitutional reforms carried out in India. Under the Government of Burma Act of that year, which came into force on 1 April 1937, Burma was separated from India and given almost full internal autonomy as a transitional form of administration between direct colonial rule and Dominion status. The only crucial difference between the status of the Philippines and that of Burma was the fact that the date of full independence had been fixed for the former and not yet for the latter.

While British domination in Burma developed from colonial orthodoxy in 1919 to near-independence in 1937, Malaya presented a different picture. Towards the close of the 1930s it was still under an undiluted autocratic regime which, although quite lenient in practice, did not show any sign of change in the direction of either representative government or self-rule. The economic value of Malaya and the strategic importance of Singapore were, of course, extremely significant factors in this respect. Yet the contrast with Burma was based on fundamentally different circumstances in the two territories rather than on an essentially different attitude on the part of the British. That type of political consciousness which the colonial authorities had to take into account had not yet emerged in Malaya, and as a result the British were able here to prolong their colonial rule in the traditional manner.

France followed a policy which was the most inflexible of any colonial nation in South-East Asia. In the four decades since Governor-General Paul Doumer (1897–1902) established a definite system of colonial administration, this system was applied without a single change. This does not mean that the French failed to formulate any colonial theory which, if put into effect, might have produced some variation in the methods or general orientation of their colonial rule. There were, in fact, two such theories which figured prominently in French literature on the subject. One of these aimed at preserving the traditional institutions and customs of indigenous society in order to create a partnership between the native elite and the colonial authorities and to bring about a close association of the Indochinese peoples and the French. As opposed to this theory the other emphasized assimilation: it was intended to subject

the colony to a policy which was to be almost exclusively guided by French concepts and norms, cultural, political and economic. Both theories were experimented with, but as each contained elements which might have proved detrimental to French control over Indochina, neither was really carried out in practice. What happened was that the French made use only of those parts of each theory which served to reinforce their rule. The principle of partnership, which was at the root of the association-theory, was entirely absent in French colonial practice: whatever element of the traditional indigenous institutions was maintained was stripped of its essential function. As the policy of assimilation suited the French purposes, in general, better than that of association, it was more strongly emphasized as an essential part of colonial policy, and particularly after Doumer adopted it the assimilative programme was put into effect quite rigidly. But it was no genuine assimilation, because France never applied those of her own political concepts which were related, even in a remote way, to such revolutionary ideals as liberty, democracy and equality. Whatever the niceties of both theories, French policy was primarily characterized by the principle that Indochina formed an integral part of a closely-knit empire which was to be completely dominated by France. This basic doctrine was in no way modified during the period of French colonialism in South-East Asia.

The difference between the French regime and Dutch colonial rule was only a theoretical one. In the French concept of their overseas empire there was no place whatsoever for self-government, while the Dutch did not in principle rule out the possibility of an autonomous status for the Indies in the distant future. Yet, when it came to putting this principle into effect, the Dutch shrank back from the consequences. In 1901 they introduced the so-called Ethical Policy as a new orientation in colonial relationship, but it was a curious compromise between humanitarian and progressive ideals on the one hand and the requirements of powerful economic pressure groups on the other. In fact the Dutch, like the French, considered their interests and influence better safeguarded by a continuation of colonial control than by abandoning their political domination. The Ethical Policy was executed in a half-hearted way for slightly more than two decades, after which it fell into complete oblivion in the 1930s.

The major factor responsible for this failure to carry out in practice what had been agreed to in principle was the unexpected emergence of an Indonesian political movement. This happened quite spectacularly after 1912 and it threatened to turn autonomy for the Indies under Dutch leadership, such as the advocates of reform had envisaged around 1900, into something quite different. First, the idea of association was launched in an attempt to conceal the fundamentally different interests of the Dutch community and the Indonesian population behind a facade of partnership that would guarantee Dutch guidance, but when this concept proved unsuccessful the policy of constitutional reforms was dropped. So far these

reforms had hardly brought about any essential change: there was neither a genuine transfer of power from the central administration to the lower levels of government, nor a perceptible diminishing of interference by the Netherlands government. Only in the legislative sphere was a new institution—the *Volksraad* or People's Council — created in 1918 as a central representative body. A few months later Governor-General Joan Paul Count van Limburg Stirum (1916–1921), a staunch advocate of a progressive ethical course, issued his 'November Declaration', in which he referred to a 'transfer of power from Holland to the Indies in the near future', but this promise was forgotten as soon as political circles in the Netherlands were convinced that the revolutionary troubles of the immediate post-war period had ebbed away and native public opinion did not have to be appeased any longer. The constitutional regulation for the Indies, adopted in 1925, did not fundamentally change the orthodox colonial situation in any way, and in 1940 the Indies were as tightly controlled by the Netherlands as they had been in 1918.

WESTERN ADMINISTRATION

The Western nations not only differed in their approach to the basic problems with which they were confronted in South-East Asia, but there were also considerable variations in the methods they applied in exercising their authority over their colonial territories. One of these was related to the degree to which the colonial administrations were politically subordinated to the home authorities. By 1940, apart from the Philippines, none of South-East Asia's administrative systems was a constitutionally complete entity: each of them was a headless torso, an appendage of an empire with its locus of power thousands of miles away. In such cases the territory's administration was ultimately dependent on the colonial minister who had executive and, in concurrence with the home parliament, legislative power as well as a general supervisory authority. There was, however, a world of difference in the manner in which the home governments discharged their supreme responsibility in practice.

In a sense the Dutch method was somewhere mid-way between the two extremes presented by British rule in Malaya and French control over Indochina. The government in The Hague and the Dutch parliament were empowered to legislate for the colony, but the bulk of legislation relating to the internal affairs of the Indies was usually enacted by the colonial authorities themselves. In the late 1930s the Netherlands government showed an increasing inclination to meddle with the affairs of the colony, and this trend, not sufficiently counteracted by Batavia, resulted in a virtual decline of the powers of the colonial administration *vis-à-vis* the home country. In the British sphere there was as little interference as possible in the internal affairs of the two South-East Asian colonial

territories. This was true not only for Burma, which had enjoyed a large amount of autonomy since 1937, but also for Malaya, in spite of the autocratic set-up of colonial rule. Contrary to British practice, continuous interference by Paris severely restricted the theoretically absolute power of the French governor-general of Indochina. The bulk of legislation for the colony was enacted in France and the bills were extended to Indochina by presidential decree. The colonial administration was closely supervised, moreover, by a team of officials of the colonial ministry who periodically visited the overseas territories and reported to the minister.

As to the structure of authority in the executive sphere the colonial systems showed a basic similarity: bureaucratic hierarchies with the administrative competence of the officials in charge diminishing in proportion to the size of the areas under their jurisdiction. In this there were only a few differences in the manner in which the colonial governments extended their influence from the top down to the lowest territorial unit as well as in the degree of subordination of the local administrative bodies to the centre.

French Indochina was an example of a highly centralized system of government without even a semblance of local autonomy. The colony was composed of five regions, and the heads of the administration of each were responsible to the governor-general, a common practice in any administrative structure. But under the system as introduced by Doumer almost all services were placed under the direct control of the central government, thus leaving hardly any power in the hands of the individual regional governments. This situation also existed in the provinces and smaller territorial sub-divisions down to the lowest level of the village administration: local authorities, whether French or indigenous, whether appointed or elected, were not genuine local administrators but executive officers of the central government in the local sphere.

The practice in Indonesia was not fundamentally different, although the Dutch carried out two decentralization schemes. They introduced different types of regional bodies and built up an elaborate system of village administration; in the 1920s and 1930s they established large administrative units, provinces in Java and 'governments' in the Outer Territories, which covered the residencies of the old structures. By facilitating greater interference from above and enabling the central government to discharge her obligations and duties more easily through local agents, this decentralization increased administrative efficiency, as, in fact, had been demanded by economic and commercial interests. Even the regency system which the Dutch practised in Java, as a unique experiment, in South-East Asia, of local native administration in a colony under direct rule, did not amount to real autonomy, in spite of the outward appearances which often led the system to be confused with indirect rule. In the territory under his jurisdiction the Javanese regent had substantial authority, based on his traditional prestige with the population, but from being a more or

less autonomous feudal official at the base of the administrative hierarchy as he used to be in pre-Dutch times, he had become merely an extension piece of the central government.

In Burma, as in the Indies, local and regional bodies served primarily the same purpose of bringing the administration, in terms of efficiency, into line with the requirements of the modern era. Municipal and rural district committees were instruments of the central government to increase its supervisory authority over matters of local concern, and the heads of the village administration were no more than minor cogs in an official bureaucracy. In all South-East Asia it was only in Burma, however, that a reform was introduced which opened opportunities for genuine local self-rule. In 1921 a new act provided for elected councils at district level, which were to take over the administration of local affairs; it also greatly reduced official interference from above. But this experiment was a total failure. Local self-rule broke down completely as it was bound to in a colonial situation, because there was no change in the fundamental principle that the district councils, whatever their formal powers, were obliged to carry out the policies imposed by an alien government. This anomalous situation could be redressed only when the executive in the centre had been captured by the Burmese themselves.

The Philippines were under a system of government which was as rigidly centralized as that of Indochina. Though it was inherited from the Spanish regime the Americans did not essentially modify it. Provincial and municipal administrations had been organized, but they did not lead to any local autonomy. Local bodies were closely supervised by the central government; most of the provincial and municipal officials were appointed, not elected, and their authority was limited to minor duties. The system of local government in the Philippines differed from that in the other colonial territories only in its subordination to a central government which was not predominantly alien. But no real transfer of authority from the centre down to the lower levels took place and centralization remained the prevailing trend in Philippine administrative practice. In the Commonwealth constitution some lip service was paid to the principle of local autonomy, but in reality there was a strong tendency in the opposite direction.

INDIRECT RULE

Local self-rule, or, in a wider sense, any substantial departure from a centralized system of administration was, in fact, unworkable in any colonial territory under direct foreign control. The only country where local autonomy did work to a certain extent was Malaya which, apart from the Straits Settlements, was under indirect rule. During the decades when Western domination was being established South-East Asia's

indigenous rulers lost their sovereign rights, but not all of them lost their entire authority. In many cases the traditional administrative structure existing at the time when the colonial powers took over control was maintained. It enabled the colonial governments to utilize the prestige of the rulers and the native aristocratic bureaucracy to impose their policies upon the population. Except in the case of the French it also released them from the obligation to build up a costly administrative machinery of their own. But in their relations with and their attitude towards the native princes the authorities followed various lines of action, depending on the attitude of the colonial government and its tendency to meddle, and on the willingness of the indigenous rulers and their entourage to subordinate themselves to the foreign masters. As a result the term 'indirect rule' covered systems of administration with a certain degree of self-rule as well as those which differed from direct rule in name only.

Malaya provided the example of indirect rule under which the traditional rulers were not completely stripped of their prerogatives. The nine Malay states were 'protected states' by virtue of treaties the British had concluded with them. Although, except in matters related to Malay custom and religion, the rulers were obliged to heed the advice of the British resident or adviser, authority was vested in them and in the State Councils which combined legislative and executive powers. In each of the states the Malay administrative hierarchy was preserved. But the process of modernization and the change in the racial composition of the country's population made it clear that the traditional feudal structure of society was not likely to keep abreast with developments, and that the Malay officials were insufficiently experienced to handle the tasks of a modern administration. It was realized that an efficient governmental process required some form of uniformity and in 1896 a federation of the four states then under British control, the Federated Malay States, came into being. This set-up strengthened the power of the British and proportionately reduced the authority of the rulers, and because of this the five other states consistently refused to enter the federation after they had been persuaded to accept British protection. In the 1920s and 1930s an attempt was made to change the centralizing tendency in the F.M.S. into a policy of gradual decentralization, and some federal services were indeed transferred back to the state governments. But this scheme was not carried to its logical consequence, and by 1940 there was a distinct difference between the system of indirect rule as applied to the states within the federation and to those not belonging to it.

Apart from the island of Labuan the three territories of British Borneo had been protected states since 1888. The situation in Brunei resembled that of the non-federated states in the Malay peninsula. Sarawak and British North Borneo were clearly exceptional cases in the entire scheme of indirect rule as practised in South-East Asia, in that they were not genuine native states. In Sarawak the traditional administrative system

was maintained, but the rajah was not a native but the descendent of a nineteenth century British adventurer. Those who ruled North Borneo were the officials of an old-style British trading company, often drawn from among the administrators of the Colonial Office. In these territories there was as little interference as possible from above, although both the Rajah of Sarawak and the British North Borneo Company consistently prevented their possessions from being overrun by Western economic enterprise.

In Burma indirect rule was applied to the thirty-four Shan states, the three Karenni states and the Kachin and Chin territories. In the pre-British period they had been subsidiary states and territories of the Burmese kingdom, and their chiefs continued to be vassals, though they were now subordinated to the new sovereign power. British control was more effective than that of the Burmese monarchs had been, and there was a tendency among British officials to expand the scope of their discretionary authority. But in spite of this the rulers retained much of their autonomous position. The Shan states and the tribal areas, not considered part of Burma proper, were not covered by the constitutional reforms after 1923, and under the Government of Burma Act of 1935 these territories came into the category of 'reserved subjects' for which the governor was exclusively responsible.

Although ultimate power lay in the hands of the British, and the authority of the rulers, traditional chiefs and indigenous bureaucracies was restricted, indirect rule in the British sphere was not a farce as in the Netherlands Indies and Indochina. In Indonesia there were over 280 native states, four in Java and the remainder comprising three-fifths of the Outer Territories. Among them were states in their own right, like Surakarta and Djokjakarta in Java, the sultanates of Borneo and Sumatra's East Coast residency and Ternate and Tidore in the Moluccas, but also traditionally subsidiary states, such as the 102 former dependencies of Atjeh which were maintained by the Dutch after they liquidated the sultanate itself. All these rulers were reduced to mere servants of the colonial administration, inferior in everything except matters of ceremony. They had been bullied into accepting Dutch overlordship on the grounds of the so-called 'short declaration', a set of rules for their behaviour, brief to the point of rudeness and not resembling in any form the treaties which the British used to present for their subordinates' signature. In Dutch constitutional law the native states, with the exception of the Javanese principalities, were referred to as tracts *(landschappen)*, a term which clearly denoted their prostrate position in the administrative context. The ease with which the Dutch occasionally abolished native states and re-established some of them at a later date also pointed to an essential difference with British practice.

In French Indochina, too, indirect rule was hardly different from direct control. The traditional rulers and the indigenous administrative hierar-

chies were preserved in two regions of Vietnam, in Cambodia and in the three provinces of Laos which constituted the kingdom of Luang Prabang. But by wiping out every vestige of autonomy in Tonkin the French did not even make the pretense of treating this region differently from a directly ruled colony. In Annam they did, but there was no real native authority left after the colonial government established a completely French administrative hierarchy alongside the traditional Vietnamese bureaucracy. The Vietnamese kings were no more than ornamental puppets and whenever they showed any sign of independent behaviour they were most unceremoniously deposed. The same conditions existed in Cambodia which had been compelled to give the French total control over the internal administration of the country: the king's prerogatives were confined to religious ceremony, and the Cambodian administrative officials were mere intermediaries through which the French imposed their policies.

THE NON-REPRESENTATIVE NATURE OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENT

All variations notwithstanding, the colonial administrative structures were, in the executive branch, basically analogous, and in exercising their supreme authority they functioned along essentially similar lines. The difference in the methods employed to enforce their will was only a matter of tactics. The persuasion of the British, the *perintah halus* or 'gentle pressure' applied by the Dutch and the high-handed interference of the French, all served the same end: to see to it that the policy of the government was carried out.

Of a far more fundamental nature was the difference in the extent to which the various colonial systems allowed the subject peoples to participate in the governmental process at an influential level. This was so because there was a connection with some basic principles, like 'representative government', or 'sovereignty of the people', which might in the end endanger Western rule. A colonial administration, equipped with a fully-fledged parliamentary system, based on genuine popular representation and on responsibility of the government to the legislature, would inevitably result in a liquidation of Western control. By 1940 only the United States and Great Britain, each in their own way, had accepted this as the ultimate goal of their policy towards the Philippines and Burma. The other colonial powers, and Britain with regard to developments in Malaya, were still aiming at maintaining their political domination, and they did so, constitutionally as well as in practice, in widely divergent ways, depending on the basic concept of their colonial policies and on the circumstances prevailing in each one of their overseas possessions.

By its very nature a colonial government was never a genuine representative government as long as the top executive posts were controlled by

aliens. In 1940 this was still the case everywhere in South-East Asia, except the Philippines. In all territories the chief executive was a representative of a foreign power: a French and Dutch governor-general in Indochina and the Indies, British governors in Burma and North Borneo, a British governor and high commissioner in Malaya and even a British rajah in Sarawak. Yet, under this foreign apex of the bureaucratic pyramid, there were substantial differences in the degree of indigenous participation in the executive bodies. There was also a wide variety in the structural organization of the legislative branches of government, more in particular with regard to the powers allotted to the various councils as well as to the manner in which the formula of popular representation was applied.

The Philippines were ahead of all other Western-dominated territories of South-East Asia in that both executive and legislative powers were in the hands of the Filipinos. Under the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 several limitations were placed, however, on the free exercise of this authority. The United States remained ultimately responsible: she had supervisory powers and the right to intervene, if necessary, to protect life, property and individual freedom and to guarantee a proper discharge of the governmental duties. Foreign affairs and defence were still exclusively placed under the American government, while in the legislative sphere all acts passed by the Philippine National Assembly on currency, tariff policies and immigration were subject to approval by the American president. In addition, the latter had the right to suspend any act or decree, which in his opinion violated the international obligations of the United States, or which would lead to the failure of the Philippine government to meet her bonded indebtedness. Under such circumstances the American high commissioner in Manila was more than just a diplomatic representative: he had extensive reserve powers which he could use at the instructions of the president of the United States. These restrictions notwithstanding, the Philippines enjoyed a substantial amount of self-government.

The constitution of 1935 provided for a powerful chief executive. The president supervised and controlled the executive departments in the central sphere, as well as the provincial and municipal administration; he was commander-in-chief of the armed forces and he appointed the administrative, judicial and military officials, among them the departmental heads who formed the cabinet. His position was more or less analogous to that of the United States president, but because of the unitary type of government in the Philippines his control over local matters was far greater.

The great power of the executive was particularly noticeable in its relations with the legislature. The president had the right to veto any law or, in some cases, any item of a law, and his veto could be overruled only if two-thirds, in some cases even three-quarters of the National Assembly

re-adopted the bill. Besides normal legislative authority, the Assembly had the power to supervise appointments made by the president, and in specific circumstances it was entitled to impeach the president and some other high officials. These powers were meant as a safeguard against official arbitrariness, but in practice this guarantee did not exist: the standing committees created for the purpose were constituted in such a way that they were entirely controlled by the ruling majority party, which was unlikely to support any rigorous action against an office-bearer of its own political persuasion.

A strong legislature might have been more in accordance with the concept of democracy and a parliamentary regime, but the framers of the constitution preferred a powerful executive, which they regarded as a necessary condition to guarantee stability and security and to prevent party-struggle and chaos. The predominant position of the Filipino élite was also considered to be better protected by restricting popular influence, and this was not only achieved by reducing the authority of the legislature, but also by limiting the right to vote to those who could read and write. The Philippines might well be the only South-East Asian country which had captured almost complete self-government by 1940, but her constitution neither provided for real popular representation, nor for the establishment of that well-balanced division of power between the executive and legislative organs, the basic characteristic of any genuinely democratic parliamentary-type government.

In some respects, the system of administration which existed in Burma after 1937 came closer to the ideal of Western parliamentary government than that of the Philippines. But here, too, self-government was limited. Restrictive powers, moreover, were held by a person who was a part of the administrative machinery and not by an outsider, as was the American high commissioner in Manila. This did not make any essential difference in practice, only psychologically; while the impression was created among the Filipinos that their self-government was real, the Burmese had no such idea as long as there was a British governor at the top of their governmental structure. The major executive organ, the Council of Ministers, was nominated from among Burmese politicians in consultation with the leader of the party or the combination of parties which commanded the confidence of the legislature. Technically the ministers were advisers of the governor, holding office at his pleasure, but in practice and in normal circumstances, they were dismissed only when defeated in parliament. The legislature consisted of two chambers. In the House of Representatives more than three-quarters of the seats were filled by elections on a territorial constituency basis: in most constituencies all voters were listed on a common register; in the others, which were reserved for Indians and Karens, there were special communal registers. The non-territorial seats were reserved for Europeans and Anglo-Burmans, and for some special interests like commerce and industry. This system secured a large Burmese

majority, but also an appropriate representation of minority interests. The Senate was half nominated by the governor and half elected from among the House of Representatives.

The governor was exclusively responsible for some 'reserved subjects', such as defence, external affairs, financial policy and the administration of the Shan states and tribal areas, in which he used his own discretion. Added to these duties he had some 'special responsibilities', related to the protection of the interests of minorities and the preservation of law and order, in which he exercised his individual judgement, but might consult his ministers. In all other matters the governor had to act on the advice of the ministers, but in the legislative sphere he had the right of veto and the power to return a rejected bill. The governor was bound, however, to use his rights in such a way as to give his ministers and the legislature full scope for the discharge of their responsibilities. On the whole the governor acted as a constitutional ruler, but the mere fact that he was there and that he had the power to intervene whenever he wanted, prevented the Burmese ministers from acting as freely as they wished. Furthermore the British element was still strongly entrenched in several services and it continued to carry on the day-to-day administration of the country in its own way.

The other colonial territories had not yet reached the stage of constitutional development of the Philippines and Burma, and their governments were to all intents and purposes foreign governments. There were, however, some variations in the way they operated in practice. Administratively Malaya presented the most complicated structure of government in all South-East Asia: one Crown colony, and nine Malay states out of which four were joined in a federation. The territory under direct rule, the colony of the Straits Settlements, was ruled by a governor who wielded extensive executive and legislative powers and was responsible only to the Colonial Office. Both the Executive and the Legislative Council, had a majority of official members, and in the latter all non-official members except two were nominated by the governor. The official majority in the legislature was considered necessary to hold the balance between the conflicting interests in this multi-racial society, and the members of the official bloc were obliged to support the policy of the government. This obligation also existed in the Federal Council, the legislative body for the Federated Malay States; the members were nominated by the governor in his capacity of high commissioner, and they were allowed to deal with federal matters only. In the F.M.S. no executive council existed; executive power was in the hands of a few departmental heads who were responsible for those federal services which had survived the decentralization policy of the early 1930s: defence, customs, police and finance. Under the high commissioner there were no officials or bodies, either executive or legislative, exercising authority over matters common either to the non-federated states or to all Malay states.

In its set-up British administration in Malaya was outright autocratic, but in practice the colonial regime was not as oppressive as its constitutional structure seemed to imply. Although British influence was considerable, indirect rule had not been made a façade, and while they were firmly under British control, the state governments enjoyed some real authority. In the Straits Settlements as well as in the F.M.S. the government was, constitutionally, in a position to carry out any policy it wanted by making use of the official majority in the legislative councils, but it did so only when the Colonial Office insisted on such a course. Whenever a proposal met with strong opposition the government set out to find a compromise, and it often happened that a controversial issue was quietly dropped. This generally lenient nature of colonial policy in Malaya was essentially different from the accommodating attitude Britain displayed in Burma. In the latter case British complaisance was brought about by the emergence of a strong nationalist movement, to the demands of which the government gradually had to give in. In Malaya there was hardly any desire either for a democratic form of government or for self-rule and independence. Under no strong pressure to change, the administration could thus afford to remain autocratic. Since, due to the political circumstances in Malaya, an accommodating attitude was not likely to constitute any real danger to the colonial regime, the British government could also afford to adopt a policy of 'enlightened despotism'.

The French and Dutch empires in South-East Asia continued to be thoroughly autocratic in nature, in practice as well as on paper, in spite of the fact that both in Indochina and in Indonesia political movements were demanding a change in the structure and outlook of the colonial systems. At the top of the administrative pyramid stood the governor-general as an absolute ruler. A large part of his executive functions devolved upon the heads of the administrative branches and he was assisted by consultative councils, both consisting of official members. Representative councils also existed, both in the central and the local sphere of administration.

Unlike the situation in Malaya the latter bodies were not exclusively filled by nominations: some of their members were elected. The holding of elections as such did not mean that Indochina and Indonesia had entered a more advanced stage of constitutional development than Malaya. First, there was the manner in which the elections were held. In the central representative assemblies, the Volksraad in Indonesia and the *Grand Conseil des intérêts economiques et financiers* in Indochina the elected members, who formed a majority, were not elected by direct popular vote but by the various regional or local councils. Of the larger territories in the Indies only the provinces of Java were equipped with provincial councils, the members of which were partly appointed and partly elected by lower bodies. The *Conseil Colonial* in Cochin China consisted of French members elected by French citizens according to a system of universal

suffrage, and of Vietnamese councillors elected by restricted native suffrage. A limited electorate, drawn from among the small oligarchy of high officials, local notables, landlords and wealthy merchants was responsible for choosing the members of the consultative councils in Annam, Tonkin and Cambodia. In the lower sphere of administration the elections for such representative bodies as the Regency Councils in Java or the Councils of Notables in Vietnam were also either indirect or restricted to a small group of influential people. Nowhere in Indochina or Indonesia did the elective system guarantee real popular influence, and none of the bodies thus constituted was genuinely representative. In the two central assemblies, moreover, the Volksraad and the Grand Conseil, only half the members were Indonesian or Indochinese.

The second factor which, elections notwithstanding, did not raise Indochina and Indonesia to a higher level of constitutional advancement than Malaya, was related to the limited authority of the representative bodies. Apart from the fact that the executive was not responsible to any such council, none of them had full legislative powers, and in some cases, especially in Indochina, they were mere façades. The consultative councils in Annam and Tonkin were not entitled to discuss political issues, and the budget estimates were merely presented to them as a matter of form; the Cochin-Chinese Colonial Council was purely advisory and any of its decisions could be overruled by the colony's executive body. In the Netherlands Indies the provincial councils enjoyed some more authority than their counterparts in Indochina, but here, too, their freedom of action was severely limited by a highly centralized system of administration, which left hardly any room for the making of decisions in the lower branches.

In the centre, finally, the Grand Conseil in Indochina was a sheer fake. It had to be consulted on all issues relating to the general and regional budgets, but it had no legislative power at all. It was a purely advisory body on economic and financial questions only, and its non-official members did not have the right to bring up any question for discussion. Of all representative bodies the Volksraad in the Netherlands Indies was the least farcical. It had full legislative power in all issues not reserved to the States General, the Dutch parliament, and in matters on which the latter was entitled to legislate it had co-legislative authority. There were several restrictions, of course, but for all its limited powers the Volksraad was not without importance in the governmental process in the Netherlands Indies. On the whole the administration tended to take the Council seriously; there was no official bloc and full liberty was given to criticize the administration. By freely expressing its views the Volksraad was able, indirectly, to exercise a considerable influence. It was only in emergency situations, like the economic crisis of the early 1930s, that the Netherlands Indies government threw off the mask and, by failing to show any consideration for the Volksraad, reduced it to impotence.

In Indochina and Indonesia, as in Malaya, the population was not

adequately represented in the administration, neither was there any responsibility of the executive authorities to any legislative or representative body. But, unlike the British in Malaya, the French did nothing and the Dutch hardly anything to mitigate the dictatorial set-up of their régimes. French rule in Indochina represented the climax of colonial ruthlessness in South-East Asia, while Dutch domination over the Indies, outwardly more tolerant and paternalistic, was in fact equally arbitrary.

2 *The Process of Economic Modernization*

WESTERN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

SOUTH-EAST Asia was tremendously affected by modern colonialism not only in a political sense but also economically. In the first place there was an absolute change in the character of the region's relations with the outside world. Until the middle of the nineteenth century South-East Asia had been supplying commodities which, judged by the then prevailing standards in Europe, might be termed luxury articles, and only Java, forced to do so under the Culture System, had produced large quantities of agricultural goods for specific export purposes. But after 1870 the region's production capacity was transformed from one primarily geared to satisfying local needs into one adapted to the requirements of the industrialized Western nations. This subordination of South-East Asia's economy to the capitalist structure of the Western world greatly increased its significance in the international economy. By 1940 the region supplied almost all the world's rubber, Manila hemp, kapok, pepper, cinchona bark and teak, three-fourths of all tapioca and copra, more than half the world's output of palm oil and more than one-third of its sisal. Furthermore it was an important producer of sugar, tea, tobacco, spices, natural resins, gums and fats, and also petroleum, and minerals like tin, iron ore, manganese ore and chromium. Apart from producing raw materials South-East Asia also provided a market for European or American and, at a later stage, Japanese manufactured goods. In these two functions the region played an important role, as was clearly testified by its production figures and trade statistics.

With the exception of the Philippines, which was dominated by the United States, foreign trade was controlled by the European colonial

powers, and in general Europe continued to be South-East Asia's chief customer as well as the main source of its imports. The United States, however, made substantial inroads into this European trade bastion, particularly in Malaya and Indonesia. This increasing American interest in the products of South-East Asia gave the region a key position in the world's balance of payments. As the colonial territories exported more to the United States than they purchased from her, they became important dollar-earners for the home countries, enabling the latter to improve their own unfavourable trade balances with the United States.

The activities of the West in developing South-East Asia's economy were many-sided. In the commercial field it was, in a sense, the continuation of the earlier, pre-1870, European trade activity, but it was of a far greater intensity and scope. Shipping lines, merchant houses, insurance firms and commercial companies, sometimes huge trading concerns handling the exports and imports of the region, grew and flourished. In many cases they did not confine themselves purely to trade, but developed far more widely dispersed interests at the same time: in plantations, in local manufacturing and processing industries and in mines. Among the so-called Big Five in the Netherlands Indies at least two (Geo Wehry & Co. and the Borneo-Sumatra Co.) extended their field of activity far beyond that of merely importing manufactured goods and exporting Indonesian products; the former had interests in several plantations, including rubber, and in local manufacturing industries, while the latter acted as an agency house for Western and Japanese manufacturing, shipping and insurance firms and it owned numerous estates and mining establishments. The remaining three (Jacobson-Van den Berg, Internatio, Lindeteves) were just giants in the import and export business. So also the great firms in Malaya (Boustead & Co., Guthries, Sime Darby & Co. and Harrisons & Crosfield) acted as managing agents in agricultural enterprise and mining, and they linked these two forms of enterprise with commerce in Singapore as well as with financial interests and managerial and technical resources in Britain.

A second field of Western activity was that of finance. In this respect banks and other financial institutions played an important role, not only in traditional commercial and exchange banking, but also in financing agricultural undertakings. Thus a powerful grip over the economy of Indochina was obtained by the *Banque d'Indochine*, which, in addition to its official function, acted as a discount and commercial bank. Its position was strongly related to the prosperity of Indochina's business, and although it did not invest capital itself in any undertaking, it managed to extend its influence over a wide field, mainly by its policy of carefully selecting certain enterprises and making the provision of credit conditional on general economic circumstances. In Indochina other institutions, too, were heavily involved in the colony's economic development, particularly

the great *Société financière des Caoutchoucs*, or *Socfin*, which was mainly interested in rubber. In the Netherlands Indies a special type of financial institution developed, the so-called cultivation banks. These came into being when the extension of the range of activities of the traditional commercial and exchange banking firms into the field of granting agricultural loans led to many difficulties of organization, which were aggravated by a crisis in the sugar industry in the 1880s. A division of functions in the financial sphere was the solution to the problem: banks were to confine themselves either to commercial and exchange banking or specialize in agricultural finance. In the last mentioned category the *Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij,* a general banking house with widely dispersed interests in agricultural undertakings, became the largest institution.

The third form of Western enterprise in South-East Asia was related to tapping the region's mineral, fuel and agricultural resources. It was this aspect of Western colonialism which in French parlance was termed *la mise en valeur*. Mining was carried on in all South-East Asian countries. Most of the deposits had been worked already, either by local miners and drillers or by immigrant Chinese. Western capital and skill replaced the time-honoured traditional methods, and assisted by the abundance of cheap labour, greatly increased outputs. In this field several big companies came into existence, like the Billiton Company (tin), the *Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij* (oil), the Burmah Oil Co., the Burma Corporation (lead and silver) and the *Sociètè des Charbonnages du Tonkin* (coal). Some of these and most of the minor companies operating in this field specialized in a rather limited range of mining activities, but some were interested in more than one product. All the companies were allied with big financial and industrial interests in the home countries and they were either financially interrelated or dominated by large holding companies.

Tin was mined in Malaya, mainly in Selangor and Perak, in Indonesia in Bangka, Billiton and Singkep, in Siam in the peninsula from the Burmese frontier down to Phuket, in Tenasserim in Burma, and in the Nam Patène basin in Laos. The Chinese were the pioneers of the modern tin industry in Malaya, but the change in the mining methods brought about by the introduction, in 1912, of the tin-dredge, drove them from first place. For about half a century the annual output made Malaya the world's foremost tin producing country. In striking contrast to Malaya tin mining in the Indies was done by two concerns, while the state was heavily involved, with the result that a large percentage of the profits flowed into the public treasury. Tin from the Indies was mainly smelted in Singapore until 1932 when a smelter was built in the Netherlands. In Siam exploitation was to a large extent done by traditional methods in Chinese-operated mines; only British and Australian mines used dredging.

Oil was found in Indonesia, Brunei and Burma. The main fields in the Indies were situated near Palembang in South Sumatra, Pangkalan Brandan in East Sumatra, Balik Papan and Tarakan in East Borneo and

Tiepu in East Java. The leading combination in the oil industry was the Royal Dutch-Shell, exercising control through the Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij, but it did not enjoy a monopoly position: Standard Oil was able to operate in South Sumatra. The total production of crude oil, the highest in the Far East, was less than 4 per cent of the world's total. In British Borneo an oil field was discovered near Seria, in Brunei, in 1929. Yenangyaung was the main centre of Burmese oil, exploited by the Burmah Oil Company which around the turn of the century started large-scale operations with the help of modern techniques and cheap Indian labour. Production rose rapidly, and although Burma's share in the world's oil production was only 0.5 per cent, the output was sufficient to meet the local demands and those of East and South India.

The chief mining industry of Indochina was the extraction of coal, making Vietnam the largest coal producer of South-East Asia. By far the most productive deposits, yielding anthracite of excellent quality, were in the Quang Yen province of Tonkin; they were worked by the *Societé des Charbonnages du Tonkin* and the *Société des Charbonnages du Dong Trieu*. Exploitation was facilitated by an ample supply of labourers and by the fact that the seams were very close to the surface: several beds, notably the mines of Hon Gay, were worked by the open-pit method. Of the coal industry in Indonesia, in Borneo and Sumatra, some mines were worked by private companies, but most were in the hands of the state. Unlike the situation in Tonkin, where the mines were close to ports, coal mining in Indonesia presented few attractions to private enterprise because of transport difficulties. Government undertakings included the two largest coal mines in the Indies, near Sawahlunto and Muara Enim, both in Sumatra, and which, in 1938, accounted for 68 per cent of the total output. In Malaya the main coal mine was at Batu Arang, in Selangor.

Gold was the most important mineral of the Philippines, extracted by Filipinos and Chinese even before the Spaniards came to the islands. Production increased sharply when under American rule mining companies introduced modern equipment. In the early 1930s the devaluation of the dollar and the increase in the fixed price of gold created great interest. The main deposits were in North Luzon, near Baguio, in Camarines Norte, in Masbate and in North Mindanao, near Surigao, making the Philippines the principal gold producer of South-East Asia.

Among the other minerals of South-East Asia were iron ore in Malaya and the Philippines, lead and silver in Burma, bauxite in the Riau archipelago in the Indies, zinc and phosphate in Indochina, manganese ore, copper and chromium in the Philippines and tungsten in Burma and Siam. In Siam mining activity was, as elsewhere, mainly controlled by Western and Chinese enterprise. From a Western point of view the industry was, in general, poorly developed: there were no adequate transport facilities, there was little modern equipment and there was a shortage of local labourers. Most Thai workers in the mines were peasants who returned to

their lands at the beginning of the rice season, and as the Siamese government was independent the Western entrepreneurs could not rely on her to obtain legislation providing for either forced recruitment of local labourers or immigration of coolies from other parts of Asia. Also the government imposed restrictions and heavy taxes which discouraged foreign capital investment.

A field of Western activity more prominent than the exploitation of mineral resources was the development of commercialized agriculture. In this sector of Western enterprise, crops, occasionally indigenous, but in most cases introduced from elsewhere, were produced for export in a planned and scientific way under Western direction and with Western methods of large, mainly European-owned estates, in which foreign capital was heavily involved. Plantation agriculture was efficiently organized, and was carried out on a large scale. It had the latest technical knowledge at its disposal, it specialized in one single crop and in some cases the products underwent preliminary processing or preparation before they were exported. As in the case of the mining industry the labour force was either recruited from among the local population or brought in from other parts of the colony or from countries outside South-East Asia. Here again Western companies either confined themselves to only one product, or they had wider interests. So the *Société des Hevéas de Tay Ninh* was a big joint-stock company dealing with rubber. The chief firm in the Philippines, the Spanish-owned *La Tabacalera*, controlled three-fourths of the colony's tobacco, which was produced by tenants on its estates in the Cagayán valley in North Luzon. But the huge *Deli Maatschappij* in Sumatra's East Coast residency was a tobacco company with other substantial interests as well. In some cases, particularly in the rubber industry, large American or European manufacturing industries, like Dunlop, Michelin, Goodyear, U.S. Rubber Co. and Pirelli, owned their own plantations.

With her vast agricultural resources the Netherlands Indies became one of the greatest suppliers of tropical products for the world market. The Culture System, in force in Java from 1830 to roughly 1870, already concentrated on export production, compelling small peasants to cultivate crops as prescribed by the government. But due to the economic developments in the Netherlands and the growing influence of liberal ideas a transformation to a new system took place around the middle of the nineteenth century, which led to the gradual abolition of forced cultivation. This change did not affect the principle of exploitation as such, but only the methods to be employed in tapping the colony's agricultural resources.

The European contribution to bringing new areas under cultivation was tremendous. The opening up of great tracts of land in jungle-covered, generally not easily accessible regions, could be achieved only under Western management, with the help of Western technical equipment and

capital investment. This also applied to the actual cultivation, and particularly in this sector, which included problems like soil investigation, fertilization, seed breeding and seed selection, and preventing plant diseases, the Dutch research institutes and experimental stations achieved a remarkably high standard, making the Dutch the pioneering experts in tropical agriculture.

One of the chief plantation crops in Indonesia was sugar. The industry was carried out in East Java in densely populated areas, since it needed a large labour supply. There was also a close connexion with village agriculture at subsistence level, because the land had to be reverted for two years to other crops after the sugar had been harvested. The factory used to rent land from the village community; regulations fixing the minimum rent and the period of the hire, guaranteed the factory-owner that he could grow several crops on the same plot of land, which after each crop was reverted to native use; at the same time they guaranteed the Javanese smallholder that he could let out his land alternately for a long period at a fixed minimum rate.

Tobacco was another important product of Western enterprise in the Netherlands Indies, with its main area in East Sumatra. In spite of the fact that this industry was extremely hazardous and a local labour supply was not easily available (the entrepreneurs having to make their own arrangements in this respect), tobacco cultivation was, in general, quite successful. In Java tobacco was grown on lands hired by the companies from the village communities. Tea was never a great success until the seeds of the Assam variety were obtained and more efficient and methodical methods of preparation had been introduced. The main centres were West Java and East Sumatra. In Indochina tea was grown on large estates on the so-called Red Lands of Southern Annam. Oil palm became a subject of Western plantation cultivation in the early twentieth century with the increasing demand of vegetable oil; both in the Netherlands Indies and in Malaya the palm oil industry was in the hands of great estate companies with very large plantations.

But the mainstay of Malaya's economy, apart from tin, was rubber, which made a phenomenal rise as an export item in the twentieth century. When the world demand increased after the invention of rubber tyres for motor vehicles South-East Asian planters feverishly expanded the cultivation of rubber, induced, too, by the extremely high prices for rubber around 1910. South-East Asia's position in world production was favoured by the fact that the Brasilian output reached its maximum by 1913, and gradually the region became the chief producer, also because of the good quality of its rubber. In 1917 80 per cent of the world's rubber came from South-East Asia, and in 1932 the region accounted for 98 per cent.

The exceptionally rapid and at times rather reckless expansion of the rubber industry had its disadvantages when over-production occurred, and as a result it was subject to fluctuations of the international market.

This became evident already during the depression of the early 1920s. When the price fell, the rubber companies, particularly those in Malaya clamoured for protection, and in 1922 the so-called Stevenson Restriction Scheme was adopted for the rubber producing territories of the British Empire. In the same year a ban was placed on the alienation of land for rubber in Malaya. The scheme aimed at stabilizing rubber prices by curtailing production and imposing a system of variable export quotas. When the prices did go up, this was not, however, the result of the restriction as such but of a wave of prosperity in the United States, which was accompanied by a vast expansion in the motor industry. For Malaya the scheme had an adverse effect, moreover, because the Netherlands Indies were not participating in it and the restriction of Malaya's output led to an increase in Indonesia's rubber production. As most of the newly planted areas in Indonesia were under immature rubber, Malaya's total production remained greater than Indonesia's, but nevertheless the share of the latter in world production rose from 25 per cent in 1922 to nearly 40 per cent in 1928.

When the demand for rubber in the United States dropped again, prices fell once more, and more steeply so after the Stevenson Scheme had been abandoned in 1928 and Malaya's production had increased. In the 1930s the industry was drawn into the maelstrom of the great Trade Depression, leading to the collapse of the rubber market: in 1932 the price was one-fourth that of 1929. In order to save the industry from disaster production restrictions were resumed when in 1934 the Rubber Regulation Agreement was signed by Britain, the Netherlands, Siam and France. Under this scheme new planting was in principle forbidden and replanting restricted; and to each of the participating rubber-producing countries export quotas were allotted. The curtailing of the exports led to a gradual increase in the rubber price, but the general improvement of the situation in the late 1930s was mainly due to the threat of the approaching war, to the armaments race and the practice of surplus stockpiling. While this restriction scheme enabled the industry to survive, the Trade Depression urged the planters in Indonesia as well as in Malaya to carry out technical improvements. Indonesia, moreover, benefited from the fact that much new land had been brought under rubber during the late 1920s, and that the international agreement provided for an increase of the export quotas when immature trees came into production. Thus in 1939 Indonesia exported, for the first time, more rubber than Malaya. The Indochinese rubber industry was not affected by the restriction, because its production was still below the needs of France. The main areas of rubber were the west coast states of Malaya, East Sumatra, Atjeh, Tapanuli and West Java in the Indies, the Bien Hoa, Baria and Thu Dau Mot provinces of Cochin China and the *terres rouges* in Southern Annam.

In the Philippines Western plantations did play some role in the cultivation of export crops, but they did not obtain a leading position. For

different reasons both the Spanish and the American colonial regimes raised obstacles against the investment of Western capital in agricultural enterprise to the same extent as in Malaya and Indonesia. The cultivation of tobacco, sugar cane and Manila hemp was chiefly in native hands, although there existed some large rubber and abaca plantations in Mindanao. The major reason why the Philippines did not develop into a plantation colony as did Malaya or Indonesia was the policy of the United States of leading the islands to independence. Thus the prospect of political and economic instability after the country had become independent prevented Western capital from making long-term investments.

THE ROLE OF THE CHINESE AND INDIANS

Western economic activity in South-East Asia forced the territories of the region into taking part in international trade and it made the world market easily accessible to the region's products. Even independent Siam followed this economic development, but at a slower pace. But Western enterprise was not exclusively responsible for the region's successful development. In every aspect of the process, in finance and commerce, in mining and in agriculture, Asians were involved at all levels, as business managers, middlemen and shopkeepers, as peasants, labourers and coolies. Western domination created the opportunities to modernize South-East Asia and to equip the region with an up-to-date technical apparatus and a managerial and financial superstructure to exploit the mineral and agricultural resources, but the outcome would have been different had it not been for the presence of Chinese and Indian entrepreneurs and middlemen, and of immigrant and native workmen and labourers. In the field of road and railway construction as well as in the mining industry and in plantation agriculture the Europeans supplied the capital, the engineering skill, the designs and the tools, but the actual manual labour was done by Asians.

Chinese immigrants had settled in South-East Asia long before the Europeans arrived, and quite significant Chinese communities, engaged in commerce and mining enterprise, already existed before the nineteenth century. Indians were also present, be it fewer in number except in Burma. However it was only in the late nineteenth century that the flow of immigrants became so large that very substantial Chinese and Indian minorities emerged. In many cases the immigrant Asians were useful intermediaries between the ruling power and the indigenous peoples. The introduction of a period of relative peace and of law and order stimulated the Chinese and Indians to embark upon more extensive activities in the economic field. But the most important factor was the region's phenomenal economic development which offered opportunities that were far more promising than in China and India. The immigrants were encouraged by the prospects of finding a new field of activity and a better living than they

were accustomed to in their own countries. There were also the inducements offered by recruiters acting on behalf of Western enterprise, or by their own compatriots who had built up a business and wanted labourers and clerks. In a more direct sense European rule was responsible for the increasing number of immigrants in those cases where the governments encouraged immigration of Chinese and Indian coolies either by introducing recruitment systems in areas where the supply of native labour was insufficient, such as Malaya and some parts of the Indies, or by failing to check the influx of cheap labour in a country where indigenous labourers had a higher standard of living, such as Burma.

Not all foreign Asian immigrants arriving in South-East Asia during the period of modern colonialism settled down permanently. The Chinese, mainly of peasant origin, planned to work as labourers, to save money and return to their country. In Malaya, for example, the majority went back to China but, in general, there was an immigration surplus. Among those who stayed behind most were labourers in the mining industry or on the estates, but with their flair for business many invested money in trade, mining and property and became shopkeepers, merchants, produce-dealers or artisans; a few also managed to reach the level of wealthy miners and bankers. As for the Indians, the group of middlemen among those who emigrated was proportionately greater than among the Chinese, but the majority, here again, consisted of coolies and labourers. Neither did the Indians stay permanently, and during the depression years the number of departures exceeded that of arrivals, as was the case with the Chinese. But here, too, the movement, seen as a whole, showed an immigration surplus.

The flow of foreign Asian immigrants was not evenly spread over South-East Asia but, for obvious reasons, channelled to those countries and territories which offered the best opportunities or where their labour and skill were most needed. This factor accounts for the variations in the proportions of Chinese and Indians in the total population from country to country. They were a rather small minority in the Philippines (0.73 per cent) and in Indochina (1.41 per cent, although the figures were 3.5 per cent and 3.7 per cent for Cambodia and Cochin China), a substantial minority in Siam (3.57 per cent for Chinese citizens, some 14 to 17 per cent for ethnic Chinese), in the Netherlands Indies (2.02 per cent) and in Burma (Indians 6.85 per cent). In Malaya the Chinese accounted for 33.9 per cent of the total population, the Indians for 15.1 per cent. Singapore and Cholon were Chinese towns, Rangoon was half Indian.

One category of immigrants was not foreign in the sense that they came from outside South-East Asia, but they were no less foreign in the country where they settled. There was a large-scale immigration of Vietnamese into Cambodia, where they were needed as labourers on French rubber estates, or as clerks. Many of them climbed the ladder in petty trade or in professional occupations; others, in the rural areas, remained plantation

workers or became fishermen or rice farmers. In the second significant instance of inter-regional migration in South-East Asia, that of Javanese to Malaya or East Sumatra, the immigrants were racially more affiliated to the indigenous population and, therefore, more smoothly accepted than the Vietnamese in Cambodia.

In territories where Western enterprise gave direction to economic affairs at the top level and the majority of the native population was not able to adapt itself sufficiently quickly to the changing circumstances and in some cases lacked the necessary business instinct, the Chinese and Indians made themselves indispensable as middlemen. The Chinese, in particular, were the proverbial traders and commercial intermediaries, performing essential functions as shopkeepers, retail traders, importers and exporters, brokers, peddlers, manufacturers, providers of agricultural credit and speculators. They were greatly successful and they gained a large degree of economic control over the peoples of South-East Asia, but their activities were not restricted to the sphere of the middleman. Although Western enterprise dominated the higher levels of economic development in the colonial territories, the Chinese managed to infiltrate there, at least in those countries where their activities were not limited by discriminatory legislation. In Malaya there were large Chinese firms either complementary to Western enterprise or competing with the Europeans in their own field, in wholesale trade, mining, agriculture and finance. Chinese agency houses and import and export firms were set up: of the four largest banks in Malaya one was Chinese. In the Netherlands Indies their activities were more restricted to the middle sector, but here, too, a trading company like the Oei Tiong Ham-Kian Gwan concern, a leading merchant firm with extensive interests, was able to develop. In the absence of Western enterprise supported by a European government, the direction of economic affairs at the higher levels in Siam was virtually in the hands of the Chinese.

But the main emphasis of Chinese economic activities was on the middle sector which they, in fact, controlled. They had a tremendous share in the rice-milling industry in all the South-East Asian countries, and a near monopoly over South-East Asia's rice markets. They practically controlled internal trade in Indonesia, the business of importing smallholders' rubber from Indonesia to Malaya; Chinese merchants handled a substantial part of the rubber exports from Malaya, most of Malaya's internal trade and a large proportion of Malaya's trade with her neighbours. Retail trade in the Philippines was for the greater part in Chinese hands, and in almost all South-East Asian countries they possessed nearly all small and medium-sized factories.

In this range of activities the Indians came second to the Chinese in Malaya. They acted as money-lenders, bankers, merchants, shopkeepers, estate owners, and, unlike the Chinese, they occupied and in some cases monopolized subordinate posts in the administration, the technical ser-

vices and in transport and communications. In Burma the Indians were the most important immigrant community. They obtained a hold over the country's economy which was as large as that of the Chinese elsewhere in South-East Asia. Non-Western banking was in the hands of Indian bankers, especially the Chettyars, who became the most significant group in this field. The penetration of Chettyar banking in Burma was directly related to the development of commercial agriculture, and their main business consisted of lending money to cultivators, and also to retail and wholesale traders and industrialists.

Because of their considerable influence in the middle sector of economic life the role of the immigrant Asians has often been misrepresented. In general they were identified with money-lenders and wealthy usurers, but this myth, like the similar one about the position of Jews in European economy, tended to overlook the fact that most Chinese and Indians were engaged in the lower spheres of economic activity. In Malaya a large percentage of the Chinese were working as labourers in the tin mines or in secondary industries, in building and construction, in which they accounted for nearly 67 per cent of the labour force. In the Indies only 35.4 per cent of the Chinese were engaged in commercial business: the majority was working in the tin industry or as coolies on the estates where their position was hardly better, if any at all, than that of the imported Javanese contract coolies. The same was true for the Indians: in 1939 only 4 per cent of the Malayan Indians were in trade, and 10 per cent in skilled or semi-skilled jobs; the remainder were absorbed in unskilled or menial work, especially as wage earners in the rubber industry and in road construction. In Burma almost all manual labour was done by Indians.

The Chinese and Indians were indispensable in the economic development of South-East Asia, both by their activities in the medium sector of economic enterprise, and by the fact that they provided cheap labour. It is true that the majority of them came to the region in order to escape the bleak situation in their own countries, and that they had little interest in the country where they were working. But this does not detract anything from the fact that they contributed to making the economic venture a success.

INDIGENOUS CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC PROGRESS

The same may be said of the contribution of the indigenous population to the process of modernization. In many cases Western enterprises were established in heavily populated areas, where a potentially large labour supply was close at hand. Whenever the inhabitants were not inclined to be employed as wage labourers, they were forced to do so, either indirectly or directly — indirectly by the general economic development which de-

stroyed native handicraft and trade, seriously damaged the native hold over the land and resulted in the emergence of a landless proletariat. Many thousands of Asians had to choose between cultivating their land in the traditional way under far more difficult circumstances, or attempting to find a living outside the traditional sphere of the village economy, and many, although a small minority in proportion to the population as a whole, entered Western enterprise. Direct pressure was exerted by government legislation or by recruiting and crimping practices.

The overwhelming majority of the indigenous population continued, however, to work in the traditional fields: agriculture, fishing, and trade and handicraft. These fields of native economic activity were, in general, by-passed by the trend towards modernization and increasing productivity which characterized the economic development of South-East Asia after the 1870s. But in some respects native economy contributed to the general process of enlarging South-East Asia's production capacity; firstly, in the sphere of traditional agriculture, particularly rice, which was no longer exclusively cultivated for personal or local consumption but also for export; and secondly, native smallholders began to cultivate crops which in the Western sphere were produced on large modern estates.

Rice was the primary crop of native agriculture and its cultivation was the basis of South-East Asia's peasant economy. It required a high degree of co-operation in building dykes, irrigating the fields, planting and harvesting, and, consequently, a strong social organization was necessary: the village community was, in fact, based on the cultivation of this crop. After the penetration of Western economy rice continued to be the basis of native agriculture. In the methods of cultivation there was no essential change, but during the period of modern colonialism it became a cash crop. This did not happen everywhere, however. In those countries where, because of the density of the population and the lack of land, or because of the expansion of Western commercial agriculture at the expense of subsistence crops, rice production was insufficient to meet the needs of the population, rice could not be exported to any large extent: in Malaya, the Philippines and Indonesia it had to be imported. But in the less densely populated territories with an abundance of land, such as Burma and Siam, rice could be commercialized. It was commercialized, too, in Cochin China and Cambodia, although in the other parts of Indochina production was insufficient, the French being more interested in Indochina's role as an exporter in international trade than in the fact that, between 1900 and 1937, the average consumption of rice per head was steadily falling.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Burma, Siam and Indochina developed into the major rice-exporting countries of the world. The rapid expansion of rice cultivation was most marked in Lower Burma, where circumstances were favourable, with an abundance of fertile land and a certain supply of water. Many peasants from Upper Burma, skilled in the art of wet rice cultivation, came to the delta area as colonists,

attracted by the new prospects in the recently opened up province and by the easy terms under which they could occupy land and borrow money. Also the government facilitated development by giving technical assistance and by encouraging the immigration of Indian coolies to cover seasonal demands for planting, harvesting and milling. In Annam and Tonkin 90 per cent of the cultivated land was under rice, but the yield was insufficient to satisfy the needs of the population. Practically no rice was exported from these territories and occasionally it had to be imported. But in Cochin China and Cambodia land could be farmed more extensively. Circumstances were favourable, as in Lower Burma: an abundance of land, a regular rainfall, and no droughts or inundations. The expansion of rice cultivation was encouraged by the authorities, and French engineers were quite active in reclaiming land. In Siam the area under rice accounted for nearly 95 per cent of all cultivated land. The transition from producing rice as a subsistence crop to cultivating it as a cash crop was less sudden than in Burma and Indochina. There was no interested European power behind the change; the penetration of money economy and of other Western economic elements was slower and contacts with the outside world were less intense than they were elsewhere. The government, moreover, attempted to prevent as much as possible any commercial exploitation of the country's resources at the expense of subsistence farming. But the impact of Western economy was strong all the same: the opportunity to market rice overseas and the lure of cash were potent forces inducing Siamese peasants to change from subsistence farming to producing rice for export. In addition to the increasing demand of rice by a growing population, this factor accounted for the expansion of the acreage under paddy.

Rubber was primarily a Western estate product, but in Indonesia and Malaya it was also cultivated by native low-cost producers on small-holdings. After Western enterprise proved its success in this field Indonesian and Malay peasants were drawn into the industry and native rubber production developed rapidly. In many respects this type of rubber cultivation did not reach the standards set by Western enterprise; it was carried out in a rather primitive way, the yield per tree was low and the quality of the product comparatively poor. Rubber was often supplementary to the smallholders' other crops. But in one respect the Indonesian rubber growers were in a better position than Western estates: they worked at a low cost and the structure of their undertakings was more flexible and, as such, economically relatively more efficient. Their economic strength lay in their capability of adapting themselves smoothly to any change brought about by price fluctuations, without endangering a highly capitalized apparatus or jeopardizing the position of a costly managerial organization. When prices were low Western estates had to cut down expenses and reduce their staff and labour force. Native rubber growers could easily change to other crops or increase

their production in order to secure a minimum income. Gradually the proportion of native rubber in the total production of the Netherlands Indies increased to 37 per cent by 1930; under the cover of the Rubber Regulation Agreement the government took some highly discriminatory steps against it, but — and this proved the native rubber producers' flexibility — Indonesian rubber cultivation managed not only to survive but also to increase its proportion to 46 per cent in 1937. In Malaya the same development took place after Malay peasants reverted from fruit trees or other crops to rubber, or opened up new lands for rubber cultivation. In general these Malay holdings were similar in character to those in Indonesia. The major development in the industry took place in the 1920s and by 1930 48 per cent of Malaya's rubber production came from smallholdings. The process was checked, however, by the ban on the alienation of land for rubber, which discriminated against Malay producers, and in 1937 the proportion of native rubber had dropped to 37 per cent of the total production. The French regime did not offer great opportunities for rubber growing in the native sphere: only 6 per cent of the area under rubber in Indochina belonged to smallholders. In Siam, on the other hand, all rubber was in non-Western hands. Initially the industry proceeded slowly, but the success of Malaya was a great incentive. The smallholdings were owned and operated by Thais and Malays, the few larger plantations by Chinese. European and American companies showed interest in developing rubber estates, but they were discouraged by the local conditions and, particularly, by the attitude of the Siamese government. The quality of Siamese rubber was, in general, low and the product was discriminated against on the international market.

Apart from rubber there were two other crops which, mainly cultivated by Western companies in colonial countries, were grown in sizeable quantities by native and Chinese cultivators in Siam. Tobacco was a Thai-grown product in the plains of Northern Siam and Korat. Sugar, produced around Bangkok, used to be Siam's most valuable export commodity in the nineteenth century, but it was not able to compete successfully with Western-enterprise Java sugar, and since the early twentieth century it has not been exported.

In the Philippines the cultivation of abaca, tobacco and coconuts was dominated by native producers, who also held a large proportion in the production of sugar. For a long time abaca was a leading export article: American capital was invested only in the processing, not in the cultivation itself. Tobacco, which had been made a government monopoly by the Spaniards, continued to expand since the monopoly was abandoned in 1882. Sugar represented approximately 40 per cent of the total income of the country. In the cultivation of this product large numbers of small planters were organized in a mill district, served by a 'sugar central'; it was in this sector that American capital was invested. Although a large area of suitable land was available for growing sugar-cane, production did

not expand greatly because of the limit that under the Tydings-McDuffie Act could be imported free of duty into the United States. Coconut growing was also a smallholder cultivation; American capital was only involved in copra refineries.

In the typical plantation colonies there were, apart from rubber, a number of crops which were not exclusively produced on Western estates but also by native growers, as well as, apart from rice, many crops which were entirely in native hands. In the export of these products native agriculture played an important role. This was most marked in the Netherlands Indies, where, in 1938, it was entirely responsible for the export of maize, soya beans, sago, sweet potatoes, fruit and vegetables, *lombok*, peanuts and peanut oil, sesame-seed and oil, cloves, cinnamon, areca nuts and castor oil. It accounted for 99.5 per cent of the pepper exports and for 95 per cent of those of coconut products, 82.5 per cent of kapok and cotton, 77.7 per cent of nutmeg, 76.9 per cent of vanilla, 72.8 per cent of cassava, 63.3 per cent of ethereal oils and 58.2 per cent of coffee. Only in some of the major crops the native share in the exports was less than half: 48 per cent for rubber, 36 per cent for gambier, 29.6 per cent for tobacco, 18.1 per cent for tea and 0.6 per cent for sugar, but this last figure tends to overlook the fact that in this product Western enterprise was closely integrated with traditional Javanese agriculture. Western enterprise had a complete monopoly only in the production and export of oil palm products, quinine and some fibres for cordage.

In Indochina and Malaya opportunities were less favourable for native peasant production of articles other than rice in the French colony and rubber and rice in Malaya. In Indochina the jealousy with which French enterprise guarded its own interests prevented anyone else from embarking upon the cultivation of a product which it was producing itself. In Malaya a disproportionately great part of agricultural activity was concentrated on rubber, which left few opportunities open, and if there were, the Chinese usually moved in before the Malays were able to do so. Yet in Indochina, sugar, tobacco, cotton, coconut and silk were produced by Vietnamese peasants, but either the quality was poor, as with cotton, or the yield per acre low, as with sugar, while the dark coloured tobacco was not suitable for export to European markets, and silk, in spite of governmental financial support, could not compete with Chinese silk or with imported rayon. Besides rice and rubber, the only other product of which Indochina became an important producer for the world market was pepper, which was exclusively in Chinese hands. Malayan rice was not exported. After rubber the major revenue crops were coconut and oil palm, but the latter was an estate product. Only coconut was, in general, grown by Asians on smallholdings. Pineapple production, which was started seriously during the 1930s when rubber planting was discontinued, was entirely in Chinese hands.

3 *The Unfavourable Aspects of Western Economic Domination*

DEPENDENCE ON THE WORLD MARKET

THE unprecedented economic activity in South-East Asia during the period of modern colonialism was instrumental in increasing the material prosperity of the region. But beneath the surface of this outward appearance of prosperity South-East Asia's economic and social conditions presented quite a different picture, particularly in the native sphere of society. There were, in fact, many factors which neutralized, for the colonial territories in general as well as for the indigenous population in particular, the opportunities to benefit from the improved economic circumstances. As such, these factors accounted for a great discrepancy between South-East Asia's potential wealth and commercial prosperity on the one hand, and on the other the deplorable economic conditions under which the majority of the region's peoples continued to live.

One of the main characteristics of South-East Asia's modern development and a factor responsible for the intrinsic weakness of its economic position was its almost complete dependence on the outside world. As a supplier of raw materials for the world market the region was highly sensitive to price fluctuations and, as such, extremely vulnerable. In fact the economic prosperity of the region depended entirely on the purchasing power of the industrialized nations, notably the United States. Any drop in the demand for its products led to economic ruin, as occurred in the early 1920s and, even more so, during the 1930s. These fluctuations were due to factors which South-East Asia itself did not control. The region's economic vulnerability was aggravated, moreover, by the one-sided nature of its

economy. Its prosperity between the two economic depressions — its favourable trade balance and its increasing purchasing power — was based on the export of only a few products. In all countries two articles accounted for 60 to 70 per cent of the exports: rice and rubber in Burma, Siam and Indochina, tin and rubber in Malaya, oil and rubber in the Netherlands Indies, sugar and coconut oil in the Philippines. The third important product of each country, added to these two, raised the percentage to between 80 and 90 per cent of all exports. These products were, in general, favourably received on the world market, but this did not lessen South-East Asia's vulnerability. Any fall in prices, any policy of economic nationalism in the consumer countries (the protection of the beet sugar industry, for example), any experiment with synthetic rubber, any shortage in shipping tonnage was likely to lead to a disaster.

Such an economic disaster, the greatest which ever overtook the region in the colonial era, was the Trade Depression of the 1930s. The world economy in general was badly affected, but South-East Asia was particularly severely hit. In a report of the League of Nations Indonesia was referred to as the country most seriously upset by the crisis. The effects of the catastrophe may be illustrated by two examples. The production of sugar fell below the level of 1900. Out of the 180 sugar factories operating in 1929, 130 were not functioning in 1935. A slight recovery followed, but the pre-crisis prosperity was no longer attained: by 1941 the Java sugar industry was reduced to between 50 and 60 per cent of its 1929 size. Deli tobacco was similarly affected, and in 1938 the value of the exports was no more than 40 per cent of the 1928 figure.

The economic depression did not affect only those who were immediately involved in the cultivation of agricultural products or in the extraction of minerals, nor only those who worked in the export business. It had a spiral effect, first hitting the top of the economic structure and then, with barrier after barrier breaking down, severely damaging the lower level. Western enterprise suffered badly and many employees had their salaries reduced or were sent back to the Netherlands. But as a result of the disaster the entire economic structure was upset and the Indonesians were also seriously affected, not only those who, one way or another, were working in the Western environment, but the masses in their own sphere as well. Employment in the sugar industry, for example, was only 20 per cent of what it had been before. During the 1930s it became evident to what extent the close interrelation of this form of Western enterprise and the traditional economy had influenced economic life of the Javanese peasants.

In other South-East Asian territories the situation was not essentially different. Because of the economic structure of the colonies there were no other sources of economic activity on which the welfare of the region could be based, or with the help of which the worst consequences of a

depression could at least be averted or remedied. Theoretically there existed a means of diminishing the nefarious effects of South-East Asia's exclusive dependence on the exports of tropical products, namely industrialization, but this was discouraged by metropolitan industrial interests. This was a consequence of another factor which accounted for the discrepancy between South-East Asia's outward material prosperity and the less favourable aspects of the prevailing economic situation; the region was not only subordinated to the world market, it was also subordinated to the home countries, in particular to their commercial, financial and industrial interests.

SUBORDINATION TO THE HOME COUNTRIES

Because of the economic significance of the colonies it was the logical policy of the Western powers to strengthen the ties between themselves and their overseas possessions as much as possible. There were, of course, several variations in the extent to which the colonies were economically subordinated to metropolitan interests, but whatever the differences in approach, a colonial economy — its dependence on the international market apart — was characterized by its strong links with the home country. Of the South-East Asian colonial territories the Philippines and Indochina were most tightly subjected to the economic system of the metropolitan powers, a situation which was mainly brought about by a policy of deliberate manipulations with tariffs and other preferential arrangements.

The economic policy of the United States towards the Philippines was the exact reverse of her approach to political problems. Overt political domination, which American public opinion and the government of the United States traditionally disapproved of so strongly in the European colonial systems, was maintained only in so far as it enabled American economic interests to entrench themselves safely in the colony. It was abandoned as soon as this purpose had been achieved, and replaced by that peculiar type of hegemony which the United States had established over the Caribbean and South America: a sort of disguised colonialism, providing for politically independent countries which were economically so completely dependent on the United States or her interests that their governments could not aspire to embark successfully upon any course, economic or political, that was not in agreement with American views.

American trade policy was the most important aspect of Philippine relations with the United States. It was directed towards the monopolization of the Philippine markets by establishing free trade between the colony and the United States and by imposing substantial duties, and at a later stage quotas, on competing foreign goods. In 1909 the Payne-Aldrich Tariff and the Philippine Tariff Act introduced a system of reciprocal free

trade in American-Philippine relations and imposed duties on articles imported from or exported to third parties. Slightly modified by the Underwood-Simmons Tariff of 1913, which abolished duties on Philippine exports to foreign countries, this system gave United States industrial interests easy access to Philippine raw materials, and it opened the Philippine market to American manufactured goods. At the same time American companies with investments in the Philippines as well as the Filipino aristocracy which owned a large percentage of the planted area under sugar, coconut and abaca drew substantial profits from the free entry of their products into the United States.

The tariff regulations of 1909 and 1913 formed the basis of the complete subordination of the Philippine economy to the United States market. In early 1909 the Philippine Assembly had already passed a resolution objecting to the introduction of free trade relations which would link the Philippines to the United States in such a manner that it could not but endanger the fragile Philippine economy and slow down the development towards independence. But in spite of these and similar objections free trade was introduced. The subordination of the Philippines to the United States was most clearly illustrated by the trade figures; in 1899–1901 9 per cent of the goods imported into the Philippines were American, while 18 per cent of her annual exports were taken by the United States; for the period 1930–1935 these percentages were 64 and 87 respectively. The economic submission of the Philippines to the United States might have constituted an obstacle to America's policy of leading the colony to political independence and there were, indeed, some American economic groups, trading with the Philippines or investing money in colonial enterprise, which disapproved of any political emancipation. But however important these interests might have been, viewed from the Philippines, they represented only 1 per cent of the total American business overseas. Thus American interests clamouring for a continuation of colonial rule over the Philippines were not capable of changing the general trend of United States policy, and certainly not so when the other far more powerful sections of American business were opposed to them. It was the great Trade Depression of the 1930s which gave particular weight to the plea for granting independence to the islands. The American pressure groups advocating such a course were severely hit by the economic crisis and they considered the free entry of Philippine products a threat to their interests. But a change in trade policy could be achieved only after a change in the constitutional status of the islands, i.e. after the Philippines had become independent and could be treated as foreign territory. It was only then that the Philippine customs preference in the United States could be abolished and that American duties could be imposed on Philippine imports.

Among these pressure groups were the powerful interests in Cuban and Louisiana sugar-cane, and the sugar-beet growers in California and

Colorado who were opposed to the imports of Philippine sugar, the producers of vegetable or animal oleaginous commodities who wanted to cut down the import of coconut oil, the American farmers who expected to find a better market for their butter in the United States if coconut oil, an element of margarine, was made subject to import duties, and finally the trade unions which resented Filipino immigration. In the ensuing fight between advocates and opponents of Philippine independence, the arguments used were occasionally of a high-sounding nature, but the entire issue was dominated by American economic interests rather than by considerations as to what would be to the advantage of the Philippines. That the eventual outcome happened to agree with the wishes of the Filipino politicians and with articulate public opinion in the islands, was totally accidental.

The economic provisions of the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 guaranteed the protection of American metropolitan interests by progressively closing the American market to competing Philippine products and by continuing the preferential treatment of American imports into the Philippines. During the transitional period duty free imports of Philippine sugar, coconut oil and cordage were restricted to fixed quotas, and in the case of sugar and rope these contingencies were smaller than the actual imports had been in the years before 1935. Any excess of these quotas was to be taxed in accordance with the American tariff. For all other Philippine products the existing free trade system between the two countries was to be maintained for five years, but from 1941 onwards they were to be subjected to import duties: 5 per cent of the American tariff for the first year, 10 per cent for the next and so on until in 1946 Philippine goods would be paying 25 per cent. After that year the American tariff was to be applied in full. But while Philippine products imported into the United States were either restricted in volume or progressively taxed, American goods were to enter the Philippines without paying any duty. As a result of this inequality Philippine exports to the United States increased by only 13.3 per cent in the period 1935–1940, while American imports into the Philippines nearly doubled.

The Philippines differed from the other South-East Asian colonial territories in that her significance to the home country was primarily based on her position as a market for manufactured goods. As such the Philippines was a category in itself; the other category consisted of the colonies of exploitation. Providing a market for metropolitan industries continued to be a significant feature of their economy, but due to the concentration of metropolitan capital in colonial enterprise rather than in other overseas ventures, this function was over-shadowed by the colonies' increasing value as producers of agricultural export crops and as fields for capital investment. In this category French Indochina provided the most extreme example of a colonial economy which, in accordance with the French concept that the colonies formed an integral part of the French Empire, was completely linked to France and jealously protected against foreign

penetration. For one thing this meant that artificial barriers were set up to direct Indochinese trade towards France, and to isolate the colony economically from its natural environment. It took some time before this end was ultimately achieved, but in the 1930s France managed to drive the Far Eastern countries from their place as Indochina's chief provisioners.

For about three and a half decades the French home tariff was applied to goods entering Indochina from foreign countries. The same act provided for the free entry of French articles, but it awarded only a slight reduction in the payment of duties for Indochinese goods imported into France. This system which sacrificed without restraint the interests of the colony to those of France was replaced in 1928, due to the demands of the French colonial community which had strengthened its economic and political position during the 'boom' of the 1920s and which resented the complete dependence of Indochina on French interests. The new tariff act established a system of reciprocal free trade within the French Empire, under which products from Indochina enjoyed the same freedom upon entering France as metropolitan goods did on entering the colonial markets. The French home tariff continued to be applied to imports into Indochina from foreign countries, but the colonial authorities were empowered to adapt the duties to local needs. Although Indochina, in principle, was given some amount of autonomy in tariff matters, the new act did not abandon the concept of the colony's economic integration within the French Empire. Exemption from paying duties on imported goods was to be granted only to those articles which were not competing with metropolitan products. In addition to this provision, the privilege to deviate from the home tariff in accordance with Indochina's needs strengthened the colony's economic orientation towards France, because these needs were, in practice, equalized with the needs of the French colonial interests in Indochina. As these were quite protectionist in outlook they did not use their newly-won freedom in tariff matters to reduce the customs duties, but to raise them instead. Consequently the Far Eastern countries, which had to pay higher duties, either avoided buying Indochinese products or retaliated with high tariffs of their own.

In this policy of separating Indochina economically from her neighbours and steering her towards France, the French were assisted by the Trade Depression of the 1930s, which severely affected Indochinese exports to Japan and China. In addition to the sharp fall in the prices of primary commodities this brought the colony to the verge of bankruptcy so that France had to come to the rescue. She did so by buying more of Indochina's products: in 1938 53 per cent of Indochina's trade was associated with France and the French colonies, and only 28 per cent with the Far Eastern countries. The tightness of French economic domination over Indochina was also reflected by its attitude towards non-French Western enterprise. The colony was virtually closed to any such enterprise, and as a result, Indochina's economic development was almost exclusively

dependent on French financial resources: 95 per cent of the Western business investments and all outstanding *rentier* investments were French.

In the Netherlands Indies and Malaya, economic relations with the outside world were guided by a far more liberal policy. In both colonies little or no limitation was placed on foreign capital investment or on the activity of foreign enterprise, although by the nature of things the greater part of Western capital investment and the general direction of industry and commerce were in the hands of the dominating power. Because of the great significance of free trade for Singapore's commercial position, the government of the Straits was the most staunch adherent of a *laissez-faire* policy. In Burma, too, the British followed a liberal course in general trade and capital investments, although only British concerns were allowed to hold concessions in the oil fields and some of the larger corporations restricted voting power to British subjects. That British enterprise was far more predominant in Burma, where 90 per cent of the investments was British, than in Malaya, with 70 per cent of the business investments held in the United Kingdom, may be ascribed to the fact that Malaya appealed more to foreign investors. In this respect Dutch policy resembled that of Britain. Although the Dutch were in a more vulnerable position in terms of economic competition, they adopted the principle of economic liberalism and extended it to foreign private enterprise, as they realized that the capital resources of their own country were not sufficient to develop the huge colony. British, French and American interests greatly benefited and they played an important part in economic development, particularly in the Outer Territories: only 75 per cent of the business investments in the colony were Dutch. With regard to foreign capital the Americans, too, established an 'open door' regime in the Philippines; here 60 per cent of the investments in the islands were in the hands of the United States. Tariff policy in the Netherlands Indies and Malaya was, in general, therefore, based on liberal tenets. The economy of the two territories was, of course, subordinated to the requirements of the home countries; metropolitan interests played a predominant role and the profits of Western enterprise flowed primarily to them. But the economies of the Indies and Malaya were by no means exclusively linked with those of the Netherlands and Britain.

As a result of the economic links between the colonies and the home countries, metropolitan interests as well as, in an indirect way, the welfare of the home country, greatly benefited from the economic development and the commercial prosperity of the colonial possessions. For one thing there were the huge capital investments, totalling for the whole of South-East Asia, some US$4,370 million. More than half of these were in the Netherlands Indies. The figures for the other colonial territories were not so extensive, yet they were sufficiently impressive to explain metropolitan interest in the colonies.

Most notably in 'boom' periods the dividends from these investments

greatly contributed to the welfare of the home country, while at the same time the remittances of the substantial commercial profits served the same purpose. A period of economic depression might occasionally put a temporary end to the profits which the home country used to derive from its overseas possessions, but in general colonial domination over South-East Asia resulted in a far higher standard of living in the West European countries than could have been achieved on the basis of their own economy. The Netherlands, for example, had such huge investments in the Indies that the annual transfers of dividends became a significant element in the maintenance of her material prosperity. The role of the other South-East Asian colonies in upholding metropolitan welfare was less conspicuous; nevertheless their contribution to the prosperity of the home countries was considerable. Indochina was the richest colony of France, Malaya the richest of the British Empire. In another respect the colonies played an important economic role by providing employment to a considerable number of people in the home countries, including not only those who were sent out to take up positions overseas, but also those who were connected, one way or another, with metropolitan industries exporting to the colony, or with commercial enterprise related to colonial products. In addition to these there were many people who were involved in the consumption of profits derived from economic activities in the colonial territories.

The strong link between the colony and the home country affected the general welfare of South-East Asia to a high degree. Western economic penetration was responsible for the economic development of the region, but its submission to metropolitan interests neutralized many of the advantages which the colonial territories might have gained from the new situation. One factor related to this economic subordination was the habit of the colonial governments to over-emphasize the role of their dependencies as producers of raw materials and agricultural cash crops. This tendency was demonstrated by the drive to increase the production capacity of the colonies for export purposes, and by tariff regulations. Thus, the free entry of Philippine products on the American market led to an increase in the production of some agricultural crops, to a flourishing export trade and to greater material welfare, but it restricted the country's production capacity almost exclusively to those articles which were most in demand in the United States. The policy of the other colonial powers had the same consequences: it contributed to checking any development towards economic diversification and, thus, aggravated the weakness of the colonial economy *vis-à-vis* the international economy. The over-emphasis placed on the export function of the colonies occasionally led to economic short-circuits and direct stress. During the 1930s for example the Vietnamese were short of food, but Cochin China continued to export rice.

A major characteristic of a subordinate colonial economy was the

complete absence of any significant manufacturing industry. Two factors were responsible for this situation. First the unrestricted imports of metropolitan manufactured goods, against which native handicraft was unable to maintain its position, severely damaged or put an end to existing indigenous industries, while it also prevented the emergence and development of new industries. Secondly, the metropolitan powers, aware that any industry in the colonial territories might jeopardize the interests of industrial enterprises in the home countries, discouraged the setting up of any modern industry. This does not mean that other factors could not have played a role in deterring industrialization, such as the shortage of skilled or semi-skilled labourers, a dislike of the native population to being engaged in employment supervised from above, or the lack of transport facilities. But as Western entrepreneurs and technicians, supported by the colonial governments, had shown sufficient inventiveness to overcome these and similar obstacles in the case of agricultural and mining enterprise, there is no reason to believe that such barriers could not have been overcome if it had been in their interest to set up modern industries.

The most important obstacle to real industrialization was the refusal of the metropolitan interests to support the development of any industry in the colonies which might compete with their own industries and endanger their position on the colonial market. Around 1900 it had been stated already by a French politician that colonial production had to limit itself to providing the home country with raw materials or with those products which had no equivalent in metropolitan industry. In French colonial thinking the colonies were an integral part of the French Empire, but the United States, which was loosening its political ties with the Philippines, followed the same policy of preventing a Philippine industry from emerging. Under the Tydings-McDuffie Act even the development of a processing industry was checked. Out of the total amount of sugar which was allowed to be imported into the United States free of duty, refined sugar constituted a very small percentage. As there was hardly a market for Philippine sugar outside the United States this provision meant that the refining of most of the sugar to be exported had to be done in the United States. The quota system for cordage served the same purpose, since the raw material itself, Manila hemp, was not subject to any restriction. In 1935 the quota for cordage was doubled, but this advantage to the Philippines was neutralized by the freight policy of American shipping companies which imposed higher fees on the transport of cordage than of abaca.

A situation similar to that which existed in Indochina and the Philippines also existed in the other colonial territories of South-East Asia: there was to be no manufacturing industry on any large scale. The processing of agricultural products and other light industries were allowed, but even these were occasionally sacrificed to metropolitan interests. While in Indonesia millions of guilders were lost in the sugar industry the Netherlands

continued to protect her beet sugar against Indonesian sugar-cane. Any large industry was tolerated only if it did not jeopardize industrial interests in the home country, or when special circumstances arose. In Indochina the government encouraged a cotton-spinning industry to make native weavers independent of foreign thread; there was no way of avoiding this, as the weavers preferred the cheaper thread from India and the Far East to that of France and the difference in price could not be eliminated by the tariffs. But at the same time the government continued to protect the imports of finished cotton goods from France. In the Netherlands Indies some cautious steps towards industrialization were taken during the 1930s, particularly in the field of weaving, but this could happen only after the Dutch textile industry lost its Indonesian markets to Japanese imports.

Wherever such industries emerged, they contributed to the diversification of the colonial economy and to diminishing the effects of price fluctuations. At the same time they provided the native population with opportunities of finding alternative sources of income outside the sphere of agricultural production. But on the whole industrialization took place on such a small scale that it was almost negligible as a means of remedying the economic ills of the colonial territories.

In addition to these general aspects of the colonies' subordination to the metropolitan powers which, in their consequences, adversely affected the economic position of the colonial territories, there were a few specific cases in which the interests of the colony were callously sacrificed to the home country. The ugliest instance occurred during the Trade Depression of the 1930s, when the Netherlands embarked upon a monetary policy which greatly aggravated the economic distress of the Indies. Facing a financial and economic collapse as a result of the crisis, the government could have devalued her currency as a means of adjusting her expenses to the reduced revenues, such as most countries did after Britain left the gold standard in 1931. But the Netherlands chose to balance her finances by economizing and cutting down expenses and she refused to depreciate the guilder until September 1936. This decision had disastrous results for Indonesia. Burdened with a non-devalued currency the colony was forced to export its products out of a weak competitive position *vis-à-vis* countries with depreciated currencies; at the same time it had to accept a low equivalent of guilders for all sales to sterling and dollar areas. By her policy the Netherlands government shifted the burdens of the economic crisis from the home country to Indonesia, and there they were transferred, once more, from Western enterprise to the Indonesian population. It was assumed that the Indonesian economy was well-suited to any economizing policy and that it could easily adapt itself to the changed circumstances. There were no powerful trade unions to protect wages, and the Indonesian employees and labourers, who had their wages cut or saw themselves deprived of their jobs in the administration or in Western

enterprise, were supposed to find a living in the sphere of the traditional village economy. It was not realized that the village community itself was in a process of disintegration, and unable to absorb all those people who were compelled to leave the Western sector of colonial economy; neither was it realized what it meant to those who had grown accustomed to employment in the Western sphere and to Western modes of life, to be thrown back into the traditional sector. The policy of the Netherlands government kept the colony for three years too long in a state of virulent depression, and although Indonesia managed to 'adapt' itself (as the official term was), it was a painful process, accompanied by hardships in the sector of Western economy and by the most squalid poverty in the native sphere.

THE PRIMACY OF WESTERN ENTERPRISE

Apart from the subordination of the colonies to the outside world and to the economic interests of the home countries, it was the structure of colonial economy as such which constituted the second major factor responsible for the discrepancy between South-East Asia's potential wealth, economic activity and commercial prosperity on the one hand and the unfavourable economic and social conditions in the native sphere on the other. During the period of modern colonialism two different economic systems came to co-exist side by side: the traditional pre-capitalist economy and Western capitalist economy. This situation was found not only in the South-East Asian countries under Western political domination, but also in independent Siam. The occurrence of two different types of economic organization operating in one country has been described as a 'dualist economy', but the result was not — such as some colonial literature has intimated — the development of a Western capitalist enclave in an Asian pre-capitalist environment, occasionally interplaying but, due to their fundamental differences, essentially dominant in their own spheres. On the contrary, the penetration of a capitalist economic system into a pre-capitalist society introduced elements which considerably affected the traditional economy and, in fact, undermined the foundations of the age-old Asian economic and social structure. Because of this general aspect the dualist character of the colonial economy as such was the principal cause of the poverty of South-East Asia's masses. The situation was aggravated, moreover, by a particular aspect inherent in a colonial economy, namely the dominant position of Western interests or, in a wider sense, the Western sector in the sum total of economic activities.

In general the presence of Western enterprise contributed to the advancement of the South-East Asian countries. It introduced three elements which were essential in setting off the process of modernization: capital, or capitalism, efficient organization and technical skill. But this con-

tribution to South-East Asia's modernization did not automatically promote the welfare of the indigenous peoples. Statistics of imports and exports, although quite impressive occasionally, and pointing to a tendency towards prosperity, did not necessarily imply an improvement in the living conditions of the population. Import figures, for example, did not give any clue in this respect, because they included goods for consumption in native markets, and also, to a great extent, capital goods and luxury articles destined for the Western sector of society.

Yet, Western enterprise created the opportunities for the indigenous population to lead a more comfortable life. In this connexion the roads, railways, bridges, irrigation works, agrarian research institutes and medical services figure prominently in colonial literature. But these improvements did not in any way counteract the nefarious influences of the penetration of Western capitalism in other fields. Secondly, such advancements were not meant to promote native welfare primarily for its own sake. Around 1900 the so-called Ethical programme of the Netherlands, showing far greater interest in the living conditions of the Indonesian population than had been evinced ever before, succeeded in becoming the basis of a new orientation in colonial policy not only because it was voiced out of humanitarian considerations, but also because it was supported by powerful capitalist groups, who had different ideas as to the effects the reforms were likely to bring about. Uplifting the general welfare, including the living conditions, of the indigenous population, might result in strengthening native purchasing power and this might favourably affect the sales of Western industrial products. Irrigation works were required by the sugar industry, better roads by Western companies interested in opening up the Outer Territories. An adequate medical service was advocated by those who expected it to contribute to better labour performances. Western education was taken up seriously only after Western enterprise and the government felt the need of well-trained Dutch-speaking clerks to cope with the increasing amount of administrative work. The same, or similar, considerations played a role in the other South-East Asian territories whenever a government, assisted by Western enterprise, embarked upon a programme of reforms to improve the living conditions in the native sphere: the benefits which the indigenous population derived from Western capitalism or Western colonial rule in a wider sense were only the by-products of governmental and entrepreneurial activities. The expenses for education, health services and social improvements were, moreover, far below those for projects serving Western interests, and when an economic depression set in, they were usually the first to be cut, and more rigorously so than the other budgets. So also the road and railway systems were designed for economic and military-strategic reasons, or in the case of the huge *Transindochinois* for boosting the prestige of the colonial power, rather than for the convenience of the local population.

The contribution of Western capitalist enterprise to the general welfare of the colonies was tremendous, but its role in raising the welfare of the native population was only an accidental circumstance. Furthermore, the beneficial results of Western activity were considerably less marked in this field, because they were often neutralized by other activities which tended adversely to affect native prosperity. Such adverse consequences were, in general, the result of the preponderance of Western enterprise in the total structure of colonial economy.

It was obvious that capitalist activity was bent on making profits and that, as a result of its strong position, Western enterprise found great opportunities of doing so in the Asian environment. Because of the speculative character of tropical products, the whole venture was something of a gamble, and price fluctuations as well as plant diseases could ruin it, but in spite of such occasional set-backs it was certain that the profits were, in general, quite substantial. A part of the companies' income was again invested in the business, or held back as reserves for further development and technical improvement, but the balance, after deduction of taxes and the payment of costs, flowed to the stock-holders in the home countries.

However the extent of profits made did not in principle touch upon the main problem concerning the role of Western capitalism. More important was the question whether Western enterprise took an unreasonably large share of the economic activities, whether or not it made profits at the expense of others who were participating in colonial economy or to the detriment of the welfare of the colony as a whole; in other words, beyond what limit did the Western share of South-East Asia's economy amount to exploiting the colonial possessions, their richesses and labour potential in a harmful manner. Since all economic activities are based on exploiting the available opportunities as much as possible it is little point condemning Western enterprise in tropical countries for using the chances offered by the fact that in the traditional sphere there existed hardly any economic force strong enough to embark upon similar undertakings or to counteract Western activities successfully. It was another matter, however, when the already powerful economic position of Western enterprise was artificially strengthened or protected, either by preferential treatment or, indirectly, by schemes designed to weaken non-Western entrepreneurial activity. In many cases its advantageous position was not merely based on natural economic factors, but on such preferential treatment by the political authorities.

In the colonial territories of South-East Asia the influence of Western entrepreneurs was tremendous. They were engaged in all aspects of economic life and the governments were in general sympathetic. Under such circumstances Western enterprise was able to develop into a powerful pressure group, exerting its influence not only in the economic, but also in the political sphere. As a result of the strong connexions between economic

interests and modern government the Western sector of South-East Asia's economy always received the support of the colonial administrations and it was often clearly favoured by a combination of legal measures and administrative practices.

Such governmental backing took on such forms as enabling Western enterprise to obtain easily what it needed for its activities: land and labour. In those South-East Asian territories which under European rule developed into plantation colonies the Western cultivation companies usually had little trouble in acquiring land. In the *terres rouges* in South Annam and in East Cochin China large tracts of land were simply declared 'public domain' and concessioned to French companies; in addition to this procedure there was also the possibility of alienating lands which were temporarily used for indigenous agriculture. Although the French decrees regulating the transfer of land to private enterprise included some guarantees for the protection of native rights, such rights were often violated.

In the Netherlands Indies the situation was not essentially different, although the Dutch, the only colonial power in South-East Asia to do so, forbade non-indigenous persons and corporations to buy or own land, and embarked upon a policy of restoring land to the native population which had been purchased before the relevant act came into force. But in the Outer Territories all land not in private ownership had been declared 'public domain', and such lands could be leased by Western enterprise. Land belonging to this category was, in general, waste land but, as in Indochina, it was important for the indigenous population, particularly in those regions where shifting cultivation was practised. In densely populated Java Western companies were enabled to hire land from the peasant-owners, and this was done in the best paddy areas where the sugar industry developed. In theory the Javanese owner was free to refuse to rent out his land, but his lack of credit and the prospect of receiving an advance were, in practice, powerful inducements, and in case they failed to be, the company might negotiate with the village heads who could easily be talked, or bribed, into making a favourable decision that was not likely to be contested in the traditional sphere of the village community.

In Malaya land was alienated for Western plantation enterprise under leases which had to be revised every 30 years. By 1940 nearly 40 per cent of the cultivated area was in the hands of estates. Encroachments on the rights of the population were fewer than in Indochina and Indonesia. This was partly the result of the British policy to protect the economic position of the Malay peasantry by prohibiting the transfer of any Malay land to non-Malays; in 1913 the F.M.S. was empowered to set aside land for exclusive Malay use, and in the 1930s this provision was extended over the other states. But the process of alienating land on such a large scale would certainly have jeopardized the interests of the native peoples to a higher degree than it did, had not the population been very sparse and land abundant.

Labour, like land, was badly needed by Western enterprise and although South-East Asia had a potentially large supply of cheap labour it was not always easily available. The problem of labour was related to the density of the population, and this was particularly true in Malaya, Cochin China and Cambodia, and Sumatra's east coast, the major plantation areas of the region. Sufficient labour was close at hand only for the sugar industry in Java and for mining enterprise in Tonkin. During the earlier period of European rule the authorities had been able to rely on various forms of forced labour, remnants of the feudal structure of traditional society adapted to Western needs. But in the modern era it was necessary to bring colonial practice in harmony with more enlightened concepts of colonialism, and forced labour, *corvées* or *heerendiensten* did not fit into this picture any longer. Yet the authorities needed labourers for their public works programmes as much as Western companies needed them for their plantations and mining enterprises. Consequently, while the various forms of compulsory labour were gradually abolished, other means had to be devised to persuade the 'natives' to work. The social effects of the penetration of Western capitalism in the traditional sphere of economy were a great help in this respect, in that they brought about a disintegration of the structure of native society, leading to rural unemployment, but this was an advantage only for enterprises in densely populated Java and Tonkin. In order to get the labour surplus of such areas to work in the underpopulated territories the governments introduced the system of contract labour.

For the rubber estates in Cochin China and Cambodia labourers were recruited in Tonkin and North Annam, particularly during the 'boom' years of the 1920s. Although the living conditions in the overcrowded rural areas in Northern Vietnam provided sufficient inducements for the impoverished peasants to try their luck in the South, there was a general unwillingness to leave the ancestral homes. This obstacle was overcome, however, by the recruiting agents of the plantation-owners who were not over-particular in their choice of methods to compel labourers to sign the three-year contracts. Supervision by the authorities hardly existed, as the rubber interests were sufficiently powerful to keep the entire affair in their own hands. One of the greatest scandals of colonial South-East Asia was the sending of contract coolies from Vietnam to the New Hebrides and New Caledonia. In Cochin China, although more familiar territory, the conditions of employment on the estates were bad enough. Many fell victim to malaria, many others committed suicide: in 1927 the death-rate among contract coolies was four to five times higher than the average death-rate in Indochina. When the contracts expired and the coolies were unwilling to renew them, they were simply sent back. During the late 1920s the government introduced some reforms — minimum wages, a ten-hour working day, adequate housing, sanitation and medical service — which put an end to the most glaring abuses. In case of a

breach of contract the labourer was no longer subject to the planter's own administration of justice, but to ordinary police penalties. Although supervision was inadequate, because the local officials were on good terms with the plantation-owners and usually gave notice when they were to make their tours of inspection, conditions on the estates improved during the 1930s. Recruitment was discontinued during the Trade Depression, but the system as such was not abolished.

The same system existed in the Netherlands Indies: the transfer of labourers at their employers' expense from overpopulated Java to the estates in East Sumatra. The conditions under which the contract coolies had to work in Sumatra were, on the whole, better than in Cochin China. There were abuses, however, like unscrupulous recruitment or the custom, at the expiration of the contracts, of skilfully manoeuvring the coolies into incurring debts so that they had to sign anew. Furthermore, at the insistence of the estate owners the coolie ordinance contained provisions for legal penalties to be imposed on workers who failed to observe their service agreements. These penal sanctions offended many liberal-minded Dutchmen, but something stronger than mere humanitarian considerations was necessary to have them removed. In the 1930s three factors contributed to the gradual abandonment of the system. First, many Javanese immigrants stayed behind in East Sumatra after their contracts had expired: with their descendents they provided a resident labour force out of which free labourers could be recruited. During the Trade Depression it was more attractive, moreover, to employ free labourers who could be put off with minimum wages, than contract coolies for whom the planters were responsible in other respects as well. But the most important factor which put an end to the system was the amendment, in 1929, of the American Tariff Act which prohibited the import into the United States of all products grown under a system of indentured labour with penal sanctions.

Labour could also be obtained by encouraging the immigration of coolies from China and India, such as happened in Malaya, East Sumatra and, though in a different way, in Burma. For Malaya Chinese labourers were mainly recruited for Chinese employers rather than for Western enterprise, which was more interested in Indian coolies. As indentured labour was illegal after 1914 only free labourers, recruited in China and South India and sent to Malaya at the expense of their employers, were imported. The conditions under which the coolies worked were supervised by the government, particularly in the case of Indian immigrants, who were more in need of protection than the Chinese who were better able to look after themselves. There was, moreover, a keen interest shown by the government of British India, which occasionally led to misunderstandings and friction with the British authorities and the European planters in Malaya, but which also induced the latter to improve somewhat the living conditions on the estates. Yet Indian public opinion

was not satisfied and in 1938 the emigration of Tamils to Malaya was forbidden by the Indian legislature. For the plantations in Sumatra's East Coast residency Chinese free labourers were recruited, either through Singapore or through an official bureau in Swatow, but with the increase of Javanese imported labour, their number declined during the 1920s, and in the years of the Trade Depression the immigration stopped altogether. Indian immigration into Burma was a category in itself, because it was not directly encouraged by the colonial government, as in the Malayan case, but rather, indirectly. Until 1937 Burma was administratively a province of British India, so that the government did not have to create special provisions for Indian labourers to be imported: they came by themselves. In reply to Burman demands to check this immigration, the authorities stated that, formally, they were not empowered to prevent Indians from moving from one part of India to what was constitutionally another part of India. But neither was the government, and Western enterprise for that matter, willing to stop the flow of Indians into Burma: Indian labour was cheap and, for that reason, preferable to Burman labour, while it was also easier to obtain clerks by importing Indians than to train Burmans.

Apart from the relative ease with which Western enterprise was able to obtain land and labour, another factor which favoured it was the financial policy of the colonial governments. In general it may well be stated that Western companies, and the European community in general, were not taxed in proportion to their share in the total economic activities. A reason for this was, of course, that a relatively low rate of taxation constituted one of the attractions for Western capitalist enterprise to invest money in the colonies. As any other government, however, a colonial government had to fill its treasury, and when Western enterprise was relatively undertaxed this could be achieved only by overtaxing the other sections of society. Thus the Indonesians, 97 per cent of the population of the Netherlands Indies, paid as much tax as the European and Chinese communities together, a situation which was utterly unfair when judged against the fact that European incomes were far higher than those of the Indonesians. Attempts to raise the corporation tax for large cultivation companies in order to diminish the tax burden for the peasantry failed because of the strong resistance of the planters.

With some modifications this picture applied in principle to all colonial territories, with the exception of Malaya which was financially almost completely dependent on tin and rubber, and where Western and Chinese companies as well as the Chinese merchant class of the Straits were more obvious targets for taxation than the Malays. The most glaring inequality in this field was to be found in Indochina, where more than half of the total revenue came from customs and from the monopolies, both of which put a heavy strain on the poorer, indigenous sections of the population. Among the colonial taxes the so-called state monopolies were the

most notorious: they had been introduced by Doumer and they applied to salt, alcohol and opium. The salt workers had to sell their product to the French company holding the concession, which fixed the price for further sale, usually three times higher than the one for which the salt had been bought from the producers. It often happened that Vietnamese fishermen had to throw back their catch into the sea because they could not pay the high price for salt needed for the preservation of the fish. For alcohol not only the sale, but also production was in the hands of the state, through the *Société française des Distilleries de l'Indochine*. High prices affected the ordinary Vietnamese villagers who needed alcohol for religious purposes. In order to ensure larger revenues the French occasionally ordered fixed quantums of alcohol to be taken, and villages which did not meet the requirements were punished. Opium smoking was an offence in France, but in Indochina it was encouraged by the government.

The inequality of taxation was only one factor which adversely affected the living conditions of the indigenous population in the colonial territories. It also put the work, undertaken by the colonial governments, to improve native welfare in a somewhat different light; a considerable part of the sum spent by the authorities on welfare projects was paid by Asian taxpayers. The irony of the situation was that the Asians themselves hardly benefited from the improvements to which they financially contributed so much, while there was also a trend, particularly during the 1930s, to curtail expenses for such purposes, which was not accompanied by the imposition of any higher taxes on Western companies.

In addition to the policy of legally facilitating Western capitalist activities, the colonial governments occasionally took steps, in special circumstances, aimed at directly assisting Western enterprise. Such steps were not necessarily at the expense of native welfare or directed against indigenous economic activities: the subsidy granted by the Indochinese government to the rubber industry in the 1920s was only aiming at giving financial assistance. But sometimes steps were taken which were knowingly designed to obstruct native enterprise when a particular European industry had to be protected against native competition. In this respect the attempt by the Dutch colonial administration to destroy the Indonesian smallholder rubber industry led to one of the most shocking injustices of colonial rule in South-East Asia. As the share of Indonesian rubber in the total production of the Netherlands Indies rose during the 1920s, the indigenous industry became a potentially dangerous competitor for the Western companies, and the international restriction agreement of 1934 provided the government with an opportunity to reverse the trend. Under the restriction scheme Western companies were registered and given individual export licenses; they exported less rubber against the same prices as before, or against prices which were subject only to the fluctuations on the world market. But smallholders' rubber was not registered,

because, as it was stated, there were too many holdings. Yet Indonesian production had to be restricted, too, and to achieve this the government placed a special export duty on native rubber, in the expectation that the rubber peasants would abandon the export of their product as soon as they had to pay an additional tax. It was a highly discriminatory step, because the indigenous producers, by paying this duty, received less money for their rubber than before. It was also a measure which badly affected native welfare in the rubber producing areas of East Sumatra, where so many depended on rubber cultivation for their livelihood. But the goal was not achieved: the fact that they received less cash for their rubber urged the peasants to produce more in order to secure their minimum income. So instead of restricting production the native rubber tax increased it, also proportionately in relation to the total rubber production of the Netherlands Indies. Once the government realized that her attempts at ruining native rubber production were acting as a boomerang, the restrictive system as applied to Western enterprise was extended to the Indonesian industry. The arguments voiced against the registration of the rubber smallholdings in 1934 were no longer valid in 1937, when the Indonesian rubber industry was registered at record speed and given export licenses. Shortly after, the approaching war put an end to rubber restriction.

4 *The Penetration of Capitalism and its Social Consequences*

FROM SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY TO EXPORT PRODUCTION

In colonial literature it has been stated quite frequently that, in general, the Asian peoples were better off under colonial domination than they had ever been before. It is doubtful whether this is true. In a way Asians benefited from the modernization of their countries under Western rule, but, whatever the benefits, this modernization did not descend onto the lower, that is the Asian, level of colonial society. Whether or not the native peoples were better off depended entirely on the point of view from which Asian conditions were appraised. In fact, two different situations were compared, the living conditions of the Asians in a traditional pre-capitalist sphere and those in a modern capitalist economy, or at any rate in a society that was greatly influenced by capitalist elements. Furthermore these conditions were judged by Western standards. As the West, in general, tended to look down upon the traditional economic and social structure, regarding it as backward and stagnant, the Asian peoples were automatically considered to be better off as soon as they had been drawn into the orbit of a 'progressive' and active capitalist society. But the potential benefits which the Asians gained under the new situation were to a great extent offset by the fundamental changes which the penetration of Western capitalism brought about in the economic and social structures, particularly in the rural areas. In the pre-colonial socio-economic system the village community constituted the basis of society; it was a social organization founded on communal labour and responsibility, a unit in

itself, having little contact with the outside world. The village was self-sufficient, producing for its own needs: the peasant would not grow more than he and his family needed, since there was no market for any surplus, and transport facilities were inadequate. Agriculture was the major activity of the village community; there was some animal husbandry, some handicraft, some barter trade, but these were of minor importance. There was hardly any demand for a better life: the villager did not work for profit and if, in such a community based on strong feelings of solidarity and common responsibility, anyone should ever dream of individual rights which were contrary to the rights of the community as a whole, his family as well as public opinion in general would restrain him. In this set-up the individual peasant and the community were not influenced by economic depressions in the outside world: the only disasters befalling them were bad harvests, natural catastrophes or wars. But all this changed when Western capitalism penetrated into the traditional sphere. The new situation created new opportunities, but it also produced new norms, new demands, new needs, as well as the conditions which made it increasingly difficult for the average Asian to meet these new requirements. Two elements, in particular, were responsible for undermining the foundations of traditional society: the penetration of money into a society accustomed to barter trade, and the change from subsistence farming to commercialized agriculture.

The penetration of money greatly influenced economic and social life at the lower levels. For the peasant money was not just an extra windfall which enabled him to enjoy life better than before, but under the new circumstances it became a necessity, to pay his taxes in cash which he used to pay in kind, or to buy salt, or fish, or building material, which formerly he could obtain more easily. Money could be earned only if the peasant sold his products, and as he was accustomed to growing crops for personal use only, this meant that he was compelled to produce more than what was needed for his own support. In this respect the penetration of money into the traditional economy and the change from barter trade to a monetary system were indissolubly linked with the transformation of South-East Asia's economy from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture. These were not the only factors bringing about the change: in many cases the peasants were encouraged to grow crops for export purposes by entrepreneurial groups with interests in the export business, or by colonial governments keen to raise the export capacity of the colony. Another factor contributing to the development of cultivating cash crops was the improvement of transport facilities which took the villages out of their isolation.

Whatever the factors behind it, in its consequences this economic revolution deeply affected village life as well as the living conditions of the individual villagers. That the rural population managed to obtain some cash was, in itself, insufficient to raise the standard of living, because other

consequences influenced conditions in the countryside in an adverse way. By cultivating cash crops the peasants were drawn into Western economy and subjected to its vicissitudes; they were no longer protected against the fluctuations on the world market. During the Trade Depression of the 1930s it became increasingly clear that peasants who had changed over to cash crops were in graver distress than those who kept to subsistence farming, while the so-called 'modern' and 'developed' areas were more severely hit by the crisis than the undeveloped territories which had not yet been completely exposed to Western economic penetration.

The rural population was completely unprepared for the change and it had great difficulty in adapting itself to the new conditions. The main reason for this was that it did not have the necessary cash resources. In spite of the pressing need to produce more, the basic pattern of production remained the same: native agriculture was the only sector of economic activity in South-East Asia which was not modernized. There was no mechanization, since the peasants had not enough money for improving the methods of cultivation, and while the primitive instruments and customs of a subsistence economy continued to be applied, native agriculture failed to attain the greater yields per acre that might have increased the peasants' cash resources.

This was only one vicious circle in which South-East Asia's peasantry was caught. The other was of a more injurious nature, and was responsible for great misery in the rural areas. Lack of credit and of adequate credit facilities, unrestricted activities of moneylenders, usury, widespread alienation of land, the emergence of large estates and landlordism on the one hand and of share-cropping, tenancy and a landless proletariat on the other, rural indebtedness, the lack of incentives to improve farming methods, agrarian poverty, scarcity of food, a low level of nutrition and serious health conditions — these were the characteristics of a substantial part of South-East Asia's countryside. In some countries the situation was complicated by the population pressure and in almost all cases conditions were made more serious by the decline in native handicrafts and the refusal of the colonial governments to introduce Western manufacturing industries. All elements put together led to a tremendous problem which the colonial regimes were unable to solve.

LAND-ALIENATION, TENANCY AND INDEBTEDNESS

The expansion of rice cultivation for export purposes in Lower Burma was achieved by Burman settler-cultivators, assisted by the Chettyars who, anticipating an economic upswing, advanced loans to the peasants against their land as security. It was not the policy of the Chettyars to become landowners themselves, but to get the highest possible income from the

cultivators. They were not interested in the economic use of the money they advanced, but only in the security and the interest, and in many cases they encouraged the peasants to borrow more money — as long as these were able to offer a security. Although it was risky for them to borrow too much money the peasants, unfamiliar with Western banking methods, continued to borrow, particularly during the rice 'boom' of the early twentieth century. The loans guaranteed the Chettyars an annual interest averaging 25 per cent, which many moneylenders subtracted in advance. As long as there were no serious set-backs the peasant could borrow money, but any bad harvest, any drop in the price of rice was likely to ruin him. As the credits, advanced by the moneylender, were protected under British law, the peasant would lose his land to the Chettyar, who would immediately find another candidate as purchaser. After a year or two the new owner would be evicted for the same reasons. By June 1931 one-third of the cultivated area in the Delta was in the hands of non-cultivating landowners. The Trade Depression accelerated this process: a wave of sales, because of debts, brought the best rice lands into the Chettyars' hands. In 1938–9 non-cultivating owners possessed 47.7 per cent of the cultivated area, 40 per cent of which was in the hands of absentee landlords.

This process of concentration of land into a few hands led to an almost complete liquidation of the class of small cultivator-owners in Lower Burma: the number of tenants rose and while the total number of landowners dropped the percentage of large estates increased. Like the moneylenders the landlords were not interested in agriculture as such, only in the rent they could obtain from their tenants. Usually they advanced cash at a rate of 1.75–2.5 per cent a month, and weighed down by heavy debts most tenants left their land immediately after the expiration of a one-year's contract. Furthermore there was a keen competition between Burman tenants and Indian immigrants who, because of their lower standard of living, were able to rent land at a higher rate: often landlords compelled candidate tenants to outbid each other for the privilege of signing a contract. By 1939 59 per cent of the cultivated area in Lower Burma was rented out to tenants, and the rents were usually higher than the interests the Chettyar moneylenders were asking.

The penetration of Western capitalist economy into the traditional sphere of Asian subsistence economy created the same problems in Cochin China, where the cultivation of rice expanded rapidly on new lands reclaimed by rich Vietnamese cultivators, European corporations or individual French colonists. During this process the French encouraged large estates by granting generous concessions or giving support to plantation owners; and by doing so, they also encouraged the emergence of a class of great landowners. But while concentration of land in a few hands increased, the average size of farms diminished, and 60 per cent of all cultivated land in Cochin China was leased out to tenants. The nefarious consequence of the growing inequality in land ownership was no longer neutralized by the

old custom under which peasants, evicted from their land, could turn to communal lands, as the latter were either almost absent in the newly reclaimed territories, or subject to land speculation by village mandarins and native chiefs in the 'old' provinces. A serious land problem developed in a territory which had an abundance of land in proportion to the population. The relation between the landowner and the tenant hardly differed from elsewhere in South-East Asia. Usually the rent amounted to 40 per cent of the crop and the tenant was not free to dispose of his own share, since the landowner claimed control over the entire production, a practice which weakened the tenant's marketing position. Furthermore, the landlord was the tenant's chief source of credit, against rates of interest ranging from 50 to 70 per cent per year; Vietnamese moneylenders used to ask higher rates, even to 120 per cent for a three months' loan.

Similar problems existed in Cambodia where 95 per cent of the peasants were owners of their own land. Under the old laws all land belonged theoretically to the king, while in practice the land fell to the man who actually tilled the soil. But the French regime did not recognize land as unalienable property of the Crown; instead it encouraged private landownership. The process of land registration developed very slowly, however, and this had grave consequences; as the administration was reluctant to advance credit to peasants whose claims on the land were not properly fixed, these peasants had to rely on the moneylender. In general rice cultivation provided the peasant with what he needed, but if there were extra expenses he fell into the hands of a Chinese moneylender who, at the same time, was the middleman selling his crop. Usually the interest was 100 per cent for a six to eight months' loan, and if the peasant was unable to pay off his debt in time the creditor took over the entire surplus of the crop, paid the taxes and turned the peasant into a serf; there were no foreclosures because Chinese did not have the right to possess paddy land, but the system was burdensome all the same, and this the more so as the taking over of the crop was only considered a pay-off of the debt, not of the interest.

The same problems of landlordism, tenancy and indebtedness occurred in the Philippines, where it had been Spain's policy to create large estates, as a result of which there emerged a Filipino class of landowners and landlords, the caçiques, who, because of their privileges, economic power and social status, controlled the peasantry. The American administration did not bring about any essential change in the feudal character of this social structure, for the Americans depended on the co-operation of the propertied classes, the only groups from among which people with sufficient education could be recruited for the carrying out of administrative tasks. Consequently the American regime was unable to create a sound economic basis for the political democracy which it attempted to introduce at the same time; it never went so far as to reform the tenancy system which paralysed Philippine economy and society. The feudal classes benefited

most from United States rule; they replaced the colonial officials under the process of Filipinization and became the dominant political group in the Commonwealth structure of 1935.

The expansion of landed property was particularly marked in the sugar areas of Central Luzon, where most of the capital was concentrated and where only a small percentage of the farms was cultivated by peasant-owners. The economic development and the commercialization of agriculture intensified the process by which land was concentrated in a few hands; it also resulted in an increase in the number of landless labourers and tenants. The opening of the United States market for Philippine products led to the dissolution of an agrarian system based on the economy and technique of Spanish feudalism and adapted to domestic needs. The feudal characteristics remained, but with the development of cultivation for export the mitigating paternalistic features of the old system disappeared. With the government officials on their side the landlords could deprive peasants of their land and eliminate small landed property, and thousands of once independent and self-sufficient peasants became tenants and landless labourers. In many cases the concentration of landed property was accompanied by the establishment of the 'sugar centrals', in which the great landowners controlled most of the shares; and the sugar baron wielded far greater power than did the rice baron in former times.

In the rice districts the prevailing system was that of share-tenancy, under which the landlord provided land, seed and capital and the tenant his labour; but in densely populated areas, where land was scarce and highly in demand, cash-tenancy was the rule, with the tenant paying a fixed rent and taking the risks, but less dependent on the landlord and in a position to market his crop himself. There were continuous conflicts between landlords and tenants, particularly when a share-cropper, lacking money, had become completely dependent on the landowner. Cash was usually advanced without interest, but an advance in rice was not, and if a tenant was unable to pay he had to carry out extra labour for the landlord. Usurious rates of interest were quite common, the most ordinary type being the *takipan*, claiming twice the quantity of unhusked rice for every quantity borrowed per harvest, that is, twice yearly; the practice of doubling this amount when a tenant was unable to pay at the first harvest raised the rate of interest to 200 per cent a year.

In Tonkin and Annam there were few large estates and most cultivators owned the land themselves, but they were very small peasants. The greatest problem in these territories was related to overpopulation and, consequently, to a minute subdivision of the available cultivable land in very small plots: the peasants in the Tonkin Delta and in North Annam cultivated rice, intensively though, with two or three crops a year, on unbelievably tiny tracts. In Tonkin 62 per cent of the peasant families owned less than 1 *mau* (= 0. 88 acres), 20 per cent less than half a *mau*; in Annam the situation was only slightly better. In theory the Tonkinese and

Annamese peasants were freeholders, but in practicė they were often completely dependent on the moneylender. The Red River was notorious for the inundations which regularly destroyed the crop, and when this happened, or when the harvest was bad because of drought, the peasant had to go to the moneylender who advanced credit against the crop as security and with rates of interest ranging from 60 to 100 per cent a year. In such a situation the registered owners were in reality share-croppers of the moneylenders and greater landowners.

The problem regions of the Netherlands Indies were Java and Madura, accounting for 7 per cent of the colony's area but for two-thirds of its population. In a country in which over 90 per cent of the inhabitants were classified as rural and the dependence of the population on agriculture had increased since the imports of Western manufactured goods brought about a decline in native handicraft, such a large population — 42 million in 1930 — created tremendous problems. Much was done to expand agricultural production, and no territory in South-East Asia was more intensively cultivated than Java. But there was a limit to expansion and in spite of technical improvements and of utilizing every bit of available land up to a point beyond which deforestation might lead to serious consequences for the water supply, it was impossible to reach a balance between food production and the rapidly growing population. During the 1930s the farm area under cultivation hardly increased and the improvements in agricultural methods were unable to counteract the population explosion. As in Northern Vietnam the scarcity of land led to a minute subdivision of the cultivable area. In 1940 70 per cent of the cultivable land was divided into pieces of half a hectare (= 1.18 acres); 25 per cent was owned by peasant families with land up to 1 hectare. This population pressure on land greatly intensified the consequences of the penetration of Western capitalist economy in the traditional sphere. The pattern was almost the same as in other South-East Asian countries, except that peasants could not be legally evicted from their lands or made into tenants, since the sale of native agricultural land to non-natives was forbidden by law. Yet the Javanese peasants were hardly better off than those of Cochin China, the Philippines or Lower Burma. First, their land was no more protected against alienation by native moneylenders or landlords than that of the Tonkinese farmers, although this happened only in a few cases. But neither did the law prevent the peasants from becoming virtual tenants on the land to which they held legal title. They needed cash, and in order to get it many of them were induced to lease their land to Western entrepreneurs in return for an advance, as occurred in the richest paddy-lands where the sugar industry developed. Others went to the moneylender who advanced loans against an interest of 20 per cent a month. Whenever the peasants were unable to repay the loan, they were forced to grow crops designated by their creditor and to sell at a price fixed by him. Indebtedness became a feature of the rural situation in Java, where peasants

mortgaged their crops, often for many years to come, in order to get a loan, and particularly during the Trade Depression of the 1930s the moneylenders greatly strengthened their control over native land.

Problems of tenancy and agrarian indebtedness also existed in the paddy areas of Northern Malaya. Here the familiar influences of Western economic penetration co-operated with Muslim inheritance laws to set off the vicious circle: division and sub-division of cultivable land into uneconomic holdings, lack of cash, indebtedness and tenancy. This development was in no way counteracted by the Malay Reservations Enactment of 1913, which did not prevent Malay landowners from excessively exploiting their tenants or from making short-term share-cropping arrangements with Chinese peasants who were willing to pay higher rents. Furthermore, as long as the Malay peasants needed cash and there were no reasonable credit facilities, the authorities were not likely to restrict the activities of Chettyar moneylenders and Chinese middlemen, who were able, illegally, to obtain titles on land pledged by the peasants as security for loans, while the Malay cultivators remained owners only in name.

The transformation from a largely subsistence economy to the production of cash crops took place less suddenly in Siam, primarily as a result of the government's cautious policy of gradual reforms. Furthermore, the abundance of land helped to bring about smoothly an increase in production capacity and to absorb the population growth without too many social difficulties. Consequently the problems of landlordism, tenancy and indebtedness took on less extreme forms than in some of the colonial territories. Yet they did exist, particularly in those districts where rice was cultivated for export. Tenancy was most serious in the areas around Bangkok which were irrigated and where rice cultivation was highly commercialized: in some districts more than 80 per cent of the peasants were tenants. Rent in kind might amount to half the crop, but in many areas it had to be paid in cash, which was more burdensome since cash rents were not related to the actual yields of the harvest. In Siam 83 per cent of the peasantry consisted of cultivator-owners, but, although technically independent, they were hardly better off than the tenants. The latter were dependent on absentee landlords, but the former were almost completely in the grip of Chinese middlemen who controlled the rice trade. They were heavily in debt to the middlemen, who had the power to dictate prices which were not related to the real market quotations, and to make the peasants compete among themselves for the highest cash advance on their crops.

DECLINE OF INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURE AND HANDICRAFTS

In its economic consequences this vicious circle of lack of credit, moneylending, indebtedness and tenancy, strengthened the effects of the other

one which contributed to the stagnation of native agriculture. The money-lenders and the landlords were only concerned with the rates of interest or with high rents; heavily indebted peasants and tenants were neither in the mood nor in a position to improve the methods of cultivation or to give the crops the care they needed, while landlordism and usury killed every incentive to work more efficiently. Of all South-East Asian countries, circumstances for agricultural production were most favourable in Lower Burma, but new varieties were not introduced and fertilizers hardly ever used. For the whole of Burma 95 per cent of the cultivated area yielded only one crop a year, and as rice cultivation required no more than six months' work this lack of diversification was responsible for the loss of millions of working hours. In the paddy areas of the Philippines, too, there was, in general, only one harvest a year; double cropping was practised on 15 per cent of the total crop area, and because of inadequate seed selection, insufficient irrigation and obsolete farming methods the yields remained low. In Java and Tonkin, where landlordism on a great scale did not exist, the situation was equally serious: the average yield of rice in Java amounted to less than half that of Japan, not a country with the best conditions in the rural areas, and in Tonkin it was slightly over one-third.

Finally the penetration of Western economy resulted in the destruction or near-destruction of native handicrafts which had been carried out on a traditional basis in the village community sphere, in many cases as a secondary occupation for peasant families, sometimes as primary occupation, but in all instances geared to satisfying domestic needs. The gradual Westernization of indigenous life and the introduction of a monetary economy badly undermined the foundations on which this industry, closely connected with agricultural activities, was based. With their lack of capital and their primitive methods the village craftsmen were unable to maintain themselves in an economic environment in which capital, efficient organization and technical methods played a dominant part. They were compelled, moreover, to compete with imported manufactured goods from Western countries or, at a later stage, Japan. Only in one South-East Asian colony — in Vietnam — native handicraft managed to survive to a considerable extent, mainly because the French introduced a system of harsh exploitation, leading to such distress that the peasants had no alternative but to embark on some secondary occupation as a means of earning some extra cash. The income from handicrafts was very small, however, and it hardly improved the living conditions of the Vietnamese rural masses.

FAILURE OF THE ATTEMPTS AT REDRESS

The penetration of Western capitalist economy was the major cause of the misery in the rural areas of South-East Asia. It contributed to the gradual

weakening of the once self-sufficient village community and to the disintegration of the indigenous social structure. In countries where the overwhelming majority of the people was employed in agriculture the deteriorating situation in the countryside influenced the living conditions of the entire native population. This was, of course, true for those who were most directly afflicted by the worsening circumstances, the peasant masses, but also for those who, compelled by the distress in the rural districts, abandoned their traditional occupations and either became coolies in Western mining industry or plantation enterprise, or went to the urban centres to work as labourers in transport, in the wharfs and in small industries. Because of several factors like overpopulation, immigration of foreign coolies or rural unemployment, a large supply of cheap labour was almost constantly available, so that the native wage-earners were, in general, no better off than the peasants. A process of proletarization affected the great majority of the indigenous population of South-East Asia after the introduction of Western capitalism, with bad consequences for the general food situation and health conditions.

The authorities were well aware that the living conditions of the population were steadily declining, and it was realized that some steps had to be taken to improve native welfare. Whether any such policy was to be successful was another matter, however, as there were several obstacles. The authorities had to take into account the vested interests, both of Western enterprise and also of the wealthier native groups, and in case any effort to improve native welfare was likely to threaten such interests, it was either not carried out, or, after an initial start, discontinued. Furthermore, a particular aspect of welfare policy might occasionally help to remedy the situation in one way, but aggravate it at the same time in an other, such as was the case with medical services. Often such a policy was not accepted by the indigenous population, either out of a general conservative attitude or out of the suspicion that it was just a new device to raise taxation. The reforms which were introduced, finally, were inadequate: they aimed at improving one aspect of the situation, but there was no comprehensive policy dealing with the entire problem of native poverty.

As this problem was primarily one of rural distress, the agrarian situation had to be tackled first. One possible remedy was to increase agricultural production, so as to raise the peasants' cash income and free them from their creditors. The Dutch, in particular, devoted great attention to agricultural instruction, technical improvements, better irrigation schemes, seed selection and the use of fertilizers. It turned out to be hardly an adequate means to combat rural poverty. Native cultivation did benefit, but the improvements were marginal only: traditional habits, rural suspicion of novelties, and apathy and fatalism were strong counteracting forces, while the greatest obstacle was the lack of cash, making it impossible for a debt-ridden peasantry to pay for fertilizers or better equipment. As a second remedy attempts were made to relieve the

pressure of population on the land, such as could be achieved either by industrialization or emigration. Yet, industrialization was not encouraged by the colonial governments, while in the indigenous society there occasionally existed a strong dislike of entering occupations, other than the administrative service, on a purely cash basis — the latter factor accounting, among other things, for the absence of any large-scale industrialization in Siam. Emigration was carried out in some cases, particularly in Java and Tonkin, but the results were negligible. The governments devised land-settlement projects for individual and group colonization and they organized these quite efficiently. Although the grinding poverty in the overcrowded provinces and the prospects of a better future might seem sufficiently powerful inducements to emigrate, there were, however, other factors which kept the peasants at home: their reluctance to leave the land where their ancestors lived and their unfamiliarity with the region into which they were supposed to move. Thus the numbers who actually migrated remained very small compared with the increase of the population which was taking place at the same time.

Another means of improving the living conditions of the rural masses was by the introduction of agrarian co-operative organizations. This was done in an attempt, partly to raise production, and partly to create better credit facilities for the peasants. The aim of such organizations was to encourage co-operation among the peasants, to strengthen their economic position and to create better facilities for marketing their products. The co-operative movement was sponsored both by the colonial authorities and by some nationalist politicians who were of the opinion that it presented a real solution for the rural problem. It did not. The co-operatives backed by the governments started late, at the time when the Trade Depression made the authorities realize that the rural problem was getting out of hand. Nationalist co-operative schemes existed at an earlier date, but the great mass of the peasantry was hardly touched by them either. This is not to say that the co-operatives were of no use at all, but they were only a minor remedy. In general their funds were inadequate, and they had to compete with social and economic forces that were far too strong to be successfully counteracted by well-intentioned but in the end impotent agrarian associations.

As lack of credit was one of the main causes of the peasants' plight, some reforms aimed at creating easy and reasonable credit facilities in order to enable the cultivators to avoid the moneylender. Thus in Burma acts providing for granting loans to peasants at low rates of interest had been already introduced in the 1880s, in Indonesia a state credit organization was established in the first decade of the twentieth century, and similar official institutions emerged in Indochina in 1913. They operated with variable success, but they did not solve the rural problem. The rates of interest were lower than the moneylenders used to ask, but often the conditions with which the peasants had to comply were completely out of

touch with reality, while in almost all cases the working of the system was hampered by so many bureaucratic regulations that it was easier for the peasants to go to the moneylender. In Indochina, where tenants, unable to offer land as security, could not borrow from the credit institutions, the official system even tended to favour the large estates: landowners borrowed money at low rates of interest which they, in their turn, advanced to their tenants at high rates. The credit organizations were therefore an inappropriate means of regulating the social disequilibrium, since they were not accompanied by an adequate economic and social policy.

The carrying out of land reforms was a final attempt at combating rural distress. Although the colonial authorities occasionally embarked upon a course designed to protect smallholders against land alienation, or tenants against eviction, such a policy never amounted to a comprehensive system of land reform. The steps taken brought about only minor changes, touching the surface of the problem rather than the problem as such. They might result in a slight improvement of the situation, but they did not bring about any fundamental change in the socio-economic structure which, in combination with modern capitalism, was at the root of South-East Asia's rural poverty. That no comprehensive policy of land reform was undertaken was due to several factors. The most important was the opposition of those interested in the existing situation: the landlord class of Cochin China, Lower Burma and the Philippines who either constituted the mainstay of the colonial regime, as in the Philippines, or were sufficiently strong, in league with other interests like moneylenders or European merchants, to kill any proposed reform. Secondly there was the fear that any comprehensive reform might jeopardize the country's productive capacity and that, in such a case, the rural conditions might deteriorate further. Finally, it was certain that a land reform policy which even remotely resembled Marxism would make the colonial authorities recoil.

In the absence of any large-scale policy of changing the economic structure of rural society, those reforms that were introduced hardly carried any weight. In Burma they were delayed by the combined forces of landlords, Chettyars and European merchants. The first attempt to offer protection to tenants was made as far back as 1908, but due to the resistance of the interested groups the tenancy problem was not seriously tackled until the Trade Depression of the 1930s demonstrated the disastrous consequences of land alienation and indebtedness, and an agrarian revolt in Lower Burma served as a warning. In 1931 an inquiry into the agrarian situation was made, but there was no cause for hurry, and it was only after 1937 that the then nationalist government showed more interest. Several regulations provided for increasing farm holdings through the purchase of land by the government and the acquisition of titles by the peasants under terms which forbade the sale or mortgage of any agricultural land to a non-cultivator. These reforms did not effect a solution,

however, as the process of concentration of property rights in the hands of non-cultivating owners had already gone too far.

In the Philippines the rural problem was not solved either. The steps taken by the American regime in this field did not in any way affect the socio-economic structure responsible for the misery in the countryside. One aspect of American policy was the transfer of the immense Church lands to the Philippine authorities in 1902, after which they were split up and sold to the tenants. But this offered temporary relief only: the rate of interest for the loans necessary to buy these plots was too high for the new owners and gradually the lands fell into the hands of great landlords. The other aspect of American land policy, the establishment of a homestead system of settler-farmers under the Public Land Act of 1903, was equally disappointing. In general the influential and better informed landlords managed to keep ahead of the peasants in acquiring land in the public domain sector: they took the plots near the roads, leaving the isolated areas to the peasant colonists who had the greatest difficulties in opening up their lands and marketing their products. Another defect of the system was that the cadastral survey did not keep pace with the approvals of applications, so that many colonists settled without legal protection of the title to their land. With the police and the judiciary on his side a landlord could easily evict a peasant from his land. This uncertainty, the lack of reasonable credit facilities and the difficulties of marketing in the new areas deterred peasants from settling there. Furthermore the authorities were unable to improve the homestead legislation under a social order which traditionally regarded public domain and peasant labour as commodities which naturally belonged to the privileged classes.

As to these rural problems the Philippines differed from other South-East Asian countries, where the moneylender was a foreigner, a Chinese or an Indian, economically powerful but politically without influence. In the Philippines the cacique combined economic and political power: he was the landlord with hereditary rights of domination in his district; his land was cultivated by tenants who were heavily indebted. Those few among the freeholders, tenants or labourers who, under the system of restricted suffrage had the right to vote, were compelled to vote for the political candidates supported by the landlords, who made it clear in advance that the election of someone else would be followed by evictions, withholding of loans and dismissals. The fact that the landlords controlled the bulk of the rural votes made it extremely difficult for the political leaders in Manila to adopt any policy aiming at introducing improvements in the rural situation which might damage the privileges of the cacique class. Even if an act to that effect was passed by the legislature, it did not bring any relief. An act introduced in 1933 to regulate the relations between tenants and landlords in the rice districts resulted in failure, because the caciques, controlling the local administration, saw to it that it was not

carried out. The Sakdal peasant rebellion of 1935 served as a warning, however, and the president was empowered to implement the act. He did so in 1937 in the provinces where rural unrest existed, but the landlords retaliated by dismissing tenants who referred to the act for protection, or by applying the old custom under which creditors were enabled to purchase the property of part-owners against the price of the accumulated debt, thus turning part-owners into tenants. Other acts, in 1936, which empowered the government to expropriate parts of large estates, against a compensation, or to hire large estates for twenty-five years, were not successful either. It was not easy to introduce a progressive land policy in a feudal environment, and in the conditions of the tenants there was no improvement at all.

RURAL LIVING CONDITIONS

Conditions differed from territory to territory, but in the problem areas of South-East Asia — Lower Burma, Cochin China, Luzon, Java and Tonkin-Annam — the combination of either landlordism-tenancy-indebtedness or overpopulation-moneylending-indebtedness were responsible for a very low standard of living, which was demonstrated in a grim way by the food situation. Thus, in Java the annual consumption of rice per head fell from 115 kg. in 1856 to 96 kg. in the years 1916–1924. From 1916–1924 to 1938, moreover, the proportion of rice in the diet dropped from 30 to 26.8 per cent and while the remainder was made up of maize, soyabeans, potatoes and peanuts, it was during the Trade Depression of the 1930s that inferior food like dried sliced cassava was increasingly consumed. Genuine famines did not occur under Dutch rule in the twentieth century, but in 1939 it came very close to one in several districts of East Java. This was a more or less exceptional case, but on the whole the Javanese masses were living at a minimum level of subsistence. So were the Vietnamese. The peasants of Tonkin and the tenants of Cochin China had such small budgets to live on that in the case of a bad harvest or a drop in the price of rice they had to cut down their consumption of food, borrow money at usurious rates and live at a near-starvation level. The problem of malnutrition was not only related to the quantity of the food consumed which was, in general, barely adequate, but also to the quality: protein-rich food, like meat or fish, were too expensive, and were thus not included in the peasants' diet.

The poor state of nutrition in the rural areas adversely affected public health. Like so much of the welfare work undertaken by colonial governments, medical services were created to ensure safe conditions for Western interests in the first place by devoting primary attention to fighting epidemics which might damage the economy and spread to Europeans. To take one instance, in the early twentieth century the Indochinese

colonial government strongly objected to an anti-malaria laboratory unit working in a region where Western enterprise was absent. Yet under colonial rule excellent health departments were established which successfully combated diseases like smallpox, dysentery, cholera, bubonic plague and beri-beri. They also contributed to the lowering of the general death rate; in Singapore, for example, from 51 per thousand in 1911 to 24 per thousand in 1936, or in Burma from 25.4 per thousand to 20.5 per thousand during the same years. This was achieved in spite of occasional drawbacks, such as a popular dislike of unfamiliar sanitary measures, distrust of vaccination, or the Buddhist taboo against killing animals, which covered rats and mosquitoes. But Western medical science was inadequate to cope with the iniquitous consequences of a defective economic system; neither could it counteract the undermining of physical resistibility against diseases by the constant state of undernourishment. Tuberculosis, an urban poor man's disease, remained a prime killer and infant mortality continued to be appallingly high: in Vietnam, in 1937, for example, it was 210 per thousand for Hanoi and 240 per thousand for Saigon, against 65 per thousand for France in the same year.

As to the living conditions of the urban proletariat and the coolies in mining and plantation enterprise, there were differences per colony, but they were essentially no less deplorable than those of the rural masses. Economically the wage-labourers were in an as weak position as the peasants, because in most countries a large reserve of labour was close at hand. Furthermore, no trade union was sufficiently strong to press successfully for an improvement of the working conditions, so that social legislation was either absent or totally inadequate. Particularly during the Trade Depression of the 1930s the position of the urban labourers and the coolies on the estates was further weakened.

In Burma 85 per cent of the factory jobs and 45 per cent of unskilled labour was carried out by Indian immigrants. As a great supply of Indian labour was constantly available, the British administration and Western business circles were not much interested in improving the fate of the industrial workers. A Department of Labour existed, but it lacked funds and it could do little more than provide for some minimum standards in the rice-milling and cotton-ginning industries and in the sawmills: minimum wages and a maximum working-day were not included in these. A labour movement was almost absent: the recognized trade unions covered only 0.4 per cent of the labourers employed in transport, mining and industrial enterprise. Strikes were broken either by having the strikers tried in court for riotous conduct, or by using unemployed Burmans as strike-breakers, who would be dismissed the very moment the Indians resumed work, such as happened several times on the Rangoon wharfs.

In Malaya, too, the majority of the coolies in mining and plantation enterprise and in urban occupations consisted of immigrants. Since 1912 a Labour Code had been in force in the Federated Malay States, and was

intended to cover Chinese as well as Indians, but as the Chinese were less inclined to be protected by governmental social measures, in practice the act applied mainly to Indian workers. Regulating working hours, wages, housing, sanitation, medical and educational facilities, this code and similar social laws, accompanied by an adequate system of inspection, contributed much to improving the working conditions of the Indian coolies. Although this social legislation was far from perfect, it was the best of its kind in South-East Asia, and this was the result partly of the interest shown by the government of British India, partly of the great demand for labour in Malaya and the necessity to encourage immigration this way.

In Indonesia the working and living conditions of the urban proletariat were, on the whole, slightly better than those of the labourers on the estates, where wages were far below subsistence level. In official reports of the Labour Department attention was often drawn to this state of affairs, but hardly anything was undertaken to improve the situation. Although the law restricted female and child labour, social legislation in the Netherlands Indies was focussed on problems like prostitution, after-care of prisoners, vagrancy, alcoholism and poor relief in the Victorian style, rather than on the conditions of industrial and estate labourers. During the Trade Depression these conditions were extremely bad, and they continued to be so following the devaluation of the guilder which raised the cost of living. In 1938 the government established the so-called Coolie Budget Commission to report on the situation on the estates in Java. This inquiry, the best investigation into social conditions ever conducted in any South-East Asian colony, revealed appalling facts and figures which utterly ruined the picture of the prosperous Netherlands Indies under colonial rule.

Ironically enough the situation was worst in the colony which on paper had the most perfect labour legislation of South-East Asia. Due to the efforts of the social-democrat Governor-General Alexandre Varenne (1925–1928), a Labour Code had been issued in Indochina in 1927, containing regulations for labour recruitment, working hours, housing and medical attendance. But this attempt to protect Vietnamese labourers in the mines and factories and on the estates failed because it was not accompanied by a system of adequate supervision; the inspection the law provided for was sabotaged by the plantation-owners, until it was officially suspended in 1934. In the late 1930s steps were taken to carry out the provisions of the act more effectively, and to restrict women and child labour, and as a result conditions improved slightly. Yet the coolies in the rubber estates of Cochin China and in the mines of Tonkin continued to be the most ruthlessly and excessively exploited labourers of twentieth century colonial South-East Asia.

5 South-East Asia's Renaissance Movement

GENERAL BACKGROUND

THE general process of pauperization of the indigenous population was not the only consequence of the unchecked penetration of a capitalist economy into the region. It also led to the division of South-East Asian society along racial lines. In the economic field the Europeans were at the top, with foreign Asian immigrants controlling the middle sector. The sole opportunity for the native population to be economically active outside the traditional spheres of agriculture and fishing consisted of working in mines, on estates and in the manufacturing industry. This classification was not watertight: in the Philippines economic top positions were also in the hands of the Filipinos, while in Siam and Malaya the higher sector had been strongly infiltrated by the Chinese; in Malaya, Indonesia and Burma Asian immigrants performed a substantial amount of manual labour, and in all countries a native middle-class of a very limited size did exist. Yet this racial division was an essential characteristic of South-East Asia's economic structure. So it was in the political sphere: the power of decision rested with the Europeans, except in Siam and, after the introduction of the Commonwealth constitution, in the Philippines. Neither the foreign Asian immigrants nor the native population had any political power, although a small privileged group belonging to the old aristocratic elite still retained some authority.

Colonial society was, in fact, a mixture of three different communities, each of them defective in its social composition. The European community consisted of an elite only, and in the immigrant Asian societies the middle sector was, proportionately, heavily over-represented. The incomplete structural set-up of the social pyramids of the two communities was due

to the fact that they were imported into South-East Asia. Indigenous society, traditionally rooted in the region and, under pre-capitalist conditions, sound and stable, contained the potential elements which, if given the time and the opportunity to develop, might have transformed it into an equally sound and stable society under any new circumstances. Exposed, however, to the sudden and virulent impact of Western capitalist economy, in most cases in combination with Western political domination, native society disintegrated. The aristocratic classes were preserved but subordinated to an alien power and, except in the Philippines, were without much real influence. No middle class of any extent developed, and wherever it did exist, either urban or rural, either in an economic or an intellectual sense, it constituted only a small section of indigenous society. The base of the pyramid, consisting of the lower classes, increased proportionately to such an extent that it covered an overwhelming majority, over 90 per cent, of the native population.

The disruption of native society inevitably led to a breakdown of the social norms under which the population previously lived. The commercialization of agriculture and the establishment of Western enterprise created opportunities of economic activity outside the familiar sphere of the village community. Since people were no longer exclusively dependent on the village for their livelihood, a change in outlook occurred, first of course among those who left the village and gave up contacts with the traditional environment, but also among those who stayed behind. The village lost its protective function, partly as a result of these new attitudes, partly because communal feelings were insufficiently strong to protect both the community and the individual against the consequences of the penetration of a monetary economy. This decay of the village community, due to economic factors, was in many instances accompanied by the weakening of the political function of the village as well as of the larger units which constituted the framework of native society. Inherent in this development was a general decline in the prestige of the traditional elite. The European authorities were responsible for this trend, because wherever they did not demolish the old structure, as in Burma, they deprived the rulers, chiefs and headmen, at nearly all levels, of almost all real power, leaving them only the authority to carry out whatever policy the colonial governments wished to dictate. Only in a few cases did the old ruling elite continue to command a substantial amount of respect, but in general the subordinate position of the aristocratic groups and the abuse of power which they occasionally practised under cover of the protection afforded to them by the colonial regimes, were bound gradually to lower their prestige with the population, and in some instances turn it into hatred, as happened in Vietnam.

In the rural areas the native chiefs were still able to retain some of their influence among the traditional-minded peasantry, although it declined

with the further breakdown of society, the emergence of a new generation and the strengthening of the authority of religious teachers. In the towns, however, where their influence had never been very extensive, a new elite began to develop in the early twentieth century. It consisted of the members of the native capitalist middle class who became aware that any effort on their part to improve their economic position was constantly blocked by the predominance of Western enterprise and the foreign immigrant communities. In addition to their dissatisfaction there was the disappointment of the intellectuals and semi-intellectuals who, in general, had access only to subordinate ranks in the administration, while in the realm of non-official jobs the openings were also limited. The disillusionment of these two groups was instrumental in engendering the Asian renaissance movement which, with ever-increasing intensity, influenced native society as well as the relations between South-East Asia and the outside world from the early twentieth century.

The term 'nationalism' is most commonly used to indicate the awakening of South-East Asia's peoples and their resistance against the conditions under which they lived, but it offers only a partial explanation to the phenomenon as a whole. As foreign political and economic domination were the most prominent features of the situation against which the opposition of the indigenous population was aimed, it was inevitable that the anti-colonial nationalist element of South-East Asia's renaissance would be most strongly emphasized. This aspect, indeed, provided a common bond for holding together all those who gave direction to, or took part in, the new development. In spite of the different social backgrounds of the leaders and their followers or the various ideological concepts, and in spite of the widely divergent views as to the more remote objectives to be pursued or the tactics to be employed, the liquidation of foreign rule was the one aim, either as an end in itself or as a condition *sine qua non* for the realization of further designs, which all self-conscious Asians adopted as their primary goal.

But the desire for national independence and for terminating the economic subordination of their countries was only one of the many ambitions of South-East Asia's new leaders, and these nationalist demands were not the primary factor which stimulated Asian self-awareness. In essence the 'awakening of Asia' was a complex, comprehensive, and indeed, revolutionary movement for modernization and renovation, including such ideals as achieving economic emancipation and social justice, effectuating a cultural and religious revival, combating poverty and wiping out backwardness, in addition to the one aim of putting an end to colonial rule. It was caused by a general feeling of discontent, either consciously entertained and expressed in an articulate way, or unconsciously and vaguely experienced, with the situation such as it had developed during the preceding decades: the disruption of native society and the poverty of the masses, the political and economic inequality prevalent in a plural society,

whether colonial or not, the decline in cultural standards and religious values, the economic dependence on the outside world and, in the colonial territories in particular, the political subordination to a foreign power and the *de facto* colour-line, blocking the road towards progress.

Primarily conditioned by the social and economic circumstances, and generated by the dissatisfaction with the existing situation as well as by the wish to bring about a process of modernization in such fields that had either been neglected, inadequately influenced or adversely affected by the earlier modernization set into motion by the West, the renaissance movement was the expression of a changing Asian outlook, characterized by the realization that people or nations who hitherto passively submitted to the development in their countries should now actively participate in it. South-East Asia's emancipation was stimulated, furthermore, by a few additional factors. In Indonesia and Burma, in particular, the newly-emerging self-consciousness ran parallel with a new orientation of Islam and Buddhism. Under the influence of Islamic reformism which aimed at combating orthodoxy and traditionalism and at adapting Islam to the requirements of the modern era in order to strengthen the position of the Muslims in the new situation which was facing them, Islam became a significant ally of Indonesian nationalism. Similarly, Buddhism in Burma, after a decline for which the British had been indirectly responsible by their refusal to appoint, as successor to the former Burmese king, a Head of the Order as general supervisor, embarked upon a campaign to restore its former influence, and with Buddhist monks entering politics it considerably invigorated the nationalist movement. Both religions, by nature opposed to the Christian Western governments, stimulated anti-European sentiments which constituted an additional element of South-East Asian nationalism. Such a supporting role of religion was restricted, however, to those countries where it, if only formally, embraced the overwhelming majority of the population and thus constituted a binding force that created some sort of pre-nationalist sentiment which could be adopted by political nationalism, and where the economic and social impact of Western penetration had been sufficiently powerful to spark off the mental re-orientation which lay at the root of South-East Asia's awakening. Buddhism in Vietnam and Thailand and Islam in Malaya did not fulfil the former condition, while Cambodia, Laos and Malaya—or rather the Malay community in Malaya — did not comply with the latter. In the Philippines, finally, it was the renaissance movement which influenced the Catholic Church rather than the other way round: Filipino nationalist resentment against Spanish clericalism and the Spanish regular orders and the hostility of the tenant farmers against the land-owning friars set off the trend leading to the establishment of the Independent Philippine Church in 1902.

South-East Asia's emancipation was also strongly influenced, though indirectly, by some actions and policies of the colonial governments as

well as by Western concepts and ideals. Although it was never the intention of the foreign rulers to foster Asian patriotism and even less to produce opportunities for any indigenous nationalist movement to arise, the Western governments instilled exactly those forces in native society which were ultimately to turn against them. Prominent among these forces was Western education. Though it was one of the most neglected items of colonial rule, responsible for appalling figures of illiteracy throughout the region, it did nevertheless contribute to the emergence of a Western trained intellectual elite which grew into a reservoir of nationalist leadership. The political reforms, moreover, which were carried out in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century with a view to achieving greater administrative efficiency, created the conditions for the rise and development of a native political movement. While the colonial masters thus provided the discontented elements among the indigenous population with leaders as well as with the facilities to organize themselves, the West, in general, also supplied the spiritual weapons and the techniques which gave South-East Asia's nationalist struggle motivation, strength and purpose. The renaissance movement was tremendously encouraged by Western political concepts and ideals; it adjusted itself to the needs of the modern era; it broke with the traditions of the past; it adopted Western doctrines, that of the nation-state in the first place but also those of liberty and justice; and it made use of Western methods of political and social struggle, like the party-structure of political organization, parliamentary opposition and strikes. In this, as well as in its general ambition to bring about the modernization of society, South-East Asia's renaissance movement differed greatly from previous resistance movements in the past which, led by feudal factions or religious teachers, had been aiming at restoring the pre-colonial situation.

Apart from these factors which, arising out of the colonial situation in the region itself, contributed to the increasing self-confidence of South-East Asia's peoples, there were also a few from outside. First, there was the impact of Japan, the only country in Asia where the contacts with Western imperialism in the second half of the nineteenth century had been followed by a swift process of modernization along Western lines. In 1905 she created the sensation of decisively beating the Russian colossus, an event which, more than any other, created a tremendous stir in the colonial territories. Another event arousing interest in South-East Asia was the struggle for freedom in British India. Men like Tilak, Gokhale, Gandhi and Nehru were more than mere protagonists of Indian liberty: they were regarded as models for all patriots in the region, while the structural set-up of the All Indian Congress and its non-co-operative tactics were occasionally copied by South-East Asia's nationalist organizations. The revolution in China, too, considerably influenced South-East Asia, first, of course, the Chinese, but also, and partly in response to this, the indigenous population. The First World War, finally, made a deep impression.

Caused and fought by those who used to refer to their civilizing task and to their obligation to preserve law and order in the colonial countries, this white man's butchery was highly detrimental to the prestige the Europeans held in Asian eyes. Added to this, President Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' and the victory of communism in Russia and Central Asia seemed to bring the ideals of South-East Asia's new leaders within easy reach.

Yet South-East Asia's renaissance movement was rather limited in extent. Conditioned by the pernicious consequences of the impact of Western capitalist economy on native society since the 1870s, and inspired by Western intellectual influences since the early twentieth century, it was restricted to those territories — and within these territories to those sections of the population — that had been most deeply affected by both aspects of these modern developments. It was, therefore, understandable that the first anti-colonial movement emerged in the Philippines where, of all South-East Asian countries, the process of Westernization and social evolution had been most intense. Similarly it was understandable that it was almost entirely concentrated on Luzon. Likewise, the main centres of Indonesian nationalism were Java, most strongly affected by Western activities, and Minangkabau, characterized by far-reaching social changes. That the start of Indonesia's renaissance came some thirty years behind that in the Philippines was due to the fact that the Dutch, as the British and French in their colonies, made Western education available half a century later than did the Spaniards. In Indochina Vietnam became the stronghold of nationalism; in Siam only a very small area in the immediate vicinity of Bangkok was touched by modern economic, social and intellectual developments; in Malaya the Chinese community was most affected, but their nationalism was Chinese rather than Malayan. In territories into which such modern influences had barely penetrated, like Mindanao in the Philippines, Laos and Cambodia in Indochina, Borneo and the Eastern islands in Indonesia, and the greater part of Siam; or where the population remained generally aloof from economic developments undertaken under colonial auspices, like the Malays in Malaya, modern nationalism hardly existed. There might be discontent in such territories or among such peoples, but either the traditional norms of life and the prestige of the old aristocratic elite were still sufficiently powerful to prevent it from openly expressing itself, or it took on the form of regional particularism, ethnic communalism or religious antagonism, such as was the case in several Indonesian areas, or with the Karens in Burma, the Malays in Malaya and the minorities in Vietnam. In such instances the foreign government was often regarded as the sole power able to protect minority rights, a situation which the colonial rulers readily made use of: it was only in Atjeh that, because of the fiery sense of patriotism and the strong position of Islamic orthodoxy *vis-à-vis* the Dutch-supported traditional ruling class, that regional particularism, while opposed to modern Indonesian nationalism, also displayed strong anti-colonial sentiments.

THE EMERGENCE OF A 'NATIONALIST' ELITE

Most indigenous political leaders belonged to the bourgeoisie or the Western-educated intellectuals, but they did not exclusively make up the new elite. Other classes, or individuals from such classes, also contributed to South-East Asia's renaissance: some members of the traditional aristocracy noticing the signs of the times, religious leaders attempting to strengthen the status of Islam or Buddhism, and the younger generation clamouring for a change. Numerically they were a very tiny group and, although they were able to carry the mass of the population along with them to the extent of passive acquiescence at least and, in exceptional cases, of active participation at best, their struggle was not unanimously supported. Asia's revolution was not unique in this: in every revolutionary situation people will be found who are opposed to change. There were those who preferred the settled conditions and certainties of the old order, in spite of the injustices which accompanied it, to the possible uncertainty of any new situation. Not committed to either side, they simply wished to be left in peace; they did not form any great obstacle to the nationalist struggle, for in general they lacked the spirit to resist the new trend just as they lacked the imagination to accept it. There were others, however, who did resist, namely those whose positions, based on the old order, were endangered: as individuals, the indigenous military men or civil servants, for example, who feared what would happen to them if the government which they had served so loyally should disappear; as a class, the aristocracy from which, in most cases, the colonial governments recruited their administrative helpers. In such instances where the aristocratic classes sided with the colonial rulers against the new leaders, the latter not only fought foreign domination but also their own countrymen who supported it.

In this respect the Philippines was an exception. As the policy of the United States to lead the islands to independence ran parallel with the aims of the nationalist politicians, the collaboration of the caciques with the colonial power was not classified as anti-national, as the attitude of the traditional elites in other colonial territories was bound to be. Differences of opinion between the urban middle-class leaders and the great landowning class did exist, but these were not related to the patriotic issue; the old elite therefore played a significant role in the nationalist movement. As the mainstay of United States domination and, later, American influence in the Philippines, the traditionally dominant classes were, of course, as useful to the American cause as similar aristocratic or 'feudal' groups in the European-held territories were to their colonial masters, but as a result of the conciliatory attitude of the United States *vis-à-vis* Filipino political ambitions, this situation neither impaired their relations with the national

ists of the urban bourgeois type, nor damaged their position as the ruling elite. In the Commonwealth of the Philippines the landed nobility continued to be the dominating political force, as it had been during the Spanish period and under American colonial rule.

In the rest of South-East Asia the traditional aristocracy was able to maintain its dominant position only in those territories where their status was not challenged by a new elite emerging from among the middle classes or by religious teachers. These were the territories in which general developments and Western economic penetration did not cause the disruption of native society: the protectorates of British Borneo, the interior of Netherlands Borneo and the eastern islands of Indonesia, the Shan States in Burma, Laos and Cambodia in Indochina, the remote provinces of Siam and, in a different sense Malaya. Under colonial rule Malaya went through a rapid process of modernization, but of the three ethnic communities the Malays were the least affected. Their conservatism, the belated appearance of anti-colonial sentiments among the Malay intellectuals and, in addition to these factors, the complete absence of any Malayan nationalist feelings among the Chinese and Indians, contributed to the fact that the traditional nobility continued to command a substantial amount of respect, enhanced, moreover, by Islam which here, contrary to the situation in Indonesia but in accordance with the traditionalist sympathies of the Malays, supported the aristocratic classes.

Everywhere else, however, the status of the traditional ruling elite was challenged by the intellectuals and middle class groups, while in Indonesia moreover their influence among the rural masses was increasingly defied by Muslim religious leaders. In such circumstances the native chiefs started to rely more heavily on the colonial governments to which they owed their position. They did not do so out of anti-national considerations, but because they feared the nationalists and they realized that a victory of the new ideals might result in the abolition of their social and political privileges. The only power which was able and, for reasons of its own, willing to help them avert this threat was the foreign ruler. In Siam, not under colonial rule, such a protective force did not exist, and consequently, the traditional elite lost its predominance, at any rate in Bangkok; in 1932 the monarchy was deprived of its absolute powers, but maintained as a ceremonial institution with its prestige among the population made use of by the new leaders for their own purposes.

THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE RENAISSANCE MOVEMENT

By prompting the elimination of the aristocracy's leadership, partly as a consequence of the emergence of a new elite, partly as a by-product of the nationalist struggle, South-East Asia's renaissance movement also took on

an anti-feudal social revolutionary appearance which was, in fact, inherent in all essentially middle-class upheavals. In addition to this, it also displayed proletarian social revolutionary characteristics, which might have been the result of the poor economic and social situation in which the mass of the population had to live. But although this situation was the primary condition for generating the feelings of discontent out of which South-East Asia's renaissance movement, and in a restricted sense South-East Asian nationalism, eventually emerged, neither the drive towards emancipation nor the nationalist movement was inspired by those who constituted, economically and socially, the most downtrodden and wretched section of native society. It was not the plight of the destitute peasantry which sparked off the revolutionary movement aimed at improving the situation. There were occasional revolts against native landlords, or outbursts against foreign planters or Chinese middlemen and Indian moneylenders; sometimes there were instances of brigandage or rising rates of crime in the rural areas, but for anything beyond that the peasants lacked the leaders, the organization and the education to stand up against their oppressors or to deviate from their traditional norms. These were provided, instead, by the Western-educated urban politicians, but on this issue of rural poverty South-East Asia's middle-class nationalist leaders were far less in agreement than on the necessity to fight colonialism and the 'feudal' aristocracy.

It is true that most of the political parties included a section in their programmes dealing with the standards of living of the lower classes and outlining the methods of improving their plight, and quite a few nationalist organizations did a great deal of welfare work among the poor for humanitarian reasons. But though the middle-class leaders subscribed to various projects for the betterment of the living conditions of the great mass of the rural and urban proletariat, they did so partly for political considerations. They were a numerically small group and the eventual success of their struggle depended greatly on whether or not they would be able to obtain support, active or passive, from among the mass of the population for their own nationalist demands. As such support was not likely to be acquired by stressing such concepts as 'freedom' and 'independence', it was realized that the nationalist leaders had to react to the profound feelings existing among the mass of the population, that they had to capitalize on the resentments and needs of the masses and to advocate an improvement in their living conditions. This is not to say that the middle-class nationalists' propaganda on behalf of the lower classes or the welfare work they undertook, were just manoeuvres to attract as many adherents as possible in the struggle against the colonial masters or to strengthen their own position and prevent others from advocating more radical reforms, in case they should fail to come forward with a viable programme to solve the people's problems. Yet none of the greater nationalist organizations was aiming at a genuine social revolution as the ultimate solution for the

region's economic and social ills, in spite of the occasionally vehement social revolutionary, leftist or anti-capitalist language of the leaders. With the exception of the major nationalist party of the Philippines which was controlled by the landlords, they were essentially bourgeois parties, and all of them primarily intended to achieve the national liberation that would be beneficial primarily to the social groups they represented.

The social consciousness of the nationalist parties was most intense whenever foreign influences were evidently responsible for either the lack of economic opportunities for the middle classes or the low standard of living of the masses: an almost classic expression of this attitude was provided by the 1918 programme of Indonesia's Sarekat Islam, declaring that it was the aim of the party to fight both the Dutch government and also 'sinful capitalism'. An attack on indigenous capitalism or a revolutionary overthrow of society as a precondition for improving the fate of the lower classes was advocated only by a tiny minority of the new elite: some factions in the nationalist parties, some social radical groups and those who had been influenced by Marxist doctrines, more in particular the communists among them.

The anti-foreign aspect of the new leaders' social awareness fitted in well with the anti-colonial element of the nationalist struggle. But the Europeans were not the only targets; the Asian immigrant communities also came under nationalist fire, sometimes even to a greater extent, since it was easier, and under a colonial regime less risky, to attack them than it was to oppose the nationals of the dominant power. Other factors may have played a role, like racial antagonism, religious differences or indignation at the Chinese and Indians' lack of interest in the nationalist issue, but the main source of the animosity towards the immigrant Asians was economic: dissatisfaction with the Chinese control over the middle sector of economic life; hatred for the Indian or Chinese moneylenders or, in Burma in particular, for the Indian coolies monopolizing manual labour. This anti-Chinese and, in Burma, anti-Indian element of the renaissance movement contributed, among other things, to the aloofness of the Chinese and Indians towards South-East Asia's national aspirations, and this attitude, in its turn, tended to intensify the general mistrust towards the foreign Asians. Only a small section of the Chinese and Indian communities took an active part in the nationalist struggle, the majority adopting a wait-and-see posture.

The differences of opinion with regard to the social problem were not the sole factor responsible for the structural fragmentation of South-East Asia's nationalist movements. The advocates of the new orientation were people with various ideological concepts, ranging from communism to social democracy and liberalism to conservatism and in some cases even to some kind of authoritarianism with fascist undertones. They differed as to their religious belief or their ethnic descent; they held widely divergent views on the immediate tactical problems as well as on more remote

questions related to the structure of the state or the character of government. There were idealists among them, interested in the nation as a whole, and cynics, seeking only their own betterment; and there were many schisms due to nothing more than personal rivalries. Until 1940, in none of the South-East Asian countries, with the possible exception of the Philippines, did a national leader arise capable of uniting the various factions into one organization, such as happened in British India, covering the entire nationalist movement and sufficiently elastic to prevent it from cracking. Finally, there was, in some cases, the oppressive policy of the colonial governments, which made a reorganization or reorientation necessary from time to time.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE COLONIAL POWERS

Facing South-East Asia's new self-consciousness, dynamism and political activism, its reappreciation of national dignity, its devotion to a common cause and its sense of revolutionary *élan*, limited to a small section of society, but capable of inspiring the population as a whole, the Western governments were confronted with a hitherto unfamiliar phenomenon in their colonial dependencies. The way they reacted was in complete accordance with the different colonial policies each of them was following. As the ambitions of the Filipino nationalist politicians were the same as the aims of the United States, the development of Philippine nationalism was not essentially obstructed by the colonial power. The social status of the nationalists guaranteed, moreover, a continuation of American influence after independence, which provided another reason for the United States' friendly attitude. The only difference of opinion between Philippine nationalism and American colonialism was related to secondary matters, such as the tempo of decolonization, particularly during the 1920s, or the conditions under which the islands were to obtain their freedom.

Britain's rule over Malaya was not challenged by any nationalist movement, but in Burma it was, and here the colonial government attempted to minimize its importance, until she realized that in the end such a policy was likely to cause her to lose her political initiative. From that moment onwards Britain gradually gave in to nationalist pressure, fixing the speed of the development herself and occasionally putting on the brakes, but taking care not to antagonize Burman nationalism to the extent of irreparably jeopardizing future relations. In fact the British were, on the whole, slightly ahead of the moderate section of nationalist opinion and, by according them their favours and thus tying them to the existing state of affairs, they managed to prevent the younger and more radical politicians from taking over the direction of the movement.

The reaction of the Netherlands and France to South-East Asian nationalism differed as much from the attitudes of the United States and

Britain as their respective concepts of colonial rule. Although professing sympathy with moderate evolutionary nationalism and objecting to the radical, i.e. non-co-operative wing of the movement, the Dutch in fact did not favour any kind of Indonesian nationalism. The radicals they isolated in places of internment scattered all over the archipelago, the bulk of them in the Boven Digul concentration camp in West New Guinea. The so-called moderate organizations were allowed to operate freely, but they were under constant police surveillance and subject to all kinds of official obstruction and repressive measures. This Dutch attitude was tolerant, however, compared with French policy *vis-à-vis* Vietnamese nationalism, which was characterized most of the time by total oppression. Freedom of the press, of organization, of meeting and of trade-unionism hardly existed, so that most parties had to operate illegally. France, too, had its *bagnio*, the notorious Poulo Condore prison. It is true that no South-East Asian nation treated its colonial masters with more haughty contempt, and rebelled more often than the Vietnamese, but it is also true that no colonial power in South-East Asia oppressed the native population to such an extent and, in case of a rebellion, perpetrated such indiscriminate massacres as did France.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM IN COLONIAL SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Of South-East Asia's nationalist ambitions only those cherished by the Filipino political leaders were on the verge of being fulfilled in the 1930s. Philippine nationalism, the oldest in the region, had gone through several phases by that time. Starting in the 1880s as a moderate and rather naive reformist movement, of which Jose Rizal was the main spokesman, it took on more radical aspects in the face of Spanish intransigence, and in the last decade of the nineteenth century Filipino discontent resulted in a large-scale rebellion. Led by the so-called *Katipunan*, short for 'Highest and Most Respected Association of the Sons of the Country', and with Andres Bonifacio as its major leader, the revolt contained strong social revolutionary elements, but these were eliminated when Emilio Aguinaldo took over the direction of the movement and had Bonifacio liquidated in 1897. From that moment onwards the revolution was a purely nationalist affair; it was of great help to the Americans when these conquered the islands in 1898, but it was not rewarded with the freedom Aguinaldo expected the United States to grant to the Philippines. The Americans destroyed the Philippine Republic which had been proclaimed earlier, crushed Filipino armed resistance and replaced Spanish domination with their own colonialism.

Under American rule Philippine nationalism changed its character once again. Its object — independence for the Philippines — remained the

same, but it abandoned violence and adopted the tactics of a pressure group instead. This last, evolutionary, phase of the development, in which leaders like Sergio Osmena, Manuel Quezon and Manuel Roxas played a prominent role, and in which the *Partido Nacionalista*, founded in 1907, was the major political organization, was characterized by the principle of American-Filipino partnership. But although American policy created the facilities for the Filipinos to take over the legislative branch of government and the civil service, and Philippine nationalists co-operated with the colonial administration, nationalist agitation remained vehement. There was a vague distrust of American intentions, particularly during the 1920s when, after the sweeping reforms carried out under Governor-General Harrison, Governor-General Wood slowed down the development towards emancipation. The press and the stage became the most important media for the nationalists to influence public opinion: constant journeys of Filipino politicians to Washington were intended to persuade the United States government and the Congressional leaders to effect a more rapid transformation of the country from a colonial territory to an independent state.

One of these missions, led by Osmena and Roxas, was successful in the early 1930s when, due to the Trade Depression, the ideal of Philippine independence obtained the support of powerful American economic interests. The result was the so-called Hare-Hawes-Cutting Bill of 1932, which provided for a ten-year transitional period after which independence was to be granted. The passing of this bill by the American Congress was followed, however, by a curious piece of political tug-of-war among the Filipino leaders, when Quezon, out of resentment that not he but his rival Osmena had been heading the mission to Washington, used his influence to have the bill rejected on the ground that its stipulations on the continuation of American military facilities after independence would be contrary to Philippine national dignity. He went to Washington himself, arranged for a new bill, the Tydings-McDuffie Act, which hardly differed from the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Bill, but which enhanced his and not Osmena's prestige and ensured his election as first president of the autonomous government in 1935.

By 1940 the nationalist movement in Burma was only slightly behind that of the Philippines in attaining its political aspirations. Beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century, in the form of the Young Men's Buddhist Association, it had been concerned initially with religious and social matters rather than with political issues. But this changed in the period after the First World War when the British attempted to exclude the country from the proposed constitutional reforms in British India. This created a tremendous stir, and the sudden emergence of Burman political consciousness, further stimulated by a strike of university students, found expression in the transformation, in 1921, of the Y.M.B.A. to the more radical General Council of Burmese Associations as a compre-

hensive nationalist organization. Facing this vigorous explosion of nationalism, the colonial government changed its course, and in 1923 introduced the Dyarchy system as it was applied to other Indian provinces. By doing so, however, it also effected a split in the G.C.B.A., between those leaders, organized in the Twenty-One Party of U Ba Pe, who were content with the reforms so far and willing to take their seats in the Legislative Council, and those like U Chit Hlaing who advocated the non-co-operative principle and wanted to fight for new concessions. Around 1930 the question of Burma's separation from India assumed great importance when the Simon Commission recommended that Burma be established as a distinct unit of the British Commonwealth and Empire. Thus far the nationalists had always advocated such a separation, but now that it was officially proposed and supported by British administrative and business circles, they became suspicious. Afraid that the British government would want to maintain colonial rule in Burma after she had been compelled to abandon India, they formed an Anti-Separation League in 1932 which, whipping up anxieties among the public, won a resounding victory at the polls. But the British retaliated by putting the Burmans to the choice: either separation or a permanent union with India. As the latter opportunity was even more unattractive, the nationalists, unable to persuade the government into consenting to a temporary inclusion of Burma in an Indian federation with the right to secede, finally decided in favour of separation, and on this basis the Government of Burma Act was adopted in 1935.

During the Trade Depression, the nationalist movement entered a new and more revolutionary phase of its development. The immediate consequence of the economic disaster, with its aftermath of social misery and widespread discontent, was a peasant revolt, the Saya San rebellion of 1930 which, although inadequately led and hopeless from the start, could only be suppressed after two years of British military action. Far more important, however, than this more or less obscurantist affair — as far as the leaders of the revolt were concerned—was the change in political life brought about by the younger intellectuals, mainly university students who were not only dissatisfied with colonial rule but also with the way the older generation of nationalists had been conducting the nationalist struggle. They called themselves 'Thakins', or Masters, and founded the *Dobama Asiayone*, or 'We Burmans Society', in 1935. Inspired by socialist and communist doctrines, but also influenced by the Japanese example, they aimed at reviving popular interest in national issues, and they were busily engaged in organizing the peasants and labourers and the youth movement. After 1937, when Burma obtained a large degree of internal autonomy, their agitation was growing stronger and in 1938 they were responsible for fomenting the serious anti-Indian disturbances which, indirectly, led to the downfall of Ba Maw's cabinet, the first Burmese government in office since the introduction of the new constitution. At

that moment Burman nationalism was evidently at the crossroads, with one group of appeased nationalists in power and another, more revolutionary, group led by Thakins Aung San, Mya, Nu and Than Tun, attempting to gain popular support and to wrest the direction of the movement out of the hands of the older politicians.

Unlike the situation in the Philippines and Burma, the nationalist movements in the Netherlands Indies and French Indochina were still fighting against the brick wall of an unyielding and rigid colonialism towards the close of the 1930s. Indonesian nationalism was initially, as everywhere, moderate in nature, and, as in Burma, strongly affected by religion; the first great nationalist organization, *Sarekat Islam*, founded in 1912, was also a Muslim association. More revolutionary ideas were introduced by Marxism and their impact was felt when the S.I. adopted a radical course, changing its policy from one of co-operation with the administration into one of opposition to the government. For a year or two some kind of collaboration between the S.I. and the Communist Party existed, but differences of opinion led to a rupture, in 1921, after which the Muslim organization lost a good deal of its mass following, while the communists had themselves manoeuvred into a rebellion in 1926–7 in West Java and Minangkabau. The revolt was suppressed and followed by a ban on communism. The next stage of the development brought other nationalists to the fore: they did not base their actions on any additional internationally orientated ideal such as Islam or Marxism, but on pure Indonesian nationalism only. In 1927 Sukarno established the Nationalist Party, *Partai Nasional Indonesia*, characterized by vehement agitation and by an attitude of non-co-operation with the colonial authorities. To the government such political activity was unacceptable and in 1929 she clamped down on the party, putting an end to it as well as, in the following years, to two other organizations based on the same principles. The leaders Sukarno, Mohammed Hatta and Sutan Sjahrir were arrested.

Dutch repressive policy was particularly intense during the disastrous regime of Governor-General Bonifacius de Jonge (1931–1936) and, in addition to the general apathy caused by the Trade Depression, it was responsible for a period of outward stagnation in the evolution of the nationalist movement. Yet, under this surface of tranquility and resignation, the Indonesian politicians reassessed their position; realizing that it was primarily the non-co-operative nationalist parties which were persecuted by the police, they changed tactics and dropped non-co-operation as a means of political struggle. A process of reorientation began around 1934–5, giving the impression that the nationalist movement had returned to moderation — a false impression, however, because self-government and independence continued to be the ultimate objectives of the fight. But the more moderate behaviour of the new political organizations, the right-wing Greater Indonesia Party, *Partai Indonesia Raya* or *Parindra*, led by

Sutomo and Mohammed Thamrin, the left-inclined Indonesian People's Movement, *Gerakan Rakjat Indonesia* or *Gerindo*, under the leadership of Sartono and Amir Sjarifuddin, and the *Partai Islam Indonesia*, led by Sukiman Wirjosandjojo and Wiwoho Purbohadidjojo, deprived the government of the excuse to continue her oppressive policy. The administration was not, however, induced to change its inflexible course of withholding constitutional reforms. The reorientation in Indonesian politics was also clearly demonstrated in the Volksraad, where a nationalist faction under Thamrin had been active since the early 1930s. Yet it was not Thamrin but a loyal civil servant, Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo, who in 1936 presented the famous petition, demanding a conference of representatives of the Netherlands and the Indies for the purpose of drafting a project of gradual reforms, to be carried into effect over ten years or more, if necessary, in order to confer upon the Indies the status of a self-governing territory within the limits set by the Dutch constitution. This request was adopted by the Council, but, in 1938, rejected by the Netherlands government. The disappointment over the unimaginativeness of Dutch policy led to the realization among Indonesian politicians that some form of united action was necessary. The Muslim parties had already joined forces in a more or less loose federation, *Madjlisul Islamil A' laa Indonesia* (M.I.A.I.); in 1939 Thamrin succeeded in bringing the many nationalist organizations, including those based on Islam, together in the *Gabungan Politik Indonesia*, or *Gapi*-federation which, immediately after its inception, started a campaign for a fully-fledged parliamentary system.

Initially nationalism in Vietnam was also moderately reformist in nature, aiming at a Vietnamese renaissance, either, as Phan Boi Chau advocated, under the monarchy and inspired by Japan, or, as Phan Chau Trinh recommended, with the guidance and help of France. But the French policy of objecting to any political trend which was not completely subservient to the colonial regime prevented these trends from developing. After the severe repression of peasant demonstrations against taxation in Annam, in 1908, Phan Boi Chau's movement degenerated into a sort of secret society, responsible for a wave of terrorist attacks from 1912 onwards. Phan Chau Trinh's intellectual reformist brand of nationalism similarly failed to be successful; it died as a result not so much of repressive action, although Trinh was exiled to France, but of the French refusal to take the movement seriously. Whatever the vague promises on constitutional reforms, made by Governor-General Albert Sarraut in 1919, French colonial policy did not essentially change: in the 1920s the very moderate Cochin-Chinese Constitutionalist Party fell into oblivion out of frustration over the French refusal to consider even the most harmless suggestions.

Gradually, more radical forces took over from the moderates. In 1927 Nguyen Thai Hoc founded the *Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang* as a Vietnamese replica of the Kuo Min Tang, as nationalistic and socially conservative as

its Chinese model since Chiang K'ai-shek's counter-revolution. Under the harsh regime of Governor-General Pierre Pasquier (1928–1934) it was compromised by the actions of French agents, and its members were harassed by the police. Due to such provocations the party made an attempt at rebellion in Tonkin which started with a mutiny in Yen Bay in 1930. The revolt was mercilessly crushed and followed by numerous executions, among them Nguyen Thai Hoc; the remaining leaders went to China in exile. Shortly after, new disturbances occurred, this time led by the Indochinese Communist Party which, early in 1930, had been formed by Nguyen Ai Quoc out of the merger of several communist associations. Because of the Trade Depression and the misery in the rural areas the P.C.I. was immediately predestined to play a prominent role in organizing demonstrations among the distressed peasantry, and in various districts of Tonkin and North Annam agrarian unrest took on the form of a peasant rebellion. The colonial government reacted with her customary brutality, and after the revolt was suppressed thousands were executed or sent to prison camps.

The lack of success of the revolutionary movement brought the moderate politicians to the fore once again, but their attempts at introducing a change in the regime were doomed from the start. In fact, the suppression of the V.N.Q.D.D. revolt in 1930 and the failure of Ngo Dinh Diem's efforts to modernize the administrative set-up in 1933 marked the end of the intellectual and middle-class nationalist movement, both revolutionary and moderate. Although, legally or illegally, some groups representing this trend of nationalism continued to exist, such as the Constitutionalist Party, the *Viet Nam Phuc Quoc Dong Minh*, the remnant of Phan Boi Chau's organization, the equally pro-Japanese and more or less fascist-inclined Dai Viet party and the Cao Dai politico-religious sect, it was the revolutionary proletarian-based form of nationalism which gradually gained in importance. Several factors were responsible for this evolution. After three decades of inefficacy and failure bourgeois nationalism was a spent force: weak, exhausted and unlikely to capture the imagination of the masses any more. Because of their lack of social contact with the population and the almost complete absence of any social programme, the middle class organizations were hardly in a position, moreover, to compete successfully with the left-wing groups for the favours of a nation which was traditionally the most social-revolutionary of South-East Asia. Finally, in no South-East Asian country did the social revolutionary wing of the nationalist movement have so many great leaders, tacticians and organizers at its disposal as in Vietnam: Nguyen Ai Quoc, Vo Nguyen Giap, Tran Van Giau, Pham Van Dong among the pro-Comintern communists and Ta Thu Thau and Nguyen Van Ninh among the adherents of the IVth International. During the second half of the 1930s, with the Popular Front government in office in Paris, there was some more liberty for the Vietnamese politicians, particularly in Cochin China, and the

P.C.I. as well as the Trotzkyists benefited most. They did not yet manage to capture the direction of nationalism, which was too fractured anyway, but they reinforced their position, and the fact that it was they, and not the middle-class leaders who took the greatest advantage of this brief period of colonial leniency, indicated a trend in the development of Vietnamese nationalism which did not augur well for the future prospects of bourgeois leadership.

Of the significant South-East Asian colonies Malaya was the only one lacking a genuine nationalist movement. The modernizing tendency of the intellectual elites of the three major ethnic groups was primarily focussed on its own community. Whatever nationalism there existed among the Chinese and Indians was related to political developments in China and British India. The Malays were loyal in the first place to their own regional state and its ruler, and any Malay nationalist sentiment was characterized by discontent over the position and interests of other races in Malaya, particularly the Chinese among them, rather than by concern over the well-being of the country as a whole or by opposition to the colonial power. Reformist trends in Malaya were therefore the expression of sectional or communal particularism rather than of Malayan nationalism. This pattern of ethnic loyalties and racial contrasts was not neutralized, moreover, by the one factor which, if sufficiently strong, could have accomplished the emergence of an all-embracing nationalist movement: that is, a hatred of colonialism. British rule never gave rise to such a dislike that it prompted the three racial communities to establish a united front.

The colonial administration had adapted itself to the feudal structure of Malay society and it made sure of the loyalty of those who were setting the tone in that society. At the same time its policy aimed at protecting as much as possible the position of the Malays. Afraid in the long run of being overwhelmed in their own country by the Chinese and Indians, but counting on the British attitude of preserving the Malay 'special position' as a means to protect them against such threat, the Malays regarded the colonial administration as the only power capable of securing their survival as a community, and this sufficed to prevent them from turning against the colonial regime. The fact that British rule provided the conditions and the opportunities for a large-scale economic development kept the Chinese, too, from disputing Britain's authority. They had their objections against what they experienced as discrimination, against the Malay 'special rights' and against the Malay claims that Malaya was a Malay country, but as long as they were allowed to work in the economic field without interference, they hardly showed any interest in Malaya's political development and they did not consider their complaints a sufficiently strong motive to oppose the colonial regime. Similar considerations conditioned the attitude of the Indians, who were, as a group, not important enough, numerically, to tip the scales. Democracy, popular representation and independence were hardly an issue in Malaya and if there happened to be

a few intellectuals mostly Eurasians, sometimes Chinese, who diffidently brought up these matters for discussion, they did not meet with any response from among either the population in general or the leading personalities in public life.

POLITICAL CHANGES IN SIAM

In Siam the process of modernization in the second half of the nineteenth century did not take place under the aegis of Western colonialism, although it happened under the pressure of the closer contacts with the West, but at the initiative of the monarchy. Starting under the reign of Mongkut (1851–1868) and intensified by Chulalongkorn (1868–1910), this policy of modernizing the administrative, financial, judicial and educational systems was one element of a wider strategy aiming at preserving Siam's independence by strengthening her ability to stand up successfully against any contingency that might arise out of the new developments in the neighbouring territories. Among other things, westernization and modernization contributed to the survival of Siam as an independent state, but for a native society which was incapable of keeping pace with the new developments, they produced fundamentally the same economic and social problems as in the Western colonies. In Siam, too, there emerged a new élite which demanded reforms and a greater degree of political authority and which, in the absence of a foreign ruler, directed its opposition against the absolute monarchy. The discontent among the Western-trained intelligentsia, the bureaucratic elite in the government and the younger army leaders increased during the years of the Trade Depression, and in 1932 a *coup d'état* took place and resulted in the establishment of a constitutional regime.

The elimination of royal absolutism was the sole object about which all those who had been advocating a change were in agreement. This, accompanied by a shift of political control from one faction of the ruling class to another, was in fact the only achievement of the revolution of 1932, in spite of the promulgation of a constitution and the creation of a parliament. The coup had been staged by a combination of young radical civilians, conservative civil servants and military officers, and as the support of the latter group had guaranteed the success of the undertaking, it was logical that the army would become the dominant force. Tradition and conservatism still being powerful trends it was equally logical that the Siamese governmental system did not deviate from the essentially conservative character of society. Parliamentary democracy was not introduced; the constitution provided for a National Assembly of which half the members were elected and the other half appointed by the leaders of the coup who had organized themselves in the so-called People's Party. This provision was announced as a transitional solution for a period of ten years, but due

to political developments it tended to be of a more permanent nature.

These developments pointed in a reactionary rather than a progressive direction. One of the major civilian protagonists of the revolution, Pridi Phanomyong, was also an advocate of a radical economic programme, but he met with the resistance of the conservatives associated with Prime Minister Manopakorn, who restricted the freedom of the press, refused to permit party organization, banned any bodies considered to be communist-influenced, dissolved parliament and forced Pridi out of the government and into exile. When, however, the conservatives and the royalists seemed to join forces in a move to weaken the power of the People's Party, the military wing of the new oligarchy, led by Phahon Phonphayuhasena, undertook another *coup d'état* in 1933 which put an end to Manopakorn's regime. While nominally facilitating the restoration of the constitutional system, neither this coup nor Phahon's cabinet brought about any fundamental change in the political and governmental set-up. Most of the previous government's measures were maintained and while the exile of Pridi was repealed his economic programme was officially rejected. The second coup only served to reinforce the position of the army leaders, and their power was further strengthened when they foiled an attempt at a royalist counter-revolution later in 1933.

In the military wing of the establishment Phahon was a moderate, trying to check the more extremist elements and to keep up the outward appearance of unity in the People's Party. In reality a struggle for power was going on between the civilian faction, under Pridi, and the military clique led by the extremist Phibun Songkhram. While steering a middle-of-the-road course Phahon lacked the power to prevent the differences of opinion from coming into the open, and this situation created public uneasiness, and, indirectly and unintentionally, the opportunity for the National Assembly to assume a more significant role. Handicapped by its non-representative character, by the tendency towards nepotism among the members and by the general indifference of the population, the Siamese parliament was a rather impotent institution, but due to the intrinsic weakness of the government it was capable of giving voice to much opposition. Towards the close of the 1930s, however, Phahon failed to keep the two contending factions in the ruling group in balance, and when his cabinet fell in 1938, it was hardly surprising in the face of the growing prestige of authoritarian governmental systems all over the world and of rising nationalist sentiments, anti-Western as well as anti-Chinese, in Siam itself, that he was succeeded by Phibun Songkhram. Phibun's accession to the post of prime minister marked the end of enlightened despotism and the beginning of Siam's evolution towards a military-led strongly authoritarian type of government, characterized by the oppression of all opposition, by vehement nationalism, by an aggressive policy of anti-Chinese discrimination and by delaying the application of the elective principle to the parliament as a whole for another ten years.

6 South-East Asia and Japan

JAPAN'S EXPANSION IN EAST ASIA

WHILE the ideals of Asian renaissance and socio-political emancipation were gradually gaining adherence in South-East Asia, it was a force from outside the region which put strong additional pressure on the old system in the 1930s and greatly contributed to the ultimate downfall of European domination: that is, the expansionist policy of Japan. As a result of both the vigorous warlike tradition among Japanese military circles and the economic requirements of the great industrial combines and the powerful capitalist class, a certain amount of aggressiveness had always characterized Japan's conduct, but this trend became particularly strong in the years of the Trade Depression. This economic disaster caused distress in the rural areas and, as the majority of enlisted men in the army was recruited from among the peasantry, dissatisfaction over their miserable conditions spread to the armed forces and supplied further motivation to the militarists who were pressing for an expansionist policy. But the crisis also struck directly at the roots of the huge empire of the great industrialists. While the industrialized countries in Europe as well as the United States were putting up tariff barriers to protect their own industries, it became increasingly difficult for Japan to find an outlet for her products; and in order to keep her industries going it was necessary to capture new markets. Japan also lacked raw materials, however, and although in general she had not much to complain about the willingness of other countries to supply her industries with the raw materials she needed, the drop in industrial exports caused a shortage of funds with which such imports of raw materials had to be financed. Diplomatic measures were no longer sufficient to secure economic concessions abroad.

Japanese foreign policy had to be reconsidered, and colonial expansion was embarked upon as a means of making Japan economically independent. China was the most obvious target, offering a potentially huge market for Japanese products and at the same time possessing the natural resources coveted by Japan. In 1931–2 Manchuria was occupied and became the vassal-state Manchukuo; during the following years North China and the provinces of Inner Mongolia were gradually subjected to increasing Japanese political and commercial penetration.

In carrying out her policy Japan was not seriously opposed by the great powers. In a period of economic catastrophe the outside world was too busily engaged with its own problems. The League of Nations ceremoniously frowned upon Japan's activities, but refrained from any action to preserve China's integrity. By occupying Manchuria and extending her influence over North China, Japan challenged the *status quo* in East Asia; and by withdrawing from the League of Nations in 1933 and denouncing the Five Powers' Treaty on naval limitation a year later she also defied the international order. In all these actions she only encountered protests which were ineffective. Neither Great Britain nor France, the dominant powers in the League, were willing to apply sanctions to Japan: actually they preferred Japanese expansion in China to the possible alternative of expansion in a southerly direction. The United States, not a member of the League, was interested in upholding the traditional principles of the 'open door' and the integrity of China, but the American government was not prepared to abandon her isolationist course which was adhered to by an overwhelming majority of the American people. Both the European powers and the United States continued to supply Japan with most of the materials she needed. Soviet Russia was going through the convulsions of Stalin's collectivization programme and although she disliked the building up of a Japanese stronghold just across her border, she did nothing to prevent it. In these years Japan's international position was indirectly strengthened by the emergence of the German Nazi regime which, by challenging the international order in Europe, added to the difficulties of the established powers and diverted attention away from Japan. It is true that after 1933 the United States government under Franklin Roosevelt showed greater concern over Japan's designs and attempted to steer a middle course between isolating herself from and actively participating in world politics, but in practice this did not amount to any essential change.

Japan's policy, dictated by the militarists who since the early 1930s had gradually strengthened their control over the civilian branches of the government, aimed at creating a sphere of influence in East Asia which was to be completely dominated, politically as well as economically, by Japan. Though the ultimate objective was consented to in general by the planners of Japanese imperialism, there was dissension over the methods

of achieving it. On the whole feelings in Japan tended to be rather anti-Western, since immediately after the First World War, the European powers and the United States had attempted to restrict Japanese influence in East Asia. Japanese susceptibilities had been hurt, too, by the ban on the immigration of Japanese nationals into the United States, while during the Trade Depression, the Western policy of raising their import barriers against Japanese products was also seen as a design to begrudge Japan her progress. A Japanese hegemony over East Asia would diminish the political influence and the economic privileges of the Western nations in that part of the world, and this would raise Japan's prestige in Asian eyes. The image of Japan as the liberator of Asia from Western colonial supremacy might, for one thing, be a suitable disguise for and a useful instrument in extending Japan's influence in a southern direction. Such a drive towards South-East Asia, with its many natural resources, greatly appealed to some Japanese political and military circles, and at the instance of the navy, in particular, a clause to that effect was incorporated in an outline of Japan's 'basic principles of national policy', as decided upon by the government in August 1936. This was not yet a positive and concrete plan, however, and if possible, it was not to be carried out by force, because other planners feared the consequences of a policy that would certainly line up the European colonial countries and the United States against Japan. With her inferior economic resources compared with those of the United States and the British Empire, Japan hoped that she would not have to fight these powers in her attempt to secure hegemony over East Asia. Instead a move was advocated against either the Soviet Union, as this would ensure Western neutrality, or China proper, in which case Western non-interference was likely to be guaranteed as long as Japan played the game shrewdly.

When internal developments in China pointed to the strengthening of popular nationalist resistance against Japanese penetration, Japan decided in favour of an attack on this country. Once again the international situation was auspicious. Great Britain and France had difficulties of their own in Europe, confronted as they were with a gradual breakdown of the *status quo*. Their conciliatory policy towards the aggressiveness of Nazi Germany and her Italian ally strengthened the conviction among the Japanese planners that their adventure in China would not provoke a stronger response from these quarters. In the United States the Neutrality Act of 1935 was an attempt to guarantee in advance that the Americans would not become involved in a conflict; this and public opinion prevented the American government from interfering in any way. Of all the nations interested in the region it was the Soviet Union that most staunchly opposed Japan, not in the cause of the defence of China but in that of Outer Mongolia; Russia concluded a defensive treaty with the latter early in 1936. As a means of defence against the Soviet Union the Japanese army pushed the government into signing the Anti-Comintern

Pact with Germany in November 1936. This was a loose association, yet a cunning move because by stressing the anti-communist motives and orientation of the two signatories, this treaty tended to weaken the willingness of the Western democracies to adopt a stronger line. In July 1937 Japan started its attack on China proper.

Concurrent action on the part of the great powers might have forced the Japanese to restrain themselves. But fear of a war in East Asia while Germany and Italy were making trouble in Europe, and the consideration that Japan, if brought to heel either by threats or by coercion, would cease to be an effective bulwark against communism, dissuaded the European nations and the United States from embarking upon such a course. The League of Nations condemned Japan for violating the Nine Powers' Treaty of 1922, the signatories of which had pledged to respect China's territorial integrity and political independence, but a conference of these powers in Brussels towards the close of 1937 failed to formulate a common policy; it only served to irritate the Japanese without giving any concrete help to China. The British government expressed her willingness to support any attempt at mediation, provided the United States would take part in this. In his 'Quarantine Speech' of October 1937 President Roosevelt had referred to an epidemic of world lawlessness which had to be checked, but hostile domestic reactions to these words forced the United States administration to soften its tone. It is true that the president did not apply the Neutrality Act, as this might discriminate against China, which needed American arms, while Japan did not; but it also meant that Japan continued to be provided with the raw materials she needed, particularly oil and scrap iron. As long as American public opinion held the view that the United States should not follow a policy that might lead to war and the British government undertook to satisfy the aggressive powers by offering concessions at the cost of third parties, Japan was allowed to continue.

The Japanese military planners might have rightly calculated the international repercussions, but they had made the serious mistake of underestimating the Chinese power of resistance. Materially China had little chance of success against the well-equipped armed forces of a modern industrialized nation which could depend on foreign imports of materials vital for her war purposes as well as on foreign markets for her exports essential to finance the necessary imports. But China's greatest asset was the vigour of her people once Chiang K'ai-shek's government made the decision to use it and to stop obstructing the national desire to resist the Japanese. After July 1937 Japan did not face weak, essentially pro-Japanese and wavering Chinese authorities, but the entire Chinese nation, stirred by an upsurge of nationalist fervour and a unanimous will to defend its independence. The war developed into a real people's war in which the Chinese masses showed an unyielding determination, great tenacity and resourcefulness and a willingness to bring tremendous sacrifices. This

unexpected opposition made the Japanese use barbaric means to break it, but such a policy only strengthened Chinese contempt for and hatred of the invaders and it stimulated their will to persevere. Chinese resistance could not, of course, prevent the superior Japanese armies from overrunning large territories, conquering the great towns and, by occupying the coastal areas, almost cutting off China from the outside world. Yet, in 1939 the war entered a phase of stalemate: great victories could no longer be won by the Japanese. Occasionally they met with reverses and they were constantly facing considerable problems of communications and supply, particularly since they were confronted with an intensifying guerrilla movement.

Facing the prospect of a long-drawn-out and exhausting war which offered hardly any promise of ultimate victory, the Japanese leaders did not ascribe the military deadlock to their own faulty calculations, but to the attitude of the outside world. Consequently an alternative course to the one of muddling on in China crept into their minds: to strike a daring blow at either the Soviet Union or the Western nations. In 1938 Russia's power of resistance was probed. Since the occupation of Manchuria and the provinces of Inner Mongolia the relations between Japan and Russia had steadily deteriorated, although initially both sides avoided serious clashes. In the summer of 1938, however, the Manchurian-Korean-Soviet border became the scene of open warfare and this was repeated the next year, on a far greater scale, in Outer Mongolia. The fighting raged from May until August 1939, an event that went unnoticed by the rest of the world but which had far-reaching consequences. In this 'forgotten war' Japanese troops were so badly mauled by the Russians and Mongolians that Japan had to give up her plans for expansion in a northerly direction. This, and the involvement of Britain and France in the European War shortly after, diverted Japan's attention to the south.

In spite of the appeasement policy of the Western nations, their behaviour was nevertheless regarded by Japan as not in accordance with rhe attitude she expected them to adopt. Besides occasionally showing disapproval of Japan's actions, these nations did not appear to accept the Japanese claim that China, and in a wider sense East Asia, belonged exclusively to Japan. Already in April 1934 a spokesman of the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo had declared, in what was to become known as Japan's Monroe Doctrine, that it was natural for Japan to act alone and on her own responsibility to keep the peace and preserve order in East Asia. It was added that any attempt on the part of China to avail herself of the influence of any other power to resist Japan would be as firmly opposed as any undertaking by such a foreign power to aid or advise China, even if this was done in the name of technical or financial assistance.

As long as Japanese expansion was confined to Manchuria and the northern provinces of China, there was little friction with the Western powers. But when the Japanese occupied Shanghai and began their

advance up the Yangtse valley difficulties arose. The European countries and the United States had sizeable interests in this area and there were also large concentrations of their nationals. With the fighting creating potential risks to their holdings and to the safety of their citizens, they began to regard the war in a less aloof manner. Yet this concern for their interests and their diplomatic actions to safeguard these, did not increase the Sino-Japanese War to the proportions of a conflict between the Western powers and Japan. This was accomplished only by the Japanese failure to bring about the surrender of China, for which the Western attitude was held responsible. By occasionally expressing opinions critical of Japan, by allowing the foreign settlements and concessions to function as places of asylum, by keeping in these settlements the funds and properties of the Chinese government which were essential for maintaining the exchange value of her currency and by supplying China with war material and other necessities, the European nations and the United States were, according to Japan, encouraging China to continue her resistance. For several months already Japan had made some moves directed against the Western position in China, mainly in the economic field, when she set out to control the established businesses in the conquered territories in order to incorporate them into the Japanese-Manchukuoan economic empire, but towards the end of 1938 Japan embarked more openly on an anti-Western course. The starting-point was the declaration by Prime Minister Prince Fumimaro Konoye, on 3 November, on the 'New Order in East Asia'. In this official wording of Japan's imperialist designs the liquidation of Western imperialism in China was mentioned as one of Japan's 'immutable' objectives.

The first direct strike at Western influence in China took place in the summer of 1939, when in Europe Great Britain and France were increasingly occupied with the crisis over Poland. A minor conflict over the right of asylum led to the Japanese blockade of the British concession in Tientsin in June. This attack had several objectives: to prevent the foreign concessions from interfering with the consolidation of Japan's economic and political control, to force Great Britain to give up the silver bullion backing Chinese currency, and to demonstrate to the Chinese that Western imperialism was a spent force. Britain could not afford to become embroiled in any serious difficulty in East Asia and during the ensuing negotiations she showed a conciliatory attitude. The British government actually recognized Japan's right to preserve law and order in China as well as the duty of the British, officials and non-officials alike, to refrain from any action that was bound to irritate the Japanese. Britain was saved from making any further concessions by the United States, whose commercial activities in China were being progressively affected by the Japanese attempts to destroy non-Japanese foreign business, and who retaliated on 26 July by announcing the abrogation of the American-Japanese Commercial Treaty of 1911. This was not an embargo of trade

between Japan and the United States; the actual termination of the treaty in January 1940 did not lead to any change in the conditions under which oil, minerals, ammunition and war materials were shipped to Japan. But the American move made the Japanese uncertain as to what might happen in the future and they hesitated to push matters to extremes.

Shortly after, on 22 August, the Non-Aggression Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union, which struck at a fundamental principle of Japanese foreign policy, was signed. It put an end to the efforts of those in the government and the armed forces who had been pressing for an alliance with Germany as a means of diplomatically embarrassing Britain and France. Japan was now forced to reconsider her stand, and when the war in Europe broke out in September she declared her neutrality. The dazzling victories of Germany in the summer of 1940 enabled her, however, to resume her policy of extending her influence at the expense of the Western powers. It was at this moment that South-East Asia became more openly a target of Japanese expansionism.

THE ECONOMIC PENETRATION OF JAPAN

In the previous decades South-East Asia had already been affected, of course, by the change in the *status quo* in East Asia, but the pressure emanating from this impact, inevitable in the light of Japan's ascendancy as a great power, was intensified by her economic penetration. To ensure the supply of raw materials she needed Japan could either use the channels of normal trade or take advantage of the opportunities to invest capital herself in mining industry or plantation agriculture. The other aspect of the Japanese offensive, particularly vigorous during the Trade Depression of the 1930s, aimed at conquering South-East Asia's markets. In order to achieve this, Japanese firms not only made use of existing import facilities provided by European merchant houses in the area, but they also set up their own importing and distributing agencies and introduced their own staff to bring every stage in the process under their own control.

Of these activities those aimed at Japan gaining easier access to South-East Asia's natural resources did not create much anxiety among Western interests. They did not directly challenge these interests, and the exports to Japan contributed to improve the balance of trade of the colonial territories. Great Britain and the Netherlands were following a liberal economic policy in their colonies; the United States was not, but as the Philippines were not of primary importance as a tropical producer or a field for capital investment the Americans hardly placed any limitation on the activities of foreign capital either. Consequently the Japanese had almost a free hand in the greater part of the region in this respect, although the Dutch at times showed reluctance to grant concessions to Japan, depending as they did on the goodwill of other powers. Only Indochina,

with her economy progressively orientated towards France and characterized by French monopolistic control, offered few prospects for such Japanese penetration.

Thus, either by trade or by investing capital and exploiting the resources themselves, the Japanese managed during the 1930s to obtain most of the chromium, manganese ore and copper and the entire production of iron ore from the Philippines, half the output of anthracite from Indochina and the total production of Malaya's iron ore deposits, the mining of which, closely associated with the demands of Japan's steel industry, was done by Japanese firms. Shipped to Japan, too, were the entire output of bauxite and manganese ore from Malaya and some rubber from Indochina. One-quarter of Japan's oil imports in 1935 was supplied by the Netherlands Indies and one-eighth came from British Borneo. The Japanese held, moreover, large concessions in lumber in the Philippines and some in Netherlands Borneo and New Guinea; they controlled native production of quinine in the Netherlands Indies and were prominent in the fishing industry in the Indies and the Philippines.

All these economic activities were accompanied by a steady immigration of Japanese nationals. In the Netherlands Indies, for example, there were around 7,000 Japanese in 1930; their number increased by more than a thousand annually in the next few years, while between 1936 and 1938 an average of close to 3,000 entered the Philippines annually. They came as employees of merchant houses, shipping companies or banks, from the level of manager down to that of shop assistant. A particular type of economic penetration *cum* immigration occurred in Mindanao, where by 1939 about 18,000 of them, i.e. 71 per cent of the total number of Japanese in the Philippines, had settled for the cultivation of Manila hemp. Here a Japanese immigrant community developed which, because neither the Americans nor the Filipinos were really interested, came to control half the agricultural land in Davao province.

But while neither the Japanese penetration into the productive sphere of South-East Asia's economy nor Japan's increasing share in the export trade of the colonies gave the colonial powers any cause for serious concern, Western interests were shocked to a high degree by the Japanese drive to capture South-East Asia's markets. A strong tendency in that direction was evident already in the economic development before the Trade Depression, when Japan quite successfully invaded the area with cheap cotton goods. In 1930, moreover, she started to import into South-East Asia superior qualities of textile at lower prices than the European manufacturers. But it was after the devaluation of the yen in December 1931 that this Japanese penetration, from a Western point of view, assumed alarming proportions. Textiles were not the only commodities in Japan's economic offensive: actually, South-East Asia was flooded with cheap Japanese goods of all categories in ever increasing quantities, resulting, for Indonesia, in a rise in Japanese imports from 11 per cent of the total

value of imports in 1929 to 31 per cent in 1933, while the Dutch imports during the same period fell from 18 to 12 per cent.

The Philippines and Indochina, strongly subordinated to the home countries by tariff regulations, were least affected by Japan's commercial expansion; Indonesia and Malaya felt its impact most. Of these two the Indies, unlike Malaya saddled with a non-devalued currency and consequently having less competitive power, was most strongly exposed to Japanese competition, but in both countries the situation posed a momentous threat to Western commercial enterprise. The European agencies in the import trade, who in 1930 refused to handle Japanese goods when the serious nature of the development dawned upon them, had first been circumvented by Chinese merchants, and after the devaluation of the yen their position was directly challenged by Japanese firms setting up their own organizations to control the import and distribution of their products. Japan's success in this field also threatened industrial interests in Great Britain and the Netherlands. In a wider context, moreover, it was feared that, in a world in which the Trade Depression had stimulated the trend towards economic nationalism and the tendency of carrying on trade on a bilateral basis, European and United States markets might retaliate against South-East Asian products when, due to the Japanese imports, South-East Asia would be purchasing fewer European and American articles.

The traditional *laissez-faire* system did not suffice any longer to protect Western enterprise. To check the Japanese penetration both the British and the Dutch governments availed themselves of the necessity, brought about by the Trade Depression as such, to overhaul their economic policy. In accordance with the system of imperial preference, agreed upon at the Conference of Ottawa in 1932, as well as with that of the textile quotas enforced two years later in the British colonies, the authorities imposed restrictions on trade with Malaya by applying quotas and duties which drove Japan from the textile market. In the Netherlands Indies too, a series of ordinances and decrees introduced restrictionist regulations between 1933 and 1935, mainly in the field of import trade, distribution and shipping and, as in Malaya, intended to protect European commercial houses, shipping firms and metropolitan industries against Japanese competition. Thus the Dutch succeeded in pushing Japan's share in the total value of the import trade from 31 per cent (1933) to 18 per cent in 1939 and in improving their own share from 12 to 21 per cent.

In its consequences the Japanese economic penetration indicated, for the first time in the history of South-East Asia, that Western companies were no longer the one fundamental factor in the region's modern economic development. Ironically this happened in precisely the two territories where European enterprise had been most successful, but where it had to be rescued now by government interference which, by abandoning free trade and introducing discrimination, was in direct contradiction to

the principles of British and Dutch economic policy. In the Netherlands Indies, moreover, the Japanese commercial agencies, by making use of Indonesian salesmen instead of leaving retail distribution to the Chinese, disproved the Western doctrine that natives were unfit for entering modern commerce.

But the Japanese economic offensive in the 1930s did not only threaten Western commercial enterprise, either directly by its competitive power or indirectly by striking at the theoretical foundations of Western economy. It also contributed to undermining Western political domination. The Japanese brought a wide range of cheap goods within the reach of a large number of Asian consumers and thus enabled the destitute masses to escape from at least one of the disastrous consequences of the economic crisis. What was unknown to these masses, however, was that Japan was capable of doing so by ruthlessly abusing her own unbelievably wretched proletariat; what they noticed instead was that only the Japanese provided them with the articles they needed at a price they could afford. In itself this created goodwill for Japan among the Asians, and when the European governments stepped in to check the imports from Japan, such a move did not endear the colonial powers to their poverty-stricken subjects. The Asian masses themselves might not have been aware of the motives behind colonial policy during the Trade Depression, but the nationalists did not fail to detect a selfish attitude of subordinating the interests of the Asian population to the interests of Western companies and metropolitan industries; in their eyes both the Japanese economic expansion and the European countermeasures added to Japan's prestige.

ASIAN NATIONALISM AND JAPAN

Ever since her rapid transformation into a modern industrialized and militarily strong state Japan enjoyed a substantial amount of prestige among South-East Asia's nationalists who admired her achievements and looked up to her for inspiration and, possibly, assistance in their struggle against the colonial system. From the early beginnings of Japan's rise as a great power the Japanese themselves made great efforts to enhance their reputation. They did so initially in a rather oblique way so as not to offend the European powers too openly, and on the whole Japan contented herself with posing as a model for other Asian nations, thus expecting to win the confidence of the political leaders and obtain in them an instrument to weaken Western domination. During the 1930s, however, with the Trade Depression pushing Japan in the direction of an expansionist policy, the Japanese stepped up their efforts to influence the Asian peoples in the subject territories, and they did so in a less concealed way than before. This was the result of the realization that Japan, in order to carry out her policy successfully, might one day be compelled to secure by force

the raw materials she needed. In such an event it would be highly important that the South-East Asian masses and their political leaders should be amicably disposed towards her. The fact that, since the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, the Western powers did not undertake any action against Japan's expansion in China, convinced the Japanese of European and American unpreparedness to fight, if not their actual weakness. Her economic penetration may have been dictated primarily by economic necessity, but there were political motives behind it as well. At the same time Japanese propaganda, of a more anti-Western nature, became more pronounced throughout the area.

In nationalist circles in South-East Asia, however, doubts as to the orientation of Japan's policies were intermingled with these sentiments of sympathy. First, there were political leaders who cherished democratic or socialist ideas and who realized that Japan hardly qualified as a model in this respect. To other nationalists Japan was the strong Asian power that, whatever her social structure or type of government, could assist them in getting rid of Western domination. But among them, too, some suspicion was growing, particularly in the second half of the 1930s, that Japanese imperialism might in the end prove to be as detrimental to the cause of Asian freedom in the future as Western imperialism had been in the past. The war in China and the bestialities committed there in her name also seriously beclouded Japan's image as the 'Light of Asia'. It was only a minority of South-East Asian politicinas, however, who were influenced in an anti-Japanese direction by ideological considerations. For most of them, who had grown up in the atmosphere of Asia's submission to Western colonialism, the spectacle of Japan assaulting European and American interests, of humiliating British citizens in China with impunity, and of successfully invading Western economic strongholds in South-East Asia itself, strengthened their Asian self-confidence. Yet in spite of these feelings of sympathy and of Asian solidarity, mistrust as to her ultimate intentions and disgust at Japanese atrocities in China induced many nationalists to adopt a cautious attitude.

Whatever doubts with regard to Japan existed in South-East Asian political circles, they were not taken advantage of by most of the Western powers, particularly by the European colonial powers. This was partly due to the fact that the colonial authorities were customarily out of touch with the currents of Asian public opinion and hardly capable of positively evaluating Asian sentiments. For one thing, the leftist and democratic ideals which determined the feelings of the fundamentally anti-Japanese orientated politicians were not the ideals of the colonial administrators. Similarly, concern for China, which was responsible for the anti-Japanese activities of South-East Asia's Chinese and for much hesitation among the nationalists, did not in any way affect the policy of the Western powers. Those nationalists, finally, who in their hearts sympathized with Japan or who were ideologically not essentially opposed to her, but who feared that

Japanese imperialism might in the end be dangerous and who, therefore, advocated a closer co-operation between the colonial government and the nationalist movement for the purpose of a common defence, saw their attitude regarded as just another move of the nationalist opposition and their proposals were ignored.

The other factor responsible for the negative reaction of the colonial governments to Asian opinion critical of Japan was the international situation. While trouble was brewing in Europe, the leading European powers were not prepared to run the risk of becoming involved in a conflict with Japan, and this cautiousness was reflected by the attitude of the colonial authorities in the region. Japan was, moreover, not considered an immediate danger to South-East Asia. It was true that she had embarked upon a policy of conquest in China, in which Western interests had been attacked, but even without Japanese interference Western influence and privileges there would have been declining anyway in the face of China's revolution. Moreover, the ruling circles in Japan were regarded as too sensible to launch an all-out offensive against the Western colonial empires in South-East Asia. There were some misgivings regarding Japan's economic penetration into the region and the influx of so many Japanese nationals who might carry on propaganda among the natives and even act as spies, but in general Japan was treated as a friendly nation. This meant that, apart from introducing legislation to check Japanese competition and, in some cases, Japanese immigration, the authorities did not take up a policy of adequately preparing themselves for all contingencies. With the exception of the United States none of the colonial powers considered mobilizing the peoples under their control. Instead they tended to look askance at almost every anti-Japanese gesture of the nationalist politicians, because they regarded this as a symptom of the same unwelcome mentality which was held responsible for the nationalists' anti-colonial attitude. Consequently, they were bound to discourage and suppress all activities against Japan within their territories as much as possible. Such policy gave the nationalist political leaders the impression that the colonial rulers were not very eager to secure the assistance of South-East Asia's peoples in any emergency situation. Except in the Philippines where the United States administration followed a different course, this conviction added to the general dislike of colonial rule, and it determined the indifferent, wait-and-see attitude at the very moment when the colonial authorities needed popular support more than ever. That moment was now rapidly approaching.

Part II

The Japanese Conquest

The Japanese Congress

Part II

1 The Surrender of French Indochina

JAPAN'S NEW POLICY

In the summer of 1940 Japan's foreign policy underwent a reorientation. Immediately after the outbreak of the European war Japan had adopted a waiting attitude, but the downfall of France and the seemingly imminent collapse of Great Britain helped to strengthen the conviction in Tokyo that closer contacts with the Axis powers might improve her position. There was some hesitation in naval circles and in the cabinet, based on the fear that such an alliance, unmistakably directed against Britain, might strain relations with the United States, but the army leaders were not as impressed by American naval strength as were the admirals, and against the argument that Japan depended on the United States for obtaining vital war materials they set their opinion that she was entitled to acquire control over other sources of supply. On 17 July Prince Konoye formed a new cabinet with Yosuke Matsuoka, a strong advocate of the anti-Allied orientation, as foreign minister. This was the cabinet which, on 27 September 1940, joined the Axis by concluding the Berlin Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy.

As far as South-East Asia was concerned, it was under this cabinet, too, that Japan's designs assumed a more definite form. These plans confirmed the interest in South-East Asia which, at official as well as non-official levels, Japanese political and military circles had been displaying in the past. In a broadcast on 29 June 1940 the foreign minister in the previous administration, Hachiro Arita, included the 'Regions of the South Seas' in the group of territories which, according to him, were geographically, historically, racially and economically very closely related. He proposed to unite all these territories into a single bloc, in which Japan had to

shoulder the responsibilities for securing the 'co-existence and co-prosperity' of the peoples concerned as well as the stability of the sphere as a whole. The Konoye government took up this suggestion and set out to carry it into effect. Japan was pushed into this direction by the premonition that the United States might one day prohibit the export of raw materials, and this would make it urgent for her to secure South-East Asia's natural resources before such an event occurred.

On 26 and 27 July the Liaison Conference met, a gathering of the heads of the armed forces and the civilian government which in the set-up of decision-making institutions tended to overshadow the cabinet in importance. It decided, among other things, 'to solve the problem of the South within such scope as would not lead to a war with other powers'. The immediate problems of the South were related to Japan's position in Indochina and the Netherlands Indies, and in this respect it was agreed that strong pressure had to be exercised on the French and the Dutch. The eventual aim of Japan's penetration into this region was outlined in a policy statement of 4 September 1940. A 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere' was to be established, a self-sustaining regional bloc consisting of Japan, Manchukuo and China forming the industrial nucleus, and the Philippines, Siam, Malaya, the Netherlands Indies, Indochina, British Borneo, Burma — and, possibly, British India — as the agricultural and raw material producing outer territories. Because of Japan's pressing economic needs the possibility of using violence in the pursuance of this project was not ruled out: if the development of the international situation would permit no further delay, from a Japanese point of view, Japan might resort to armed force, irrespective of whether or not her preparations for meeting such a contingency were complete.

For the time being, however, she hoped to attain her ends by peaceful means, either by posing as a protector (to Indochina), as a seeker of fair economic opportunities (to the Netherlands Indies), as the exponent of justice and the advocate of Asian self-determination (to Siam), or, failing these guises, by a display of bad temper and the adoption of a threatening attitude. The first Japanese penetration into South-East Asia was achieved along these lines: it was also a by-product of the war in China and the outcome of a favourable opportunity offering itself at a propitious moment. But in its after-effects this move amounted to carrying out the initial phase of the ambitious scheme for a 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere'.

THE PENETRATION INTO TONKIN

French Indochina was the first European colony to be drawn into the Japanese sphere of influence. This was the result of its geographical position, close to the theatre of war in China. There was also the fact that

the Yunnan railway, one of the few overland routes along which the Chinese government could be supplied with war material, ran through Tonkin. Soon after the outbreak of the war Japan started to apply pressure to the French, hoping to persuade them to put an end to these transports. By considering the war a mere 'incident' Japan could not possibly claim the rights of a belligerent nation under international law, and in a resolution of 6 October 1937 the League of Nations expressed the pious wish that no member-nation embark upon any action which might weaken China's power of resistance. The French government nevertheless prohibited the transportation of arms and ammunition to China as far as these had been ordered after the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war. For the moment this was the only concession France was prepared to make: in the face of strong insistence she refused to give in to the Japanese demand to stop the shipments of oil and trucks along the railway.

In spite of France's partial compliance, the Japanese were highly irritated by the French unwiliingness to oblige them on all points. From this moment onwards Japan set out to strengthen her military and strategic position *vis-à-vis* Britain and France so as to enable it to put stronger pressure on both powers. The occupation of Canton, in October 1938, served that purpose as did the surprise attack on Hainan in February 1939. Put into use as an air and naval base, Hainan undermined the Western military position in the area by posing a potential threat to British communications between Singapore and Hongkong as well as to all shipping to Haiphong. After the landing of troops at Pakhoi and an offensive in South China the Japanese pushed through to Nanning, which fell into their hands in November: as a result they were able to cut off at least one road leading from Tonkin into China. The Yunnan railway, however, remained outside the reach of their ground forces so that Japan had to look for other means to stop supplies going into China via this route.

These means, simultaneously applied, were of a diplomatic and a violent nature. Towards the close of 1939 negotiations between France and Japan took place in Tokyo. In the course of these talks Foreign Minister Kichisaburo Nomura admitted that France was not under any obligation to interrupt traffic with China, since no formal state of war between China and Japan existed. Nevertheless he would like France to acknowledge that fighting on a grand scale was going on and that an end had to be put to the transportation of materials which enabled the Chinese government to persist in her resistance. When these negotiations did not lead to results satisfactory to Japan, in January 1940 the Japanese started to bomb the railway on Chinese territory. In spite of this threatening attitude France refused to yield. During a heated conversation in Hanoi between the special delegate to Indochina, General Yuitsu Tsuchihashi, and the French Governor-General Georges Catroux, it was pointed out to the Japanese that France had discontinued the transports of war material and that the demand to stop all traffic on the Yunnan railway was unjustified.

But for the Japanese the supply routes to China were an urgent problem as long as they ascribed to them their failure to overcome Chinese resistance. The opportunity to put stronger pressure on the French came in June 1940 when France herself was overrun by the German armies.

Not only was Indochina the first European colony to be controlled by Japan, it was also the only one the Japanese did not have to conquer by force. Facing mounting diplomatic pressure at the moment when the French Third Republic was sliding towards a humiliating military defeat and political collapse, the French authorities ruled out the possibility of successfully resisting the Japanese. In this context they pointed to the economic structure of the colony and the inadequacy of its military potential. Indochina was economically entirely dependent on the outside world; and the French armed forces, primarily intended for suppressing internal disturbances and native rebellions, were not ready to defend the territory against any attack. The French could not, moreover, count on support from their potential allies. Britain, facing on her own Nazi Germany's military power in Europe, could do nothing and the United States, although wishing to preserve the *status quo* in South-East Asia, was not prepared to run the risk of becoming involved in a conflict with Japan.

Japanese pressure on Indochina started a few days after the new French cabinet of Marshall Philippe Pétain asked the Germans for an armistice. While Japanese troops entrenched themselves at the Tonkinese border opposite Lang Son, the government in Tokyo presented an ultimatum to Hanoi in which she demanded that the Indochinese authorities prevent supplies from reaching China and that Japanese supervisors be given the right to inspect transit traffic along the Yunnan railway. On 20 June Catroux gave in, at the same time emphasizing, however, that the matter had to be definitely laid down in a formal agreement. He did so in order to gain time, and he immediately started to investigate what support the outside world might be giving Indochina in case it chose to resist the Japanese. Within ten days he received negative replies from the United States, the authorities in Singapore and the British government.

On France herself Indochina could not count any more. The government reproached the governor-general with allowing Japanese inspection teams on Indochinese soil instead of suggesting that they discharge their supervisory duties in China, and Paris continued to cling to this absurd view even after Catroux replied that the Japanese might have considered such a suggestion a bad joke, since their troops in China had not reached the Yunnan railway for hundreds of miles. At the back of this unreal difference of opinion loomed, however, the question of Indochina's loyalty *vis-à-vis* a French government which by signing the armistice had broken away from the British-French war-alliance. Catroux made it no secret that he advocated a continuation of the war by the French colonial empire and that, in anticipation of such a contingency, he did not want

Indochina to be bound by the armistice. But he did not succeed: the major French colonies sided with the government of Pétain, and thus indirectly with Germany, and when Catroux asked for complete freedom of action the French Council of Ministers appointed a new governor-general.

Shortly after, it became clear that both the French government, which moved to Vichy on 1 July, and Indochina were to be confronted with more excessive Japanese wishes. On 10 July General Issaku Nishihara, head of the Japanese delegation which was conducting negotiations in Hanoi over the definite agreement Catroux had been referring to, demanded that the Japanese be granted free passage through Tonkin for their troops and free use of some airfields for their air force. It was no longer Japan's sole aim to prohibit transit traffic which might aid China's war efforts, but also to open a new front against China and to build up a base which would bring the Burma road, the only remaining supply route from the Western world to Chiang K'ai-shek, within the reach of Japanese bombing planes. Catroux avoided making a decision himself; instead he emphasized that this new demand touched on a problem that would have to be arranged, at higher level, by the two governments. Before the matter came up for discussion again, he handed over his functions to his successor, Admiral Jean Decoux, on 20 July, after which he left the country and went to London to join General De Gaulle who had summoned the French to continue the war on the side of Great Britain.

While Catroux made his choice between Pétain and De Gaulle this way, Decoux made a different one. Afraid that Indochina might be isolated from the rest of the French Empire if it should side with the Free French movement, and pushed by the direct threat of a Japanese action, he and the colonial administration in Indochina with him opted for the Vichy regime. This choice was neither exclusively based on the arguments of economic and military impotence such as the French advanced as an explanation and, at a later stage, as an excuse for their attitude, nor on considerations of legality and continuity. An important factor which induced Indochina to turn against the Allied powers fighting under the banner of democracy was the anti-democratic disposition of the majority of the French colonial community. It did not directly opt for Japan, although in fact the compliance of the French authorities with Tokyo's demands amounted to just that. Indochina did opt, however, for an authoritarian political system, officially inaugurated in France on 10 July, as opposed to parliamentary democracy which, in spite of its generally accommodating attitude towards colonial interests, at times used to spring an unpleasant surprise on them in the past. Linked with Vichy which gave expression to the authoritarian counter-revolution in the home country, French colonial circles did not have to be afraid any longer of progressive experiments, however unreal and temporary in nature these had been in previous decades. Furthermore there was the consideration that Indochina, with its natural wealth, might play an important part in financing France's

recovery after the war, and because of this the French were not prepared, and certainly not for the sake of China, to expose the colony to a Japanese military conquest which might not only cause tremendous damage to the economy but which, by its impact on the native population, might also seriously endanger French domination.

Meanwhile the question of Japan's position in Indochina reached the level of discussions between Tokyo and the Vichy government. On 2 August Foreign Minister Matsuoka delivered a note to the French ambassador in Japan, in which the same demands were posed as Nishihara had submitted to Catroux three weeks earlier. The government in Vichy initially rejected these, but after it obtained the guarantee that Japan did not harbour any territorial ambitions, she expressed her willingness, on 13 August, to negotiate. Admiral Decoux, afraid that an admission of Japanese troops would preclude him from opposing any possible further Japanese demands in the future, advised the French government not to give in, but once having made his choice for Vichy he could not but follow suit when the ministers decided otherwise and granted concessions to the Japanese which were far greater than those for which Catroux had been reproached. It is true that Vichy contacted the United States, but the American government did not want to get into trouble with Japan over a territory which, in principle, had already joined the anti-Allied camp.

In the Franco-Japanese Treaty of 30 August 1940 Japan recognized French sovereignty over as well as the territorial integrity of Indochina in exchange for the recognition by France of Japan's special position in the Far East. In addition France expressed her willingness to grant military concessions to Japanese troops in Tonkin, the details of which had to be elaborated by the French authorities and Japanese delegates in Indochina. As soon as the news of this treaty broke in Hanoi, French circles discussed the question whether or not they should oppose the Japanese penetration. It did not come to any resistance, but the negotiations over military affairs which began on 3 September took place in a very uneasy atmosphere. The French were inclined to save at least some trace of their honour and hoping that the attitude of the American government would change, they behaved as obstinately as possible. After about two weeks the conversations, already suspended once before in connexion with a border incident, seemed to fail. On 20 September Japanese citizens ostentatiously left Indochina and the next day Japanese naval authorities arranged for a demonstration in the Gulf of Tonkin. In this atmosphere of mounting tension a military agreement was arrived at on the 22nd. Shrinking back from the consequences of an armed conflict with Japan and equally recoiling from disobedience towards Vichy the colonial administration yielded to Japanese pressure. In this agreement the Japanese air force was allowed to make use of the airfields of Gia Lam, Phu Lang Tuong, and Lao Kay, while the port of Haiphong was put at the disposal of Japan's navy. The Japanese army was given the right to

station 6,000 troops in Tonkin, east of the Red River. Haiphong was to be the port of disembarkation for Japanese armed forces passing through Tonkin to the Chinese border, but the number of their troops present in Indochina at any given moment should not exceed 25,000. Finally, a Japanese division in Kwangsi was permitted to march from Lang Son to Haiphong, where it would embark for repatriation.

Although the talks were conducted in an awkward manner and the Japanese had had to abandon their initial demand that an unlimited number of troops be stationed in Tonkin and allowed to pass through it, they were greatly astonished by their own success. Not able to fathom the degree of defeatism which had taken hold of France in 1940, they had not expected the French government and the authorities in Indochina to go down on their knees so quickly, and it made them suspicious when it happened. Afraid of a French ambush they did not disembark the first batch of their troops, on 25 September, at the quay of Haiphong as had been agreed. Instead they carried out a full-scale landing operation near the town, and only after it had become evident that there was no sign of any French defensive action and even less of a trap, their minds were set at ease. The other Japanese violation of the agreement took place in the Lang Son area, but this incident was caused by the impatient and arrogant behaviour of the Japanese division which was anxious to withdraw from China into Tonkin. On 22 September the Japanese attacked Lang Son and a few other frontier towns, and when the French put up resistance a bloody fight ensued which lasted for several days until Lang Son was stormed and the defenders were made prisoner. After the 'misunderstandings' out of which both incidents emerged had been cleared up, Japan's peaceful penetration into Tonkin started at the end of September 1940.

THE VIETNAMESE REBELLIONS

The swiftness with which Japan forced Indochina to accept her demands demonstrated that the French were no match for the Japanese, and this realization deeply undermined the prestige of the colonial regime in the eyes of the Indochinese peoples and their political leaders. French rule had always been hated, but when the nationalists noticed that the colonial administration gave in to Japan and placed a part of their country, officially termed a 'protectorate', at the disposal of a foreign power, it made them further despise the French, in addition to their already hostile feelings. The French surrender to Japan also convinced them of the basic weakness of French rule and it induced them to make fresh attempts at armed rebellion. Here they made a serious error of judgement which cost them dearly: the colonial government might not have been able to resist the Japanese but her capacity to tyrannize the Vietnamese had not in any way diminished.

After the Popular Front episode, the political pendulum of the Third Republic had made its customary swing back to the right in the late 1930s. The situation in Indochina was, of course, affected by this, particularly in Cochin China which as a colony under direct rule was immediately exposed to any change in the political orientation of the French government. In Cochin China, more than in Annam or Tonkin, Vietnamese political organizations and quasi-political groups, like the religious Cao Dai sect, had benefited from the slightly progressive attitude the Popular Front government had been displaying in 1936 and 1937. New forces had emerged, like Nguyen Van Thinh's Democrat Party and Huynh Phu So's Hoa Hao sect. Other forces had increased their activities and strengthened their positions. Prominent among these was the Trotskyist Party of Ta Thu Thau, which after abandoning a short-lived alliance with the communists managed to extend its influence and to obtain a predominant place in the left-wing movement. The Indochinese Communist Party was also successful in gaining strength, both in Cochin China where it was allowed to work in the open, and in Annam and Tonkin where it was not.

But already in 1938 the first signs of a change in the French attitude were perceptible and the traditional policy of colonial oppression was fully restored in September 1939. This was partly due to the outbreak of the European War, to which France committed herself quite hesitatingly but which, nonetheless, provided her with the justification to crack down upon those of the left-wing who declared themselves against it. The first victims were the Trotskyists who had consistently favoured an anti-French rather than an anti-fascist policy, and in a wave of arrests their organization was completely crippled. For some years the communists had been advocating assistance for France against the aggressive powers, including Japan, but after the signing of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact the French Communist Party changed its course into one of refusing to support what it considered to be an imperialist war. At the same time the Indochinese communists, too, were also subjected to persecution by the authorities, although it was open to doubt whether the P.C.I., whose leaders were independent, would have followed the French party line. But the renewal of colonial oppression was also the logical outcome of France's political swing towards the right, which initiated a development that was eventually crowned by the establishment of the Vichy regime. Late in 1939 many communists were arrested, but their organization, unlike that of the Trotskyists, was not destroyed, because the moment they noticed the first indication of the approaching change in French policy in 1938, they had started to build up an underground network of cells which remained intact, in Cochin China as well as in Tonkin. So, while many communists were sent to jail, many others escaped arrest.

When in 1940 the French were humiliated by the Japanese and, at about the same time, the Thai government took the initiative to press for the retrocession of Indochinese territory, the moment seemed auspicious for

launching an attack on the colonial regime. The first uprising took place in North-East Tonkin. It was initiated by the conservative and pro-Japanese Phuc Quoc, which hoped for Japanese assistance in the fight against French colonialism. Gradually, however, the revolt widened into a rebellious movement of a more variegated nature when some other nationalist groups, and a few individual militant communists like Tran Trung Lap joined the rebels, when the Tho auxiliary troops deserted from the French armed forces and the hill peoples gave wide support. Starting as a guerrilla uprising, late in September, the rebellion spread rapidly over the mountainous areas of the Cao Bang and Lang Son provinces, developing into a full-scale insurrection in October and November 1940. In order not to jeopardize the prospects of peaceful co-operation with the French authorities the Japanese did not support the rebellion, but instead collaborated with the colonial regime in suppressing the movement. In spite of extensive military operations in which the Foreign Legion and the French air force were taking an active part, it took the French several weeks to stamp out all resistance. A policy of severe repression followed, with Tran Trung Lap among the many who were put to death. A revolt of Vietnamese police troops, the Indigenous Guard, in Nghe An province in North Annam, was supported by the impoverished peasant population, but it was also put down in January 1941.

The most dangerous challenge to the colonial regime, however, was the rebellion in Cochin China which was led by the local section of the Communist Party. After the communists had been hounded into hiding or prison by the police, the party's top leaders met in a Conference, 6–9 November 1939, to outline their course for the future. As co-operation with the French was no longer feasible under the circumstances, they decided to bury the so-called Indochinese Democratic Front which had been set up for this purpose some years previously, and to promote instead an anti-imperialist united front as an instrument of achieving independence. It was French repressive policy rather than any compliance with Comintern directives which induced the P.C.I. to change its attitude from offering to collaborate with France into one of fighting French colonialism. As the communists wanted to make the proposed united front as broad as possible they subordinated their revolutionary doctrines to the primary aim of national freedom; thus the slogan to seize the land of the great landlords and divide it among the peasants was replaced by one advocating the confiscation of the land of the imperialists and of Vietnamese traitors. As its ultimate end the P.C.I. favoured the establishment of an independent, democratic and federative Indochinese republic; its immediate aim was to build up a strong organization in the countryside, to mobilize popular support and prepare the masses for the approaching struggle.

As to the timing of the fight against colonialism a difference of opinion occurred between the Cochin-Chinese section of the party and the members of the Central Committee. After the French government resumed its

repressive policy, some of the communists who had managed to escape arrest had gone to China where, in Kunming in May 1940, they met the legendary leader Nguyen Ai Quoc, whose death in a Hongkong prison had been announced as far back as 1933, but who had been studying in the Soviet Union instead. Since 1938 he worked in South China, collaborating with the Chinese authorities against the common enemy, Japan. In outlining the immediate strategy of the Vietnamese independence movement, he advocated cautiousness. The Cochin-Chinese communists were not as prudent, however. While working among the poverty-stricken peasantry, they noticed that there was great dissatisfaction over the bad economic situation, which was aggravated by a failure of the crops. With a view to the general feelings of discontent prevailing in the rural areas, the Cochin-Chinese communists hoped to muster sufficient mass support so as to make any attempt at rebellion a success, particularly at that time when the colonial regime was morally weakened. When the resentment of the peasant masses found an outlet in an armed uprising, the local communists immediately participated in it, providing it with a purpose: a social revolution, with an organization: their underground network, and with leadership: their own.

On 24 September 1940 the revolt started as a guerrilla movement and the agitation of the communists as well as the widespread discontent of the rural population contributed to its development into a full-scale peasant rebellion. It was in fact a genuine agrarian revolution, which swept over Cochin China from the Plain of Junks near the Cambodian border down into the Mekong delta, extending from Rach Gia and Bac Lieu to Can Tho and My Tho, and to Gia Dinh near Saigon. The uprising reached its zenith on 22 November when the town of My Tho was temporarily occupied. Initially the French authorities were completely surprised by the intensity and force of the rebellious movement, but, having recovered from the first shock they sent troop reinforcements at once. This was a challenge which, unlike the one presented by the Japanese, they could handle, and they did so with unrestrained savagery. The suppression of the Cochin-Chinese rebellion by the Decoux regime surpassed in barbarism and cruelty all previous repressive actions undertaken so far by French colonialism in Indochina, or any other colonialism in South-East Asia for that matter. The Plain of Junks, the main centre of the insurrection, was cut off from the outside world; the air force bombed towns and strafed villages and the military operations were hardly more than mere campaigns of indiscriminate killing, in which some 6,000 Vietnamese were mercilessly done to death. In two weeks time the uprising was crushed, thousands of people were arrested and for months afterwards French courts-martial were meting out long terms of penal servitude or death sentences. For the Cochin-Chinese section of the Communist Party it was a terrible disaster; while Tran Van Giau managed to hide, most of the leaders were killed and

the underground organization which the party had been building up so laboriously was completely destroyed.

THE THAI-FRENCH WAR

The weakness of the French colonial regime was also, and more successfully, taken advantage of by Thailand. The government of Phibun Songkhram, dominated by the military element, adopted a vigorous nationalist course in the pursuance of which it tended to look to Japan for possible backing. It was not inclined, however, to link the fortunes of Thailand to those of Japan, or to enter the Japanese sphere of influence; it remained Thailand's policy to preserve peaceful relations with all the great powers in the area. But Phibun Songkhram's leanings towards Japan nevertheless gave an impression of ambiguity which induced the French delegation at a British-French military conference in Singapore in mid-1939 to advocate the necessity that both Western powers conclude Non-Aggression Treaties with Thailand. The Thai government was willing to take up the suggestion but, faithful to her traditional policy, she also negotiated a similar agreement with Japan. On 12 June 1940 Non-Aggression Pacts with Great Britain and France were signed in Bangkok. The same day a treaty with Japan was concluded in Tokyo, this one slightly different from the two others in that it contained a clause providing for an exchange of information and for mutual consultation on matters of common interest.

The Anglo-Thai treaty was ratified on 31 August; the treaty with France was not. The collapse of France in Europe and the Japanese demands to Indochina provided the Thai authorities with a heaven-sent opportunity to apply pressure on the French to force them to accept a boundary rectification. Early in September 1940 a Thai goodwill mission, on its way to Tokyo, made a stop-over in Hanoi; its leader proposed a military alliance between Indochina and Thailand in order to face jointly the Japanese menace on the condition, however, that the French cede the Laotian territories west of the Mekong. It was stated in addition that, if Japanese troops were allowed to be stationed in Tonkin, an entirely new situation would develop which might force the Thai government to reconsider her stand completely. When Decoux stalled, the government in Bangkok directly approached the Vichy regime, on 13 September, demanding the retrocession to Thailand not only of the Laotian territories in question but also of the Cambodian provinces of Battambang, Sisophon and Siemreap.

Phibun Songkhram went even further than that; after the French government rejected the demands for the restoration to Thailand of the areas taken from her in 1904 and 1907, he claimed all of Laos and Cambodia if France, in the face of future Japanese pressure, should ever renounce her sovereignty over Indochina. At about the same time anti-

French measures were taken, and French missionaries in Thailand were forced to leave the country. On 14 October the French reacted. Decoux announced that Vichy wished to ratify the treaty of 12 June as soon as possible, and the French government itself, while again rejecting the Thai demands, declared its willingness to co-operate with Thailand in solving some minor problems of the frontier. But such a belated concession was no longer sufficient to satisfy Thailand, and both the press and the radio in Bangkok became more aggressive in stressing Thai historic rights on the provinces in question. Tension between the two countries was gradually building up, with sporadic hostilities in the border regions, and in December the situation deteriorated rapidly. When Thai artillery and the air-force, on the 8th, started to attack ships on the Mekong and shell Laotian towns like Vientiane, Thakhek and Savannakhet, the French retaliated by bombing towns in Thailand, first more or less close to the frontier, but later also in the interior, even as far as Korat. By the end of the year a virtual state of war existed between the two countries.

On 7 January 1941 Decoux convened the *Conseil de Gouvernement* for a special session in which he referred to the determination of Indochina to stand up against the unjustifiable territorial claims of Thailand and to resist Thai aggression. But precisely at that moment the fighting came to a climax, this time in Cambodia and Southern Laos, and with ground-troops involved. The French armed forces were anything but ready to withstand the Thai troops when these invaded Indochina. Near Paksé the French frontier guards had to be withdrawn. Further to the south a strong Thai force concentrated along the Cambodian border, crossed the Dangrek mountains and entrenched itself in the Poipet sector, threatening to cut French communications in Sisophon province. On 16 January French troops made preparations to repel the invading Thai, but these, well informed by the local population about the French designs, attacked half an hour earlier. In the ensuing battle of Yan Dang Khum the Thai had the advantage of tanks and air support and the French were driven back to Sisophon. At sea, however, France was more successful: on 17 January her naval forces launched a surprise attack on a Thai squadron near Koh Chang Island in the Gulf of Siam and in a few hours they gained a swift victory in which they crippled slightly less than half the Thai navy. Some days afterwards the fighting was put an end to by Japanese interference.

Contrary to what the French, and the West in general, believed at the time, Japan had neither encouraged the Thai to make their demands on Indochina, nor backed them in their military activities. Actually the Japanese were rather embarrassed by Thailand's behaviour, as it threatened to spoil Japan's plans regarding Indochina. She wanted to exploit the French colony's economic resources and make use of its strategic position in co-operation with the French. But the prospects of keeping Indochina a going concern were seriously jeopardized, not only by the actual fighting but also by the impression that Thailand acted at Tokyo's prodding, an

idea which might adversely affect the attitude of the French towards Japan. On the other hand the Japanese could not afford to oppose the Thai too openly, as this might prejudice Phibun Songkhram against them, for Japan also planned to bring Thailand into the Greater East Asia Sphere. Thus caught in a conflict between two parties whose co-operation Japan was anxious to secure, the government in Tokyo initially adopted a neutral posture. But on 5 November 1940, after it had become evident that the French were definitely not going to resist Japan, the Japanese cabinet decided to give stronger support to Thailand, provided the government in Bangkok agreed to co-operate with Japan in establishing Greater East Asia; on second thoughts this offer of assisting Thailand was also made conditional on a Thai undertaking to confine her territorial demands to Laos only (21 November). On this basis Foreign Minister Matsuoka made the French government the offer of Japan's arbitration in her dispute with Thailand. In its reply on the 29th Vichy pretended to appreciate Japan's good intentions, but it refused to make any territorial concessions.

For the time being Japan did not press the matter, but in January 1941 she was forced to act. This was partly because of the deteriorating situation, but also of Great Britain's policy. British cruisers had stopped a French troop-ship sending reinforcements to Indochina, and the British ambassador in Bangkok offered his mediation in the conflict, most probably at the cost of the French who were lost for the Allied cause anyway. As these moves were evidently aiming at strengthening British influence in Thailand and, accordingly, at weakening the influence of Japan, it was necessary for the Japanese to step in: they did so by hurriedly enforcing an armistice and an agreement between Thailand and France. With Phibun Songkhram still free to outline his future policy and Decoux, in principle, already in the Japanese bag, it was logical that this Japanese interference should be to the advantage of Thailand. On 18 January in Hanoi and on the 20th in Vichy Japan once again offered her mediation. While a large Japanese squadron anchored off Cape Saint Jacques, the French had to give in: on 28 January the fighting ended and on the 31st an armistice was signed for fifteen days.

Peace negotiations started on 7 February in Tokyo. The Thai, encouraged by the notion that the Japanese were on their side, tried to make the most of this opportunity to redress the never forgotten humiliation of 1893 by submitting far-reaching demands. The French were not in the mood to accept these and on the 17th they stated that it would be useless to go on with the talks. But a resumption of hostilities was not to Matsuoka's liking: he insisted that the armistice be extended and at the same time he produced a compromise solution. To the Thai this plan offered less than they hoped to obtain, yet they agreed. To the French it was a most degrading experience and they protested vigorously, but under strong Japanese pressure they had to comply. On 6 March it was announced that an agreement had been reached and five days later its terms were

revealed. Indochina had to cede to Thailand the Laotian territories west of the Mekong as well as all Cambodian territory bounded by the Mekong down to Stung Treng and thence by a line running westward to Tonlé Sap and from there in a south-westerly direction to the Gulf of Siam. Further it was agreed that both countries conclude no arrangements with third powers which might involve them in any political, economic or military combination directed against Japan. The formal Peace-Treaty was signed in Tokyo on 9 May 1941; Thailand had to pay an indemnity of 6 million piasters while she promised the demilitarization of the provinces ceded to her, a promise she broke the day after the transfer took place.

2 *Britain vis-a-vis Japan and Asian Nationalism*

THE BURMA ROAD AND SINGAPORE

In spite of her financial dependence on the United States and her gradual economic decline Great Britain was in 1940 still the most powerful nation with interests in South-East Asia, but she, too, had to yield to Japanese pressure, be it only for a brief period. The demand made to the British was the same as the one presented to the French: to stop the transit of war materials to China. After Catroux, on 20 July 1940, had given in to the Japanese request concerning the Yunnan railway, the Burma road, leading from Lashio to Kunming, had become China's only remaining link with the Western world. Japan was not slow in asking the British to close this road to supplies for China. On 24 June a request to that effect was made, and to press her demand she ostentatiously concentrated troops near the Hongkong border. Facing this menacing Japanese attitude the British government contacted the United States, pointing out that the future security of the British Commonwealth as well as the interests of the United States were at stake and emphasizing that, on her own, Britain would not be able to resist Japan. To counter the Japanese threat she suggested that the United States send warships to Singapore and impose a full embargo on exports to Japan or, as an alternative, co-operate with Britain in mediating a peace settlement between Japan and China.

The reply of the United States amounted to a rejection of these suggestions. The American government was opposed to any closure of the Burma road, but she was not prepared to help the British out of their dilemma, either by sending her fleet to Singapore and apply sanctions to Japan or by adopting the mediation proposal. Secretary of State Cordell Hull made it

known that the United States would not be opposed to Britain offering economic advantages to Japan, provided these were not at the expense of China and did not violate the principles the American government stood for. Thus left in the cold the British followed the advice given by the Australian government, which opted for a peaceful settlement on the ground of the consideration that an advantage won by Japan this way would be considerably smaller than any she might obtain in the event of an armed conflict. On 14 July it was announced that all transport of arms and ammunition, petrol, lorries and railway material from Burma into China was to be suspended for three months.

When the government in London made this decision Britain, inadequately equipped to defend herself, was facing the gravest threat in her history, and standing against Nazi Germany on her own she could not run the risk of having to take a stand against Japan as well, and in all probability on her own there too. Forced upon Britain as the inevitable consequence of 'the dominant fact that we are ourselves engaged in a life and death struggle', as Churchill put it, and the unwillingness of the United States to commit herself to anything that might either cause trouble with Japan or clash with her own moral standards, this yielding to the Japanese demands was entirely different in character from the accommodating and acquiescing policy Britain had been following towards Japan in the preceding years. In practice the British undertaking to stop supplies to China was a small concession: it was temporary only, the transports had never been large and the three months period coincided with the rainy season in Burma and Yunnan which stopped transport anyway.

Yet it was a surrender to Japan and a moral defeat and Churchill did not hesitate to reopen the Burma road at the earliest possible moment, when the three months period expired on 17 October. By then, Britain's position had improved a little, and speculating that the Japanese government was more or less likely to adapt her course to the development of the European war, it was assumed in British circles that she would hesitate to attack now that the German invasion had not come off. Still there was considerable anxiety as to how the Japanese would react to the reopening of the Burma road, but nothing serious happened. This was not because of the slightly tougher attitude the United States was displaying, but because at that moment, eager to draw the Netherlands Indies into her fold first, Japan was not ready to fight the British. The occupation of Tonkin, moreover, had provided Japan with a base from which her bomber planes could attack the Burma road on Chinese territory, as indeed they did on several occasions.

Far more important to Japan than this supply-route to China were Malaya and Singapore. But here Britain would not yield to any pressure at all, and convinced that they would not be able to obtain concessions by any means short of war, the Japanese did not try. On the other hand Singapore was a major obstacle to the Japanese southward advance, and

although she had her reasons to believe that Japan would not attack because of a trivial matter like the reopening of the Burma road, the British government was not so sure about Japanese restraint regarding Singapore. At times Britain felt quite nervous over this, for fear that Japan might strike one day. In the light of the panicky way in which this anxiety was repeatedly brought to the attention of the Americans it was almost certainly also the intention of the British government to get the United States into accepting a larger share in the defence of the *status quo* in South-East Asia. With most of her naval forces and her planes engaged in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, Britain's power was not sufficiently impressive to dissuade the Japanese from attacking Singapore if they wanted to, and the British were particularly eager to see the United States fleet move towards the South-West Pacific area, as a token of America's determination to check any Japanese advance in that direction. But the United States government was not prepared to do so and all British pleas, made time and again in late 1940 and early 1941, that part of the American Pacific fleet be sent to Singapore, fell on deaf ears.

Britain's anxiety was not entirely unfounded. In the event of a Japanese attack she would not be able to hold Malaya and Singapore, and a loss of these territories would have disastrous consequences, because it would deprive the British of their tin and rubber supplies and allow the Japanese navy to dominate the seas and cut off troop reinforcements and the transports of food and raw materials sent from Australia, New Zealand and India. Furthermore the British government, although not knowing what the Japanese were actually planning, had good reasons to believe that Malaya and Singapore were as vital to Japan as they were to Britain, and her suspicions were not allayed by the assurances given to her by Foreign Minister Matsuoka, early in 1941.

The desirability of an attack on Singapore was, in fact, discussed by military and naval circles in Japan, with Germany in the background urging them to strike. While visiting Berlin in March and April, Matsuoka was told by Hitler that the war was now in its final phase and that, by capturing Singapore and at the same time taking care to leave the Philippines alone, Japan could be instrumental in bringing Great Britain into submission and in depriving the Americans of a possible naval base in the South-West Pacific, so as to dissuade them from entering the war. Japan was certainly interested in Malaya and Singapore, but she was hesitant to attack before some conditions had been fulfilled. First, the neutrality of the Russians had to be ensured, and from Berlin Matsuoka went to Moscow where, on 13 April 1941, he and Molotov signed a treaty to that effect. Secondly, Japan wanted to draw the whole of Indochina and Thailand into her sphere of influence before she embarked upon any further conquest. Finally she was eager to explore America's intentions. In spite of Matsuoka's insistence that Singapore be attacked, the Japanese political and military leaders did not wish to resort to violence unless they had

done everything in their power to achieve their ends by peaceful means and to persuade the United States to agree to Japan's predominance in the area. Thus Britain was given time to do something about the defence of Malaya and Singapore and, at the same time, to continue her policy of pushing the American government into taking the leadership of an alliance of nations interested in halting Japan's expansion. In contenting herself with playing a secondary role in such a coalition Britain admitted, quite realistically, that for the first time since 1819 her diplomacy had lost its traditional authority and that her power in the East was no longer supreme.

THE RADICAL ORIENTATION OF BURMESE NATIONALISM

Britain's dominant position in South-East Asia was not only declining in the face of the potential hostility of Japan and the growing need of assistance by the United States. In one of her colonial possessions British control and influence were also increasingly challenged by a change in the orientation of the nationalist movement. When the Government of Burma Act came into force in 1937 Burma reached the final stage in her evolution towards independence, but at the same time Burmese politics entered a phase in which the achievement of nationalist goals, hitherto of overriding importance, was no longer the major issue. As long as there was to be a British governor with 'special responsibilities', the power of veto and the right to exercise his own 'discretion' in matters which were listed as 'reserved subjects', nationalist sentiments were not entirely satisfied, but independence was evidently approaching and this did not fail to focus the politicians' attention, to a greater degree than before, on post-independence problems.

The granting of internal self-rule was primarily to the advantage of the older nationalists, because it offered them the opportunity to transform themselves from opponents of the colonial regime to the leading elite under the new constitution. As ministers, or as parliamentarians or politicians belonging to parties included in the ruling coalition, they took over the management of affairs, directly or indirectly; as members of parties left outside the cabinet they waited and worked for its downfall and for the chance to secure control over the government and obtain the privileges going with it. Politics took on the aspect of a struggle for power and high positions between rival groups and persons, as indeed in any parliamentary democracy, but as in other Asian countries in similar circumstances it was accentuated here by a general lack of experience and the failure of the opposition parties to keep up an appearance of political responsibility, as well as by the process of Burmanization of the services which, offering high-prized jobs, added a forceful stimulus to the politicians' engrossment in the prerequisites of public office. Together with the result of an official

inquiry which, in 1941, revealed corruption and bribery in bureaucratic circles, this trend of political behaviour created the impression that the public good and the needs of the people were exploited rather than served by the new ruling elite.

Although in its generality an exaggeration, this impression was strong enough to cause disappointment over the new system and, to a greater extent, dissatisfaction with those, either in office or in the opposition in the legislature, who had taken the direction of Burma's affairs into their hands. The most vociferous opponents were the Thakins, the young idealists who advocated revolutionary programmes of economic, social and political change. It was inevitable that they should clash with the older politicians who had been given control over the country in anticipation of a definite transfer of power. In spite of occasional discontent with the British, the old guard nationalists were in general not dissatisfied with the new situation which carried the promise that the independence of Burma, for which they had been fighting so tenaciously, would be won at long last. They could also be fairly sure that the dominant position they had gained for themselves in this period of transition was to be maintained after independence. But this appeared to be doubtful as soon as the anti-British and anti-capitalist sentiments, the youthful enthusiasm and the bravado of the Thakins succeeded in winning popular support and gave new impetus to the nationalist struggle, accelerating its tempo and changing its orientation. At the moment when the older politicians were about to achieve their aims, their superiority in political life was disappearing in the face of the growing prestige of the younger generation. Disappearing, too, were the prospects for the British to wind up their colonial rule over Burma steadily in accordance with their own timetable, which was not yet disclosed, and in peaceful collaboration with their erstwhile nationalist enemies who had become the office-bearers under the new constitution.

To curb this threat to their position, two courses were left open to the older politicians: either to suppress the activities of the Thakins and jail their leaders, or to try to catch up with them in order not to get estranged too much from popular feelings. The latter course was followed by Ba Maw who as prime minister refrained from taking repressive action. Although the Thakins were too drastic for his liking, he admired their energy; he realized, moreover, that as the leader of the *Sinyetha* Party supposedly intending to improve the conditions of the working classes, he could not possibly take steps against an organization advocating precisely the same socialistic reforms to which he had committed himself but which, once in office, he failed to carry into effect. After he had been brought down by the House of Representatives in February 1939 and the new cabinet of U Pu adopted a tough line towards the young radicals, Ba Maw and the Thakins gradually began to co-operate politically. To the Thakins Ba Maw, for all his faults and vanity, symbolized Burma's struggle against colonial rule and his name might add prestige to their movement; to

Ba Maw collaboration with the Thakins would offer a better means of appealing to the masses than he could hope to achieve through the virtually defunct Sinyetha.

The major issue which settled the alliance between Ba Maw and the Thakin revolutionaries concerned the attitude Burma should adopt towards the European war. On the whole Burmese political leaders sympathized with Britain in her struggle with Germany, because they realized that a victory of the Nazis would seriously jeopardize the prospects of an independent Burma. In principle they were prepared to co-operate with and give aid to the British in their war efforts, as became evident when, in an initial step in that direction, the Working Committee of the Dobama Asiayone, the Thakin association, on 9 September 1939, put an end to the strikes and students' demonstrations it had been organizing for nearly a year. But in spite of their willingness to assist Britain, there was also the desire that this should not be taken for granted as the mechanical consequence of Burma's status, such as had been the case when early in September Governor Sir Archibald Cochrane formally committed Burma to the war. Instead the Burmese wished that the British should make a few constitutional concessions and clarify their intentions, a desire based on the quite reasonable assumption that only if carried out on an equal footing Burmese-British co-operation would be fruitful.

In a request, put forward by Ba Maw towards the end of September, it was demanded that the special prerogatives of the governor be immediately brought under control of the cabinet, that preparations be made for convening a Constituent Assembly and that, as a matter of principle, Britain formally recognize Burma's right to independence. On the basis of these demands the so-called Freedom Bloc was established on 26 September, with Ba Maw as general leader and Thakin Aung San its secretary. The Freedom Bloc consisted of the Sinyetha, the Dobama Asiayone, some organizations of Buddhist monks and a few conservative and liberal politicians. In it the major currents of political thought were represented, ranging from communist on the left to moderately conservative on the right, but as a result of the important part the Thakins played in it, the general orientation of the Bloc was slightly to the left. This progressive outlook did not matter much, however, as far as economic and social questions were concerned, because it was agreed, with the communists dissenting, that socialist principles were to be subordinated to the basic objective of independence. This was done, partly as a tactical move in order not to deter conservative elements and thus endanger the prospects for a broader political front, partly out of the conviction that problems of social and economic improvement could be solved only after independence had been achieved. At first the activity of the organization was directed at forcing the U Pu cabinet to accept the Bloc's programme or resign. When this failed and it also became evident that the British were not prepared to pledge themselves to any change in Burma's constitutional status,

the initial willingness to co-operate with Britain faded and the Freedom Bloc started advocating that Burma should give no support whatsoever to British war efforts.

Disappointment over the British attitude made the radical politicians feel that freedom was not to be won by slogans and propaganda campaigns, but that it had to be fought for. Some of the more ardent and obstinate among the younger Thakins, like Aung Gyi and Ba Swe, loosely organized in a vague group called the Burma Revolutionary Party, even advocated armed resistance and, although arms were lacking, they started to train volunteers. At this juncture it was also realized that any fight could not be won without assistance from outside. This issue caused quite some difference of opinion in the nationalist ranks, however, mainly over the problem as to the support of which power had to be solicited. In the circumstances it was felt that Japan was the most obvious choice. Ba Maw and the more conservative elements among the Thakins were in favour of using the Japanese to oust the British, and so was U Saw, leader of the rightist *Myochit* (Patriot) Party and minister in the Pu cabinet. But the communist and pro-communist politicians were strongly opposed to Japan, for ideological reasons, while the moderate elements like Aung San, Thakin Nu and the social democrat leader Thakin Mya disliked Japanese imperialism and looked for support from elsewhere. In early 1940 Nu and some others made a goodwill tour to China, while a delegation under Aung San visited India, and returned strongly impressed by the radicalism of Subhas Chandra Bose. The decision as to from what quarters help should be asked was not yet made at the time, but the 'no war effort' attitude of the Indian Congress convinced the Thakins of the correctness of their own stand.

Meanwhile tension was building up, with the leaders of the Freedom Bloc and Ba Maw in particular travelling around, addressing meetings, carrying on a militant propaganda and fomenting popular unrest. From the British point of view this agitation, and especially the anti-war campaign, bordered on encouraging sedition. In May 1940 the authorities took repressive steps, when three nationalist propagandists were jailed, followed in July by the arrest of some leading Thakins, among them Nu and the communists Than Tun and Soe. A warrant of arrest was issued for Aung San but he managed to slip out of the country. At that moment Ba Maw dramatized the entire situation by resigning from the House of Representatives and courting arrest by delivering an inflammatory speech in Mandalay in which he vehemently attacked the policy of the Pu government in supporting the war. He was duly apprehended, on 6 August, and sentenced to one year in prison.

But in the face of the increasing unrest a policy of mere repression was not likely to restore law and order, or eliminate the embarrassment to the older politicians caused by the internal disturbances. This was fully understood by U Saw, who also realized that the Pu cabinet lacked the imagina-

tion to embark upon a positive programme which would appeal to the masses and divert their attention away from the nationalist resentments so successfully stirred up by the Freedom Bloc. By resigning from the government and ordering his Myochit Party to join the parliamentary opposition he engineered the downfall of U Pu on 7 September 1940. Two days later he became prime minister himself. Having attained power this way, U Saw immediately began to carry out his plans to strengthen the cause of the leading elite but also, and to a far greater extent, to safeguard his own position within the ruling group. First, he wanted to find a basis for popular support, with the help of which he might enhance his authority *vis-à-vis* the opposition. Secondly, and for the same purpose, he severely cracked down upon the Thakins and the Freedom Bloc, an attitude which was looked upon favourably by the British administrators. Finally, he made a fresh appeal to Britain to comply with some of Burma's nationalist desires: and, after having gained the confidence of the British authorities, he expected to be more successful than his predecessors had been. Thus he might emerge in the eyes of the people as the hero who had won independence, and by eclipsing all his competitors in this field, he might gain a great prestige that would certainly improve his future position as leader of free Burma.

In his policy statement of 26 September U Saw abandoned his earlier demand for Burma's independence as voiced by the Myochit Party in October 1939; instead he now advocated a Dominion status, to be achieved in an evolutionary way and by non-subversive means. On the positive side of his programme were the Rural Self-Government Act, long overdue but finally passed by the legislature in February 1941; the Bajpai-Saw Agreement with British India in July, which gave Burma the right to limit Indian immigration, long desired by the Burmans; and the stepping up of the process of Burmanization of the Civil Service. Furthermore, in an effort to enlarge his popularity, he advocated the introduction of free compulsory primary education, to make Burmese the medium of instruction at Rangoon University and to establish a Buddhist University. The support of the traditional and religious-minded people he solicited by his policy favouring a religious revival and by his spectacular ceremonial actions, which were clearly reminiscent of customs practised in the old days by the Burmese kings.

For the rest, however, U Saw's course was diametrically opposed to the major currents of articulate nationalist opinion. He continued U Pu's policy of giving positive support to Britain's war efforts and to Burma's defence measures. Pro-Japanese articles disappeared from his own newspaper the day he took over as prime minister and they were repressed in other newspapers, too. He agreed to the reopening of the Burma road, in October 1940, although Burmese opinion resented this for fear of a Japanese retaliatory attack as well as of an increasing influx of Chinese immigrants. But most of all U Saw was interested in stamping out the

agitation of the radicals, and he did so in a ruthless way; he set his private armed groups upon Thakin meetings, extended Ba Maw's prison-term, hunted down most of the Thakin leaders or forced them into hiding.

Although it was carried out in the first place to crush his political opponents, the policy of suppressing nationalist and anti-British activities made U Saw an indispensable ally to the British authorities, and he was regarded as such by Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, the governor since June 1941. But it was also realized that, in spite of his efforts, Saw was not a popular man and that some British compliance with Burma's nationalist demands might bolster up his public image. The problems concerning Burma's constitutional future were taken up at official level in August 1941, when Churchill and Roosevelt promulgated the so-called Atlantic Charter, containing the 'Four Freedoms', one of which was related to 'the rights of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live'. This clause, unintentionally so as far as Churchill was concerned, was received very enthusiastically in colonial Asia, and in the Burmese legislature it was asked whether it applied to Burma too. To this U Saw answered that he supposed so, wrongly as it turned out, because on 8 September Churchill made it specifically known that no constituent element of the British Commonwealth was covered by the Atlantic Charter. Yet, in a move to fortify U Saw's political position in Burma by making him the sole official spokesman of Burmese nationalism, Dorman-Smith suggested that the British government invite the Burmese prime minister to London for general talks on the subject of Burma's future status. With some reserve Churchill agreed.

From 11 October to 4 November U Saw stayed in London where he declared that he wanted to be informed by the British government what the status of Burma in the British Commonwealth would be when the war was over. He stressed that Burma, by offering her co-operation in Britain's war efforts, was making a contribution to the general fight for freedom in the world, but that she was entitled to know whether her own liberty was included in that fight. He demanded an assurance that immediately after the war the British government establish Burma as a self-governing Dominion. But Churchill and Leopold Amery, the Secretary of State for India and Burma, were not prepared to give this assurance; while emphasizing that self-government would be granted to Burma one day, the government was unwilling to fix any date.

To U Saw this reply was quite disappointing and it considerably dampened his enthusiasm to co-operate with Britain, as he was now deprived of the justificatory argument that his collaboration with the colonial authorities served the cause of Burma's independence. The British rejection also destroyed the last opportunity for the old guard politicians to keep the direction of the nationalist movement out of the hands of the younger radicals. For some time already, some of the latter had been seeking support from Japan as a means of liberating Burma from British

domination. The pro-Japanese faction of the Dobama Asiayone had made contacts early in 1940, when the others were still opposed or wavering. But after having escaped from Burma Aung San went via Amoy, in Japanese-occupied China, to Tokyo where he arrived in November 1940. He was promised assistance, unofficially though, by some army and navy circles who were interested in mobilizing popular sentiments in South-East Asia for their own cause. In February 1941 Aung San returned to Burma, in disguise, to enlist co-operation from among the Thakins. The communists persisted in their opposition to the project, but many others went along with it, and among them a group of volunteers, later known as the 'Thirty Comrades', slipped out of the country to form the nucleus of the Burma Independence Army, under Japanese auspices, to be led by Aung San. They received specialized training in general warfare, sabotage and administration, mostly on Hainan, and in Burma itself, too, the Thakins prepared themselves for an underground struggle.

POLITICS IN MALAYA

Compared with Burma, Malaya was a paragon of orderliness. Political organization was still in its infancy, although in a colonial context almost all issues in the economic, social and cultural fields inevitably took on a political aspect. There was only one political party of any significance, the Malayan Communist Party, which in the late 1930s gradually managed to overshadow the influence of the Kwo Min Tang among the Malayan Chinese. The policy and the activities of the M.C.P. were strongly stimulated by the Japanese aggression in China and, from a Chinese point of view, the rather disconcerting attitude of the colonial power in this respect. Since the Japanese occupied Manchuria in 1931, the British government had been following a course which, avowedly neutral, tended to favour Japan, and although she suppressed the pro-Japanese bias of her neutrality after the invasion of China proper took place in 1937 and, particularly, after Japan assaulted Western commercial interests, she refrained from anything that might offend the Japanese. In Malaya the authorities did not interfere with the transfer to China of the sums of money which were collected by the Malayan Chinese as a contribution to China's war efforts, but they were opposed to the attempts, both of the Kwo Min Tang and the M.C.P., to arouse national sentiments among the Overseas Chinese and mobilize support for anti-Japanese demonstrations. This attitude was based on the fear, not only that such activities might jeopardize Britain's efforts to maintain friendly relations with Japan, but also that the increasing Chinese interest in politics might cause unwelcome repercussions in the Malay community which was very sensitive to any sign of Chinese political activity. Because of the challenge it might also pose to British colonial rule, the government did not relish the prospect of national

consciousness spreading among the Chinese, even less so since a communist organization was mainly responsible for it.

By suppressing the anti-Japanese demonstrations, even as late as June 1941 when governor Sir Shenton Thomas took action against the Kwo Min Tang youth organization which was stirring up sentiments against the Japanese, British policy caused discontent among the Malayan Chinese, and this added an anti-British element to their political feelings. But the M.C.P. gave these sentiments the ideological, anti-imperialist and anti-colonial touch which served to captivate the imagination of the younger generation. The party, led by Lai Teck as general secretary, collaborated with the Kwo Min Tang in the anti-Japanese 'National Salvation Association'. Within this movement the M.C.P. greatly strengthened its influence, partly as a result of events in China where the communists played a substantial role in resisting the Japanese invasion. Identifying themselves with Chinese nationalism, the Chinese communists did not fail to impress the Malayan Chinese, not only the labourers but also the bourgeois middle-classes who were the natural supporters of the Kwo Min Tang but who, because of the communist achievements in the war against Japan, felt more attracted to Mao Tse-tung than to Chiang K'ai-shek. Partly the policy and tactics of the M.C.P. itself, the recruitment of young members through youth and labour organizations and its catching propaganda were responsible for its success in luring the allegiance of the Malayan Chinese away from the Kwo Min Tang. The British authorities attempted to check the growing influence of communism among the Chinese, by arresting and at times banishing some leaders, but they were unable to curb the trend.

Between 1939 and 1941 the Malayan communists, like so many Asian nationalist and communist leaders, were undecided as to their attitude towards Britain's war effort. Immediately after the outbreak of the European war they expressed their willingness to assist the British administration, though under certain specified conditions: Britain should abandon her reactionary policy, adopt a democratic system of government in Malaya and improve the living conditions of the people. That they nevertheless continued their anti-British activities was bound to be ascribed to their obedience to the prevailing communist line of condemning the 'imperialist war', while their attitude was prompted instead by the failure of the British authorities to react favourably to these demands, actually the same motivation which inspired the Freedom Bloc in Burma to follow an anti-war policy. But unlike many non-communist Asian nationalists who, rebuffed by the colonial power, gradually and cautiously turned to Japan, the Malayan communists changed their course into one of supporting the British. Around February 1940 the M.C.P. still took the initiative to form an anti-imperialist national united front, directed against the Japanese and other imperialist powers alike, but later in the year the party dropped in principle all anti-British movements and all

agitation in the trade union sphere. Compared to Japan Britain was considered the lesser evil, and when the Japanese menace to South-East Asia became more threatening the Malayan communists not only decided to concentrate their efforts exclusively against the Japanese, but also to offer their full co-operation to the British authorities in defending Malaya. Late in 1941 they approached the government with a proposal to that effect. But the British rejected the suggestion: the M.C.P. being an illegal party, overwhelmingly Chinese and communist in outlook, was, on these three points, not considered an acceptable source of support to a government which had to take account of her own dignity, the susceptibilities of the Malays and the dangers to the continuation of her colonial rule possibly emerging out of an alliance with communists.

During this period hardly any challenge to British rule had emerged from among the Malay community. For the members of the traditional elite in the protected states there was no reason to harbour feelings of antipathy to a system preserving the indigenous establishment which guaranteed their position as ruling class as well as their prestige among the Malay population. Neither were the English-educated civil servants in the bureaucracy inclined to dislike British colonialism. There was a growing sense of political awareness and there was some criticism, too, but these were related mainly to issues which, they feared, might be to the advantage of the non-Malay communities. In this spirit they organized between 1937 and 1940, on the analogy of the older *Kesatuan Melayu Singapura*, several Malay Associations in the peninsular Straits Settlements, in all but three of the Malay states and in Sarawak and Brunei, with Tengku Ismail bin Tengku Mohammed Yasin, the president of the Selangor Association, as the driving personality. There was not a single trace of anti-colonial sentiment; instead the leaders offered to co-operate loyally with Britain when the Europan war broke out in September 1939 and, unlike the Burmese and Indonesian politicians under similar circumstances and the Malayan communists at the same time, they did not press for or even expect concessions in return. The anti-Chinese leanings of the Malay Associations clearly testified to their basically communalist orientation. The failure, moreover, at two successive 'national' congresses, held in August 1939 in Kuala Lumpur and in December 1940 in Singapore, to overcome their primary allegiance to the Malay states and bring about an all-Malayan organization, demonstrated their provincial character. The Malay Associations of the late 1930s clearly expressed the conservative and particularist opinions of the Malay ruling elite, and whatever was presented as Malay nationalism in those circles did not approximate to any variety of Asian nationalism, however moderate, that existed in the neighbouring colonial countries.

Yet nationalist sentiments were not lacking altogether in Malay society. They were to be found among those Western-trained intellectuals who were impressed by the Indonesian nationalist movement and vaguely

influenced by more or less leftist doctrines. Younger radicals like Ibrahim Yaacob, Ishak bin Haji Mohammed and Ahmad Boestamam declared themselves against British colonialism, and their various objectives ranged from driving out the foreign ruler and liberating Malaya to bringing about a political union with Indonesia. Some also intended to arouse Malay feelings against the Malayan Chinese and Indians, while others had links with the Malayan Communist Party. But although quite vociferous and advocating a policy of non-cooperation, like the Indonesian revolutionary nationalists, they were not a real danger to British rule. Their organization, the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (Young Malay Association) had no clear-cut programme; their occasional attacks on the ruling elite and the state royalties placed them outside the main current of Malay opinion which was fundamentally traditional; their dreams about a Greater Indonesia touched on something far beyond the imagination of the ordinary Malay. Consequently they did not have much support. Late in 1941 they seem to have contemplated contacting Japanese agents, but on detecting this the police arrested the leaders and sent them to prison.

3 The Netherlands Indies: Japanese Pressure and Indonesian Nationalism

THE ECONOMIC NEGOTIATIONS

As a major producer of raw materials Indonesia was the prize number in any gamble for South-East Asia, and that country greatly fascinated Japan. Japanese interest in this Dutch colony was one of long standing, far antedating the formal inclusion of the 'New Order' project in Tokyo's cabinet policy. At an official level the Dutch had already been approached by the Japanese in 1934 when delegates met in Batavia to discuss commercial relations between Japan and the Netherlands Indies in the light of Dutch restrictionist policy. Apart from expressing the wish that the Netherlands Indies abandon the system of quotas and licences the authorities were imposing in order to check Japanese competition, the Japanese negotiators proposed that future relations be guided by the principle of 'co-existence and co-prosperity'. But the Dutch, suspicious of the political motives behind Japan's economic offensive, rejected the idea and when after six months the talks were adjourned *sine die*, the Japanese left empty-handed. A policy of resorting to violence in the 'Southern Seas' was not yet officially considered an appropriate reply to this rebuff, but Japanese interest in the area remained. Political spokesmen as well as the press continued to point out that, 'Japan and the Indies being economically bound by an intimate relationship of mutuality in ministering to one another's needs', the Indies had to conform to the requirements and rules of the economic and political bloc which Japan had set as her goal.

The opportunity to put stronger pressure on the Dutch came in 1940 after the Netherlands had been occupied by the Germans. But the Dutch

reaction to this was diametrically opposed to the behaviour of the French in the same period, though conditions similar to those contributing to Indochina's surrender were also present in Indonesia. Economically the Indies, although possessing more natural resources, were equally dependent on the outside world. The Netherlands Indies army was primarily an instrument of subjection and of enforcing law and order among the Indonesians, and it was unsuited for withstanding a grand-style military attack on the colony. The navy was in fact better prepared for such a contingency, but it was far too small. As in Indochina not much support from among the Asian population was to be expected. Finally the colonial society in Indonesia was not essentially different from that in Indochina: its mentality was basically anti-democratic. But these factors were entirely neutralized by three circumstances. First, Japanese military power was not so close to Indonesia's borders as to Indochina's. Secondly, the Dutch authorities in the Indies were not put to the same choice as were the French. The Dutch surrender in May 1940 applied to the European part of the Kingdom only; it did not end the war between the German Reich and the Netherlands. And there was no doubt about Indonesia's commitment to the Allied cause, subordinated as it was to a Dutch government which, in exile in London, was a staunch friend of Britain. Finally, although the Netherlands Indies were militarily and economically weak, the doggedness with which the Dutch opposed Japanese pressure was based on the somewhat vague expectation that they would not be abandoned by the outside world. The United States had large economic interests in the Indies, in contrast to Indochina where it had been French policy to guard their monopoly jealously. Strategically, too, Indonesia was of far greater importance than Indochina. If the Japanese chose to launch an attack they would have to by-pass Singapore and the Philippines, and as this would irreparably damage the military positions of Great Britain and the United States in the area, such a penetration was bound not to be considered lightly by these powers.

Immediately after the collapse of Holland in Europe it was feared in the United States that Japan, anticipating a possible seizure of the Indies by the British, might make a similar move. At the instance of Secretary of State Cordell Hull Britain gave the assurance that she was not considering taking the Indies under her protection, while the Dutch reiterated a formerly made pledge that they themselves were not seeking any foreign protection. Both governments, too, promised not to interfere with the exports of raw materials to Japan. At that time, however, Japan did not actually consider taking Indonesia by force, out of fear that the Dutch might destroy the oil wells; the Japanese navy was not yet ready for it anyway. But Japan was as anxious as before to draw the islands economically into her sphere of influence. As far back as 2 February 1940, that is, before the German onslaught on Western Europe, Japan had demanded that Japanese enter-

prise in the Indies be given greater facilities, and on 20 May the Japanese made it known that they wanted to obtain larger quantities of raw materials, above all oil, of which they required 1 million metric tons, and not only the entire output of bauxite, but also rubber, manganese, chromium, tungsten, tin, nickel and molybdenum. Furthermore Japan wished to come to a new agreement. As in 1934 economic negotiations were to be the means of forcing the Dutch into accepting Japan's wishes, this time, however, under international circumstances which seemed more likely to produce a satisfactory outcome. The Netherlands government attempted to play for time: she rejected the Japanese demand for greater elbow-room for Japanese enterprise, but she accepted in principle the requests with regard to exports of raw materials. On 12 September a large delegation headed by the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Ichiro Kobayashi, arrived in Batavia. The purpose of this mission was not only economic, but also political, an effort to bring about a 'general co-operation' between the Netherlands Indies and Japan. The Dutch sensed the danger and they insisted in advance that the discussions would be confined to economic affairs. For this reason the governor-general, Tjarda, refused to take part in the talks; the main burden of negotiating with the Japanese fell to the director of economic affairs, Hubertus van Mook.

Oil proved to be the main issue. In accordance with Japan's attempts to obtain ever greater quantities from all sources she increased her demands: Indonesia had to raise her exports to Japan to 3.1 million metric tons over and above the 600,000 tons she was supplying already. But it was precisely this greediness which alarmed the United States who feared that Japan, by building up large reserve stocks of oil, was making herself independent of supplies from the outside world in order to enable herself to carry on a large-scale war for a considerable time. As a counter-move the American government, while shrinking from imposing a total embargo on oil, had issued an order on 26 July which limited exports of aviation gasoline and lubricants only to nations in the Western Hemisphere. When the Japanese approached the Netherlands Indies on the matter and the Dutch, fearful of the consequences, at first showed little inclination to rebuff them, the United States gave the gentle hint that she would prefer the Dutch not to give in. In spite of the fact that the Dutch did not have any guarantee whatsoever about what the Americans would do should Japan attack the Indies, their attitude stiffened. In reply to their demand Van Mook referred the Japanese to the oil companies operating in the colony. In her delaying tactics the Netherlands Indies government was backed by the companies who resorted to a policy of long and hard bargaining: Standard Vacuum Oil had been 'advised' by the Americans to do so, while the British government had made its views known to Royal Dutch-Shell. Consequently the Japanese were not able to get more than the companies were willing to offer: half the amount they demanded for half a year only. At last they settled for this and on 18 October the contracts with the oil

companies were signed. Four days later Kobayashi returned to Japan, leaving his delegation behind to have the deal approved of by the Netherlands Indies authorities. This approval the Japanese secured, in an agreement on 12 November, but their demand that the government guarantee the deliveries had to be dropped, and their requests of concessions to develop large areas in Borneo, Celebes and New Guinea for oil-prospecting were ignored.

Yet in spite of the frustration of the Japanese, this agreement meant that 1.8 million metric tons of oil were going to be shipped to Japan. With regard to other raw materials Japan had no cause for complaint either: in 1940 the quantities of rubber, nickel ore, bauxite, tin and scrap iron exported by the Indies to Japan were considerably larger than in 1939. But this was all the Dutch were prepared to do; for the rest they firmly stood out against Japanese demands. From the outset they made it clear that there could be no question of any Japanese interference with Dutch control over Indonesia. During the negotiations the Japanese delegation sought to allay Dutch misgivings as to the real nature of the talks by assuring that the Indies were not to be included in the 'New Order', but the distrust of the Dutch was not easily allayed. First, taken by themselves, the Japanese demands were evidently aiming at securing a stranglehold over Indonesia and at subordinating the colony economically to Japan. Secondly, while at the actual talks the Japanese negotiators avoided referring to the 'New Order', the Dutch very well realized that in Tokyo many people were regarding the Indies as a territory which should be but was not yet part of Japan's sphere of influence. The Dutch were also hurt by the attempts of the Japanese to cause a break between the Netherlands Indies authorities and the Netherlands government in London. Finally, in the wider context of the war, the Dutch were shocked that Japan, by signing the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy on 27 September, had associated herself with Holland's enemies against Britain and her allies.

On 15 November the Netherlands government suggested discontinuing the talks but Japan did not agree to this idea, and on 23 December 1940 the career diplomat Kenkichi Yoshizawa took over the leadership of the Japanese mission. He submitted a memorandum, on 16 January 1941, which emphasized the economic interdependence between Japan and the South Sea area. His demands, some new, the others already voiced during the previous months, were in full accordance with the plan for acquiring control over economic life in the Indies, such as had been formulated in October by the Konoye cabinet. To put it briefly the Japanese demanded an influential voice in the operation of ports, submarine cables, air services and inland communications; concessions to explore the Outer Islands, to exploit undeveloped areas, to create joint Indo-Japanese enterprises, and to develop oil production and mining projects and establish hydro-electric stations; and the abolition, finally, of all regulations restricting Japanese immigration, off-shore fishing and coastal shipping.

Apart from a fundamental reluctance to open the doors of their colony to unlimited Japanese penetration and, thus, surrender it economically to Japan, the Dutch were haunted by the prospect that, because of her alliance with the Nazis, Japan might share with Germany the profits obtained from the Indies. So Van Mook delayed, haggled, rejected, showing a most uncomprising attitude. He succeeded in forcing the Japanese to reduce some of their most extravagant requests on 14 May 1941, after which he yielded a little, on 6 June, and continued to bargain. The Dutch promised some increase in the exports of bauxite, nickel, rubber and tin, stalled on demands for concessions, referred new requests for larger oil supplies to the companies and refused Japan the special economic and political position she sought. It was a battle of attrition in which the Dutch, controlling the raw materials the Japanese so eagerly desired, held the stronger position. In a sphere of mounting irritation and increasing Japanese annoyance the talks dragged on for months until finally, on 17 June 1941, they were broken off and the Japanese delegation sailed home.

The Japanese had reason to be exasperated. The stubborn Dutch attitude foiled their plans to obtain a predominant position in Indonesia through a process of peaceful infiltration and it prevented them from gaining control of the colony's rich natural resources. So also Dutch military power, however inadequate, and the naval facilities of the Indies were kept at the disposal of the nations potentially opposed to Japan, instead of being neutralized or taken over by the Japanese as had been the case in Indochina. But the advantages which this Dutch inflexibility produced for the Allied cause in the approaching struggle for South-East Asia were almost completely nullified by the equally rigid attitude the authorities displayed with regard to the Indonesian political movement.

DETERIORATION OF DUTCH-INDONESIAN RELATIONS

When the news of the German invasion of Western Europe in May 1940 broke in South-East Asia, the nationalist leaders in Indonesia and Indochina reacted in different ways. By its oppressive nature and its occasional brutality French rule had not been able to inspire any feelings of solidarity with or loyalty for France among the Indochinese peoples, apart from a few collaborators, and their political leaders. In Indonesia on the other hand the German onslaught and the collapse of the Netherlands caused mixed feelings: there were nationalist politicians who showed indifference and sometimes a certain amount of pleasure in the Dutch misfortunes, but most of them clearly expressed sorrow. This was not because the Indonesian political movement was less self-conscious or more naive than the Vietnamese — although there was some pathetic naivety in the way the nationalists continued to appeal to democratic principles in order to stress

their point — but because the Dutch regime, unlike the French, still gave the impression that it was open to reason. Many Indonesian politicians realized that in a world dominated by totalitarian powers they would not stand much chance of achieving their goals and that, for the time being, something more important was at stake than the nationalist issue. They had actually been convinced of this long before May 1940: the Sutardjo petition was partly based on the opinion that democratic forces in Indonesia and the Netherlands had to join together and stand united in the approaching common struggle. Although the Dutch had haughtily rejected the Indonesian overtures, the nationalists continued to show their willingness to subordinate their demands to the higher interests of democracy at large, or to the cause of those nations with whom democracy seemed better guaranteed. While in Vietnam the nationalists had given up all hope of arriving at any understanding with the French colonial regime, Indonesian political leaders — and among them those considered to be extremists by the Dutch, such as Hatta, Sjahrir and Tjipto Mangunkusumo — loyally offered their support to the administration.

While the involvement of the Netherlands in the European war stimulated the Indonesian nationalists to explore the possibilities of a closer co-operation with the Dutch, it also gave rise to the expectation that the Dutch might realize by now that the Indonesians, too, were entitled to enjoy the freedom in the name of which the war was fought. To arouse more enthusiasm among the population it was considered necessary that the administration comply with at least some of the Indonesian wishes. Close co-operation between the authorities and the people was, after all, a *sine qua non* if the government wanted to stand any fair chance in successfully defending the Indies. For this reason it was expected that the demonstrations of Indonesian loyalty should be reciprocated by an unequivocal and positive declaration as to the government's future policy. Among the Indonesians this might create a feeling of unity and togetherness essential in bringing about a genuine nation-wide concentration of power.

The opening of the new session of the Volksraad on 15 June gave the authorities the opportunity to react officially. The governor-general pointed to the demonstrations of loyalty which were considered very welcome indeed, and he referred to the necessity of a reorientation, but he failed to give any indication as to the government's plans for the immediate future. In fact there were no such plans: it was stated that a possible exchange of views concerning reforms in the political and social structure would be better served by postponing the discussion until after the war. This had a rather sobering effect on the Indonesians, although they concealed their disappointment in the hope that the Dutch might come to terms with the new situation as soon as they had overcome their perplexity over the events in Europe. But there was no sign of this: the address in the Volksraad was the prelude to the Dutch policy of politically

freezing the Netherlands Indies, and when Indonesian hopes proved an illusion their willingness to co-operate faded. By the end of 1940 their initial enthusiasm had been replaced by some sort of political hangover; gradually the old antithesis between the Indonesian cause and that of the Dutch came to the fore again in nationalist argumentation, contributing to the general feeling of indifference among the Indonesian population which seriously jeopardized the Dutch capability of successfully defending Indonesia against any outside attack.

Since the proclamation of martial law on 10 May 1940 — a by-product of the European war — the Volksraad became the only place where Indonesian politicians could freely voice their demands. What they desired was expressed in three motions. One, proposed by Sutardjo, intended to introduce an 'Indies citizenship' in an attempt to remove the legal distinctions between 'Europeans', 'Natives' and 'Foreign Orientals', and to create opportunities for the development of a nation. A second motion, tabled by Thamrin, requested that in official documents the word 'native', considered grievous to Indonesian self-consciousness, be replaced by 'Indonesian', and that the term 'Indonesia' be officially used instead of 'Netherlands Indies'. The most significant proposal was the motion-Wiwoho, which asked the administration to consult the Netherlands government over the possibility of introducing constitutional reforms in the Indies within the limits set by the Dutch constitution. Wiwoho stated that the international situation forced people to wonder whether the administration's policy was sufficiently constructive and whether it was carried out in a sufficiently energetic and imaginative manner. He demanded a thorough and comprehensive inquiry into the matter, preferably by a state commission. As constitutional reforms, he proposed, among other things, an enlargement of the Volksraad's powers so as to make the executive responsible to the legislature.

The debates in the Volksraad indicated, however, that neither the Dutch community nor the administration were prepared to meet the Indonesian wishes. The basic reason for the government's rejection of the motion-Wiwoho was precisely the same which had urged the proposer to introduce it: the critical international situation. But while the Indonesians had taken this situation as an argument to press for a closer co-operation between the government and the population, the administration used it as a pretext to ward off the Indonesian demands. It was stated that no change in the constitutional set-up was to be undertaken during the war, because any reform to be effected by a revision of either the Dutch constitution or the Government Act for the Indies would have to pass the States General; and as long as, due to the German occupation of the Netherlands, this body was unable to meet, any such revision was out of the question. The suggestion that reforms might be carried out by an emergency decree was rejected on the grounds that they were not urgent enough to necessi tate such drastic action.

By this legalistic Dutch attitude the motions of Wiwoho and Sutardjo as well as the proposal put forward by Thamrin officially to use the term 'Indonesia' instead of 'Netherlands Indies' were doomed. As far as the other demand of the Thamrin motion was concerned, the government was prepared to recommend that in official circulars and documents instead of the word 'native' the word 'Indonesian' or, as an alternative, a different word for native be used — an undertaking which annoyed the Indonesians to the extreme. But while she rejected two proposals and part of the third the government realized that something had to be done to allay Indonesian feelings of discontent. For this reason a commission, headed by F. H. Visman, was appointed, on 14 September 1940, which had to report on the demands and opinions of all sections of the population with regard to constitutional reforms. This move, too, highly upset Indonesian political circles, who considered such a commission completely redundant since the Sutardjo petition, the Wiwoho motion and the debates in the Volksraad had provided the government with enough material from which she might gather what the Indonesians were demanding. It was regarded as a simple manoeuvre to divert Indonesian attention, and in the Gapi-federation there was some discussion as to whether or not the commission should be boycotted.

The Dutch policy of postponing all action until after the war disappointed the nationalists, but by introducing a new series of motions they made some fresh attempts to persuade the government to change her rigid course. These proposals did not meet with a more accommodating reception: on 27 November the authorities stated in the Volksraad that, if the Indonesian desire to be free had to be taken as a demand for independence, such a wide gap existed between the government's and the Indonesian leaders' views that it would be virtually impossible to come to an understanding and that, therefore, the government would have to discontinue all discussions on the matter. To what extent the relations between the colonial administration and the nationalists had deteriorated became evident on 6 January 1941 when the police raided Thamrin's house. Thamrin, seriously ill, was put under custody: he died five days later. Although the affair was never cleared up, the most probable explanation is that Thamrin had been approaching the Japanese through a radical Eurasian politician who was acting as secretary of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and who was arrested the same day. For the government it might have served as a sign on the wall that one of the most prominent Indonesian nationalists, presumably out of chagrin over the unimaginative Dutch policy, had taken up contact with the Japanese government about the intentions of which the Dutch were not in the dark since the Kobayashi mission. The colonial administration might have drawn conclusions, too, from the overwhelming interest the Indonesians showed in Thamrin's funeral, which became a massive silent demonstration against the Dutch regime.

While the Indonesian Volksraad members were pressing for reforms, the Gapi-federation prepared a fresh moye in the campaign for a parliamentary system. This new campaign got under way late in 1940 after the action in the Volksraad had proved a failure. As public political activities were greatly hampered under martial law, much was done by organizing closed meetings, intensifying propaganda and devising new plans. Such a plan was the 'Memorandum on Indonesia's Constitutional Structure', drafted for presentation to the Visman-Commission in January 1941, suggesting a form of parliamentary democracy. This was not exactly an original idea, but it was important as a tactical move, since Holland was not expected to be capable of refusing Indonesia her own form of government. But the Gapi proposal was buried among the working-papers of the Visman-Commission. Meanwhile the nationalists diverted their attention to the visit, in April 1941, of two Dutch cabinet ministers. It was hoped that they would personally contact some nationalist leaders to discuss the outstanding problems, but nothing of the sort happened: the ministers came only to extend officially the governor-general's term of office. There was a second glimmer of hope when the text of a broadcast by Queen Wilhelmina, delivered on 10 May 1941, became known, in which it was announced that the constitutional structure of the kingdom had to be adjusted to the changing circumstances and that the place of the Overseas Territories had to be discussed. Yet all hopes the nationalists were cherishing disappeared completely when the governor-general gave his annual address to the Volksraad on 15 June. An Imperial Conference was to be convened in order to discuss the future structure of the Realm, but this was not to happen until after the war. This formal confirmation of the government's policy to postpone all debates on Indonesia's constitutional future greatly disappointed the nationalist politicians and it definitely put a stop to their enthusiasm for co-operating with the Dutch administration.

The change of mood was to be noticed in two respects. First the Indonesian nationalists started to reorganize their political movement, once again, just as they did after earlier disappointments. It was a new attempt to achieve greater unity among the several currents of political thought and to combine all efforts in the pursuance of the common goal. At a conference at Jogjakarta the Indonesian People's Council, *Madjelis Rakjat Indonesia*, was established on 14 September. Composed of representatives of the Gapi-federation of political parties, the M.I.A.I.-federation of Islamic associations and the federation of trade unions, the new organization was to concentrate on a renewal of the campaign for a fully-fledged parliament. In political circles the M.R.I. aroused great expectations although it was in fact nothing more than yet another attempt at strengthening the nationalists' case by reshaping the tools and, given the unresponsive nature of Dutch colonial rule, it was hardly likely to be more successful than the earlier efforts.

The Volksraad was the place where the Indonesians could demonstrate their disappointment in a more forceful way, and this occurred immediately after the gubernatorial address, when a proposal to establish a so-called 'Native Militia' was introduced by the colonial authorities. The demand for an Indonesian conscripted army was as old as the nationalist movement and during the late 1930s it had grown stronger: the nationalists wanted to be prepared in the event of an attack from outside, because they realized that the Dutch army and navy would be in no position to resist the Japanese successfully if the Indonesians remained passive. This was one of the many demands the colonial administration had not bothered to comply with, but after the French had allowed the Japanese to entrench themselves in Indochina, the threat was coming nearer. Something had to be done and for this reason the government proposed a 'Native Militia' of 6,000 men. But by this time the attitude of the nationalists had changed and they found several points on which they rejected the proposal. First, while introducing conscription the colonial government at the same time failed to recognize the basic right of the Indonesians to defend their own country. Furthermore it was stated, rather tactlessly, that for financial reasons a militia was to be preferred to any enlarging of the defence forces with regular soldiers. But the major objection to the 'Native Militia' was the complete absence of any *quid pro quo*. The nationalist politicians resented that, while in the Netherlands a conscripted army was provided for by law, it was to be introduced by ordinance in Indonesia, that is, without approval by any real representative body. They were not prepared to accept conscription unless the government was willing to comply with the demands regarding constitutional reforms. Almost all political parties rejected the proposal. The fact that, in spite of this opposition, the 'Native Militia' was approved of by the Volksraad, on 11 July, contributed to a further depreciation of this body in Indonesian eyes.

The Dutch community regarded this Indonesian attitude as treacherous and political blackmail, and during the last months of 1941 relations between the colonial administration and the nationalists reached their lowest ebb. Indonesian members of the Volksraad continued to voice their resentments and demands, not so much because they were hoping for any compliance on the part of the administration, but only to compel the government to reply, to refuse, to reject, in brief to be on continuous record as a regime from which the Indonesians had nothing to expect. These politicians were certainly no extremists — the radical leaders were still kept in their places of internment. Among them were many loyal civil servants, but they were all highly irritated by the Dutch attitude, for two reasons. First there was the failure of the colonial government to take them seriously and to appreciate their proposals for closer co-operation on an equal footing, which they deemed necessary in the face of the impending dangers. But there was also their fear that, should they not be successful, they might be replaced as leading spokesmen of Indonesian

nationalism by more irreconcilable nationalists when Dutch inflexibility and unimaginativeness ultimately resulted in a situation of revolutionary upheaval. Such a development they were most anxious to avoid.

By the end of 1941 a virtual impasse had been reached and as both the Netherlands Indies authorities and the nationalist opposition were becoming increasingly annoyed and peevish the general atmosphere grew into one of rancour and resentfulness. Yet the nationalists made one last attempt to talk the administration into accepting their views. After the Netherlands government in London, on 24 September 1941 declared its adhesion to the Atlantic Charter, the question was posed in the Volksraad what the consequences of this would be for Indonesia. The government replied on 13 November that the Charter aimed at creating good international rather than internal relations and that, even if it had been the intention of the signatories to produce the latter, the Netherlands government would not re-examine her policy, because the general principles as outlined in the Charter had motivated her conduct for a long time already. Put off by this explanation which was in fact an admission that the Atlantic Charter was meant for the European peoples oppressed by the Nazis and not for Asians under colonial rule, the nationalists did not make any further attempts, and adopted a 'wait and see' attitude.

4 The Occupation of Southern Indochina and the Policy of the United States

THE ECONOMIC ANNEXATION OF INDOCHINA

IMMEDIATELY after the breakdown of negotiations with the Dutch in June 1941 Japan's southward advance gathered new momentum. In combination with the ban on the export of certain specified materials which the United States government had been imposing during the previous months, the failure to bring the Netherlands Indies within the Japanese sphere of influence heightened the fear among military and political circles in Tokyo that the Allied powers and the United States were devising a scheme to weaken Japan progressively by applying economic sanctions. Such a development might eventually result in Japan being cut off from her supplies of vital materials, and if this should happen she might be forced either to accept a humiliating diplomatic defeat by having to abandon her Greater East Asia policy, or to fight a war under desperate circumstances. In order to avoid this the Japanese policy-makers were determined to expedite Japan's expansion in South-East Asia. At the same time, although not quite ready to embark upon a war, they tended to be less hesitant than before to accept the use of armed force in the last extremity. On 16 April 1941 , when deciding to proceed with the already approved programme for extending Japan's relations with Indochina, Thailand and the Netherlands Indies, the Liaison Conference still emphasized the use of political and economic means and referred to waging a war only in case the American bans on trade should threaten Japan's existence and jeopardize her self-defence, or if the 'encirclement' of Japan by the United States, Great Britain, the Netherlands Indies and China should become intolerable. By

late June, however, the mood of the Liaison Conference had changed considerably.

From a Japanese point of view between April and June 1941 the situation had become more critical; the United States had imposed bans on exports from the Philippines and the negotiations with the Dutch had broken down. The outbreak, finally, of the German-Soviet war, with its possible new international entanglements, compelled Japan to define her future policy. She did so in the course of a Liaison Conference meeting on 25 June. Foreign Minister Matsuoka clamoured for an attack on the Russians; he was even prepared to take on a fight with the United States at the same time, if this could not be avoided. But he was overruled by the Emperor Hirohito and Prime Minister Konoye, who were appalled at this prospect, as well as by the army and navy leaders who, fully engaged in the war in China and committed to a southward expansion, did not want to become involved in a Russian adventure. Konoye, moreover, wished to abandon the alliance with Germany, but the army overruled him too: it was in fact the minister of war, Hideki Tojo, who dictated the decisions the conference agreed upon. Japan was not going to dissociate herself from Germany, neither was she to join the Nazis in their war with Soviet Russia. Instead, she would direct all her attention to South-East Asia, particularly to Indochina over which territory she was to acquire full control, by force of arms if necessary. On 2 July these principles were confirmed by the Imperial Conference. It was stated that Japan had to establish the 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere', and that, in the pursuance of this, she should settle the 'China Incident' and build up a solid base for securing the safety and the preservation of the Japanese nation. In order to be successful in this it would be necessary to penetrate further into South-East Asia; the preparations for a southward advance had to be stepped up and the course already decided upon with regard to Indochina had to be carried out as quickly as possible.

The relative ease with which Japan had achieved her aims in August and September 1940 considerably affected the attitude adopted by the Japanese government and the military leaders towards Indochina in the succeeding months. During the negotiations it had become evident that both the government in Vichy and the authorities in Hanoi had been most worried by the prospect that any yielding on their part to the Japanese demands might ultimately impair the territorial integrity of Indochina and France's sovereignty over the colony. Only after Japan had given them an explicit reassurance as to that, the French had shown willingness to grant concessions. The French authorities were inclined to regard the continuation of their political domination and the safeguarding of Indochina's territorial integrity as not such an unfavourable outcome of the negotiations. The official French attitude caused the Japanese to believe that Japan might easily make further demands and that it might succeed in having them accepted as well, provided French susceptibilities on these points were

respected. And even this was not a prerequisite, as was demonstrated a few months later when, in settling the conflict between France and Thailand, the non-observance of Indochina's territorial integrity did not arouse the French to offer any stronger opposition.

By recognizing Japan's special position in East Asia and granting military facilities to the Japanese in Tonkin the French had in principle opted for a policy of collaboration with Japan, from which they could not easily withdraw. The stationing of Japanese troops in Indochina put them militarily at a disadvantage. Furthermore, collaboration with Japan was the logical consequence of the colonial administration's adherence to Vichy, by which choice Indochina had indirectly become an ally of the Axis powers. Under these conditions a neutral attitude in the war was out of the question. As regards China this had become evident the moment the Vichy government allowed Japan to station troops in Tonkin. It was true that this French concession did not lead to a Japanese invasion in Yunnan, such as Chiang K'ai-shek feared at the time; it was also true that the withdrawal of Japanese troops from Kwangtung and Kwangsi, through Tonkin, enabled the Chinese to recover Nan-ning in October 1940, but for this the French could hardly be given the credit. The privileges the Japanese acquired in Tonkin were primarily intended to strengthen Japan's military position in her war with China. But when, in 1941, Japan definitely decided to step up her southward advance, the French colonial administration in Indochina became an accomplice in this as well.

The stationing of Japanese troops in Tonkin made this a region of crucial importance for the execution of the ambitious political and strategic plans to establish the 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere'. From Tonkin the Japanese tightened their grip on Indochina which they turned into an advance base in South-East Asia and a stepping-stone for a possible attack on Malaya and the Netherlands Indies. Significant also was the desire of the government in Tokyo to draw Indochina, the producer of rice, rubber and certain minerals, within her sphere of influence. Japan's penetration was facilitated by the fact that it offered Indochina an opportunity to escape from the economic difficulties which had beset the colony since the Germans overran Western Europe. Indochina used to depend on French markets and on imports from France, but now that normal overseas communications had been cut the authorities were forced to find other outlets for the colony's exports as well as alternative sources of supply. Collaboration with Japan was the logical outcome of this quest, but on the other hand it enabled Japan and the Japanese business firms to secure a greater share in Indochina's economy than they had ever managed to obtain in the past.

In October 1940 Japan started to examine the opportunities for further economic penetration in Indochina by sending a mission and proposing closer trade relations. As Decoux attempted to continue with the traditional French protectionist policy, the suggestion did not immediately

meet with a favourable response, but in December a group of economic and financial experts left Hanoi for Tokyo where they joined a trade delegation which had been sent there by the Vichy government. The economic talks, led by former Governor-General René Robin on the French side, did not proceed in any smoother a manner than the military negotiations a few months earlier. Although the French were eager to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by their collaboration with the Japanese to improve Indochina's economic situation, they were not prepared to grant Japan the predominant position she demanded in return. Japan had a strong case, however, and after concluding a provisional accord on 20 January, by which Indochina undertook to send a million tons of rice to Japan during a one-year period, several definite agreements were signed on 6 May 1941. Although the French managed to include some provisos and guarantees favourable to them, these agreements virtually put an end to the French monopolistic position in Indochina's economy, while at the same time they marked the beginning of Japan's economic control over the territory.

By one of these Conventions of Tokyo Japan acquired the status of most-favoured nation in Indochina and Japanese citizens obtained the same rights as French nationals enjoyed. Japanese commercial firms, limited companies, industrial enterprises and banks were allowed to establish themselves in Indochina, to carry on trade, and open businesses and cultural or religious institutions. Opportunities were created for Japanese to obtain mining concessions, to possess real estate in the so-called 'protected areas', to practise professions hitherto forbidden to foreigners and to establish Japanese-medium schools. Their activities were restricted by one regulation only, which stated that the number of Japanese working in Japanese enterprises should not exceed half the total number of personnel employed in each enterprise.

While this agreement made possible the intensive exploitation of Indochina's resources by the Japanese, the other Convention placed the colony's foreign trade almost completely in Japanese hands. Japanese commercial firms were to handle the lion's share of the quantities of rice, rubber, zinc, tungsten, manganese ore, coal, tin and chromium which Indochina undertook to export to Japan in amounts to be fixed annually by separate treaties. The French managed to stipulate that Japanese firms were not to do the actual purchasing themselves and that the French authorities would function as go-betweens, but this proviso did not detract anything from the fact that the major part of Indochina's exports was to be controlled by Japan. The same was true with regard to imports into Indochina of Japanese industrial products, particularly textile goods. Ten Japanese commercial firms were admitted to the Federation of Importers and they were given import licences up to one-third of the total value of the imported goods concerned. Only in the monetary field did the French prevent Indochina from becoming almost completely subordinated to

Japan: in the Tariff and Trade Convention it was agreed that the value of the piaster in comparison to the yen should be fixed according to the exchange rates of each of the two in a third currency convertible in gold.

THE OCCUPATION OF SOUTHERN INDOCHINA

In the light of Tokyo's policy in mid-1941 it was inevitable that Japan's economic penetration into Indochina should be followed by the extension of Japanese military power over the colony. On 14 July the Japanese ambassador in Vichy handed a note on the subject to the French government. After the earlier retreat by Pétain's regime and the colonial authorities it was logical that the Japanese would not meet with any real resistance, but only slight hesitation. As a result the entire matter was arranged on all levels within two weeks after the Japanese made their first move.

Pressing Japan's demands Foreign Minister Teijiro Toyoda pointed to the concentration of British troops in the Western Pacific, the military preparations in Malaya and Singapore and the necessity to defend Indochina against a possible attack from those quarters. Impressed by the events in Syria where another colonial administration loyal to Vichy had been forced to surrender to British and French Gaullist troops a month earlier, the government of Pétain gave in. In order to make it easier for the French to yield, the Japanese presented their demands as part of a scheme for a 'common defence' of Indochina, and they did not fail to pronounce the password which was bound to open the doors to the colony: French sovereignty over Indochina as well as its territorial integrity were to be respected. On 21 July Admiral Jean Darlan, vice-president of the French Council of Ministers, and the Japanese ambassador, signed the agreement by which Japan was granted permission to station as many troops in Southern Indochina as she deemed fit, and to establish air and naval bases in that region.

After the government in Vichy gave its consent to place Indochina under Japanese military protection, the colonial authorities had to be persuaded to agree and on 23 July the leader of the Japanese mission in Hanoi, General Raishiro Sumita, began talks with the French. In Japanese circles it was felt that this time Decoux might possibly refuse to obey orders from France, because the principle of 'common defence' would seriously impair his freedom of action in the military sphere. In order to exert pressure on the French a convoy of troop-ships was directed to Cape Saint Jacques, and two days later 30,000 Japanese landed near Saigon and Nha Trang. There was no opposition, and on 29 July 1941 Indochina signed the agreement which enabled the Japanese to station an unlimited number of troops in the colony and to make use of roads and railroads for military purposes. Furthermore a number of airfields (Nha Trang, Tourane, Tan Son Nhut,

Bien Hoa, Soc Trang, Siem Reap and Kompong Trach) and three ports (Saigon, Tourane and particularly Cam Ranh) were placed at the disposal of the Japanese air force and navy.

By occupying Indochina Japan gained a major victory. She now had the opportunity to build up a strong base in South-East Asia, in a territory where the French remained in charge of maintaining law and order and, by doing so, enabled the Japanese to carry out their military preparations without having to worry over administrative duties or police tasks. In the light of the subordination of Indochina's economy to Japan's needs it was also highly important that economic activities should proceed normally. This, too, was guaranteed better by the continuation of French rule than it would have been had Japan been compelled to conquer the colony by armed force. Exerting diplomatic pressure and encountering little opposition, Japan succeeded in securing all her goals in Indochina before the great battle had seriously started. According to the Franco-Japanese treaty of July 1941 the French were not obliged to give active support to any Japanese military offensive, but by handing over the territory, the military facilities and the economic resources of Indochina to the Japanese Empire, the regime in Vichy and the colonial authorities made themselves accessories of the Japanese government in her aggressive designs *vis-à-vis* South-East Asia.

U.S.-JAPANESE RELATIONS

The Japanese penetration into Indochina had far-reaching consequences, and one of these, the change in the military situation, was immediately obvious. But no less momentous were the political repercussions of this Japanese action, particularly with regard to the attitude of the United States. Since Japan embarked upon her expansionist policy in the early 1930s the United States had confined itself to emphasizing its high standards of international conduct and to addressing moralizing admonitions to the Japanese. The American government did not like Japan's behaviour and at times she protested against it, especially during the later years of the decade when American interests and properties were increasingly affected by the Japanese drive against Western businesses in China. Diplomacy rather than a show of force, however, continued to be the cornerstone of United States foreign policy, and even this diplomacy was carried out in a cautious way so as not to provoke the Japanese. At the end of 1937 a British proposal to protest jointly against a Japanese air attack on foreign ships on the Yangtse, in which a British gunboat was damaged and an American one sunk, was rejected by the United States who feared that any such concurrent action might be considered by Japan as part of a deliberate Western policy to prevent her from developing into a strong nation. This Japanese suspicion was bound to be aroused even more

if the United States should stop the exports to Japan of oil and scrap iron, the two commodities the Japanese were most anxious to acquire. Japan might not only regard such a move as a direct challenge but also as the proof that she had no choice but to accelerate her attempts to establish a self-supporting bloc in East Asia, by force of arms if necessary.

As American public opinion was opposed to a policy which in the end might lead to a war, and doubts existed, particularly in naval circles, as to the readiness of the armed forces to fight the Japanese, the United States was not willing to shoulder the responsibility of any action intended to prevent Japan from getting what she wanted. Caught between the traditional isolationist sentiments of the American people and President Roosevelt's sense of justice and his dislike for Japan's aggressive policies, the American government followed a course, the only principle of which was that the United States had to stay out of the war. So she disapproved of the French when they gave in to Japan in Indochina as well as Britain's closure of the Burma road, but she refused to give any promise of support to them, or to the Dutch for that matter. Meanwhile, in the years from 1937 to 1940 the United States continued to supply Japan with a substantial amount of the scrap iron and over 75 per cent of the oil she needed.

The disastrous development of the European war in 1940 slightly modified American policy towards Japan. It was understood that a failure of Great Britain to withstand the Germans might endanger the security of the United States herself and for this reason the government not only embarked upon carrying out an emergency scheme of aiding British war efforts in Europe, but she also had the National Defence Act passed, in June 1940, which authorized the president to control all exports in order to keep materials vital to her own defence in the country. In Washington a number of high officials strongly advocated the banning of all exports to Japan, but Secretary of State Hull counselled caution, and the order of 26 July 1940 did not go beyond making exports of top-grade scrap iron and aviation gasoline and lubricants subject to official licence. Japan was not really hurt by this action: top-grade scrap iron accounted for only 15 per cent of the iron and scrap she used to purchase in the United States, while certain grades of gasoline and crude oil which with little trouble could be converted into aviation motor fuel were not covered by the order. Japan's protest against this move was based on the principle of restriction as such, and because she feared that the American government might have other, and more damaging, trade regulations in mind. As with the termination of the commercial treaty in 1939, this was exactly what the United States wanted to achieve: to force Japan to restrain herself by leaving her in the dark about American intentions.

But Japan, pressed by economic necessity and pushed forward by nationalist pride, was not to be restrained, certainly not with Matsuoka as foreign minister. She forced the French to accept Japanese troops in Tonkin, started to put pressure on the Netherlands Indies authorities and

negotiated with Germany over joining the Axis powers. Consequently the official American attitude hardened, and although there was no readiness yet to commit the United States to defend South-East Asia or to assist Britain and the Netherlands if they should be attacked, it was decided to turn the screw a little tighter. On 25 September 1940 Roosevelt ordered an embargo on all iron and scrap exports to Japan. A slight change in public opinion was perceptible too, brought about by the Tripartite Pact of 27 September and the subsequent realization that Japan's policy was now directed against Great Britain, in whose fortunes the average American was more interested than in those of China. Yet isolationism remained a very powerful factor, and in his election speeches the president still had to promise that Americans need not take part in the battles in Europe or Asia and that his administration would not cause them to do so. In addition there were other factors compelling the United States to proceed carefully: the production of materials vital for waging a war was lagging behind, and the armed forces, especially the navy, were anything but equipped to fight Japan. So the talks on the co-ordination of defensive action in case of a Japanese attack, which were taking place towards the close of 1940 between American, British, Dutch, Australian and New Zealand military experts, were merely tentative, preliminary, explanatory and unofficial as far as the American contribution to them was concerned. But a widening of the ban on exports to Japan could be justified by the interests of American national defence and in December iron ore and steel were put on the list, followed in January 1941 by brass, copper and zinc. An embargo on oil, however, was still considered too risky in view of possible Japanese counteractions, as was a proposal to 'freeze' all Japanese funds in the United States.

Early in 1941 when Japan forced France and Thailand to accept her mediation in their territorial dispute, a further Japanese penetration into South-East Asia seemed approaching. At the same time Great Britain pointed out that she would not be able to protect Singapore against a Japanese attack, engaged as she was in her naval war with Germany in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Although the Americans were inclined to suspect the British of exaggerating the danger, the prospect of Japan taking over South Indochina nevertheless alarmed the United States to such an extent that she agreed to discuss military co-operation with Great Britain in the Pacific area in a more concrete form. She was still not prepared, however, to promise American assistance for the defence of Malaya or the Netherlands Indies and once again she rejected the proposal to station part of her naval forces in Singapore. At about the same time the United States government entered into conversations with the Japanese in an attempt to settle the points of discord.

On 8 March the talks started; they were conducted by Hull and the Japanese ambassador in Washington, Nomura. Japan's basic demands were clear from the outset; for herself: economic independence and a pre-

dominant place in East Asia; with regard to the role of the United States: a termination of all aid to the government of China, pressure on Chiang K'ai-shek to make peace, a resumption of normal trade and co-operation with Japan in developing natural resources in the Pacific area. American wishes were as straightforward: Japan had to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all nations, to support the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, to refrain from all acts of force in the Pacific and to withdraw, on an agreed schedule, her troops from China. To the United States the talks offered an opportunity to impress upon the Japanese that their major problem — to secure Japan's economic life-line — might be solved by other means than by the use of force. The Japanese government regarded the conversations as an instrument to bring the United States into accepting Japan's hegemony over the area. As the aims of both governments were diametrically opposed, an agreement was hardly likely to be reached, and even less so in the wider context of the general situation in the world. The United States had stepped up her military assistance to Great Britain and she was giving naval and air force protection to Allied convoys in the Atlantic Ocean. Consequently the risk of the United States becoming involved in the war with Germany had become greater. So the American government wanted to know which were Japan's obligations under the Tripartite Pact; in fact she felt rather uneasy as long as Matsuoka, a strong spokesman for the Axis connexion, remained foreign minister. Meanwhile, on 28 May, American controls on exports were extended to all overseas possessions of the United States, so that iron ore, copper, manganese, abaca and chromium from the Philippines could no longer be purchased by Japan. A month later all oil exports from the American east coast ports were restricted to the British Empire and the countries of the Western Hemisphere. The Japanese attempt to obtain economic control over the Indies failed when on 17 June the negotiations with the Dutch broke down.

With the economic opportunities for peacefully building up a 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere' gradually fading, and the international situation once again upset by the German attack on the Soviet Union on 22 June, Japan had to outline her future policy. The most crucial decision taken at the Liaison Conferences of 25 June and 2 July was the one related to the establishment of the New Order for East Asia. In pursuance of this Japan had to reinforce her preparations for a southward advance. Her first aim was to acquire full control over Indochina and Thailand, even if this were to lead to an armed conflict with the United States and Great Britain. She hoped, however, to avoid such a war, and thus the talks with the United States had to be continued, but without Matsuoka, since Hull once intimated in a talk with Nomura that the utterances of certain Japanese leaders gave the United States government serious cause to doubt whether any agreement with Japan would be worth pursuing. On 16 July Konoye

resigned with his ministers and in his new cabinet Admiral Toyoda was given the post of foreign minister.

It was only a change of tactics, not of policy, and the American authorities, informed by intercepted and decoded Japanese messages, were fully aware of this. While the Japanese army and navy were stepping up preparations for a possible war against Great Britain and the United States, and were developing operational plans against Malaya, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, the Bismarck Archipelago and Hawaii, the actual occupation of Indochina was taking place. At the time the American government could do nothing to prevent Japan from carrying out this plan. Public opinion was still very much opposed to any action that might lead to an armed conflict, and with a considerable part of her naval strength and transport facilities engaged in protecting shipping on the Atlantic Ocean the United States was hardly in a position to fight the Japanese. Nevertheless on 24 July Roosevelt made the proposition that Japanese troops should evacuate Indochina in exchange for a solemn guarantee of the territory's neutralization by all interested powers, a proposal which was extended to include Thailand on 31 July.

THE 'FREEZING' ORDER

By occupying Indochina Japan overstepped, as it were, the danger line as far as the United States government was concerned. On 26 July, against the objections of the naval authorities the Roosevelt administration issued the order to 'freeze' Japanese funds, providing for the control of all assets and possessions of the Japanese government and of Japanese nationals in the United States. Within a day the British government abrogated the commercial treaty of 1911 with Japan and the trade conventions of 1934 and 1937 between Japan and British India and Burma respectively. The Dutch, as the dominant power in the Indies likely to be the first victim of any Japanese counter-attack, hesitated, but on 28 July they, too, required special permits for all exports to Japan and for all payments to or receipts of payments from Japanese subjects.

From now on it was the United States which took the lead in opposing Japan's plans for extending her domination over East and South-East Asia. The 'freezing' order of 26 July, combined with the economic sanctions imposed by Britain and the Netherlands, amounted to a virtual embargo. Its effects were very serious for Japan's economy, in spite of the progress she had made towards self-sufficiency. Japan had to live on her reserves as the imports from the territories under her control were insufficient to satisfy her needs. Consequently she faced a critical dilemma: either to fight or to reverse her policy in line with American requirements. The longer Japan hesitated in making the decision, the more her troubles would increase, because the dwindling of her stockpiles would diminish both her

capacity to fight a major war as well as her bargaining power. The negotiations with the United States went on, but the American government, having gone thus far, was not in a mood to budge. The Japanese leaders, on the other hand, because of their prestige and Japan's national pride, could not possibly afford to give up their ambitions, even less the conquests Japan had made during the previous decade. The embargo, intended by the American government as a means of restraining Japan, was instead taken up as a challenge; in fact it was the step which made war inevitable.

On 6 August Japan promised not to station troops in the South-West Pacific, aside from Indochina, to withdraw her troops from Indochina after a settlement in the Chinese war had been reached and to guarantee the neutrality of the Philippines, provided the United States suspended her military preparations, restored normal trade relations, and agreed to mediate between Japan and China, to recognize Japan's special position in Indochina and to assist Japan in obtaining the raw materials she needed. Hull replied that these proposals were unacceptable, and when Prime Minister Konoye suggested a meeting between himself and President Roosevelt the Secretary of State was unresponsive. On the one hand Hull was still sufficiently cautious not to provoke Japan openly, and for this reason he toned down a strongly-worded warning against further Japanese aggression, drawn up by Roosevelt and Churchill during their conversation at Argentia, Newfoundland, which, he feared, might precipitate a conflict. On the other hand, however, he restrained Roosevelt's initial enthusiasm over a possible meeting with Konoye by insisting, on 3 September, on a detailed settlement of outstanding questions before such a meeting could take place. This American reticence was based on mistrust of Japan and on the fear that Konoye's invitation was an attempt to prevent the United States from taking definite action, but the questions Hull wanted to have cleared up in advance were related to Japan's obligations under the Tripartite Pact and her policy *vis-à-vis* China, precisely those matters in which Konoye could not possibly yield to the American wishes without infuriating the Japanese military authorities.

For the army and navy leaders the time-factor became more pressing since the Netherlands Indies openly refused, on 28 August, to allow the exports to Japan of oil, bauxite and certain other specified raw materials. In military circles it was feared that Japan, progressively weakened by the embargo, would not be able to fight a war successfully if she did not strike soon. In addition to this consideration there was also the realization that weather conditions would be unfavourable for an attack after December. On 3 September the Liaison Conference met, and pressed by the military leaders, in particular the minister of war, Tojo, it drew up a programme of action which was confirmed by the Imperial Conference on the 6th. The army and navy were to make all dispositions for a war against the United States, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Meanwhile diplomatic means had to be used to persuade the United States and Britain to accept the

Japanese demands. If by early October there was no reasonable hope of success, Japan would definitely have to decide on war. Thus Konoye was given a one-month reprieve to work out an agreement.

An agreement could not be reached, however. The Japanese made further proposals on 6 September, partly a repetition of former promises and demands, but they did not strike Hull as sincere. What the United States primarily emphasized as its wish and as proof of Japanese good intentions amounted to nothing less than a commitment on Japan's part to withdraw its troops from China within a stated time. After ten years of warfare in China such a concession was hardly likely to be acceptable to the Japanese military authorities. So, when the American government stated, on 2 October, that the Japanese proposals were disappointing, it was clear that the projected Roosevelt-Konoye meeting would not materialize. As far as the army leaders were concerned, this was the end of the attempts to reach a settlement through diplomacy, and although he was backed by the Emperor and influential Court circles Konoye had to yield. On 16 October he offered the resignation of his cabinet, and the next day full responsibility was placed in the hands of the military establishment when General Tojo became Japan's prime minister.

POLITICS IN THE PHILIPPINES

The deterioration of United States-Japanese relations brought the Philippines into the danger zone. In its general nature and objectives political activity here differed from that in most other South-East Asian countries in the late 1930s. Although still ultimately dependent on the United States the Philippine islands enjoyed an almost complete internal autonomy. Consequently political action was no longer dominated by the quest for national freedom, so peculiar to politics in colonial countries, nor characterized any more by that semblance of unanimity which, in the pursuit of a common goal, tended to bridge to some extent the differences of opinion on other problems. Now that in principle the fight for independence had been won, the main emphasis in Philippine politics shifted from the nationalist anti-colonial aspect to the one which is typical of all political activity — the struggle for power.

Among the contenders for power the Nacionalistas held almost all the trumpcards. In the previous years they had been able to monopolize the fight for national freedom and because of their success in this they enjoyed a great popularity which enabled them to gain an overwhelming victory at the polls in 1935. On the strength of these election results they captured the National Assembly as well as the executive branch of government and, once in power, their position as members of a majority party was clearly favoured by the constitution with its provisions for a strong administration. Although there was a large amount of freedom for the politicians

and the press of the opposition, which made Philippine politics a very colourful affair, the Nacionalistas managed to maintain their dominant position. They had split a few years earlier over some stipulations in the Hare-Hawes Cutting Bill, but the two factions joined forces again after the passing of the Tydings-McDuffie Act. Personal competition for leadership apart, the two groups had the same political outlook and similar economic interests, while the peasant rebellion of May 1935 also induced them to stand united against any social revolutionary action that might threaten the position of the privileged classes which they represented.

Because of this fusion a virtual one-party system emerged, and no opposition group was capable of successfully challenging the Nacionalistas' influence in the legislature or disputing their hold over the executive. The opposition parties were small and weak. Most of them represented the same social classes as the Nacionalistas; consequently they were hardly able to offer an alternative programme and their opposition to the government was regarded as dictated only by the wish to criticize the group in power. Those politicians on the other hand who, out of a socialist conviction, opposed both the Nacionalistas as the majority party and the structure of Philippine society upon which the privileged position of the ruling elite was based, generally lacked the necessary funds, while the literacy requirements for voting effectively reduced their chances of being elected in parliament or to any office by their potential adherents, the destitute peasant masses. Attempts were made, in 1937, to bring about a coalition of opposition parties, the Popular Front (*Frente Popular*), headed by Juan Sumulong, but as the organizations participating in it had no common interest except their dislike of the Nacionalistas, and as they were not in agreement among themselves because of personal rivalries or, particularly as far as the social revolutionary groups were concerned, because of their different opinions on fundamental problems, the experiment failed within a year although the front continued to exist in name. Under such circumstances the Nacionalistas could easily maintain themselves. In 1937 they won the provincial and municipal elections with only a few positions going to the Popular Front. The elections in 1938 for the National Assembly were also a victory for the ruling party in all 98 districts. This performance was repeated in the elections of 11 November 1941: both Quezon and Osmena were re-elected as president and vice-president respectively, and in the National Assembly all but three seats went to the Nacionalistas who captured all the 24 seats of the Senate which had been introduced by an amendment to the constitution a year earlier.

The impotence of the opposition was the result, too, of those clauses in the constitution which were to the disadvantage of minority groups or which prevented a proper representation of the lower classes. As it is the aim of any political party to strengthen its own position *vis-à-vis* its adversaries, it is logical that the Nacionalistas attempted to ensure the continuation of their control over the government. They did so for the sake of

their own party but also, in a wider sense, in the interest of the elite to which they belonged. As in all countries under a similar system of government, democracy in the Philippines had been elaborated by the framers of the constitution in a manner which was most likely to safeguard the power of the traditional ruling classes of society. In the years since the inauguration of the Commonwealth government these social groups, through the policy of the Partido Nacionalista, further strengthened their position by introducing a few more constitutional devices to prolong their political and economic domination. One of these had already been provided for in 1935: women's suffrage, the safest of all designs to ensure non-revolutionary election results in any parliamentary system, and certainly so in one which, in a country with an illiteracy rate of 51.2 per cent, disqualified illiterates from voting. In 1937, after a plebiscite, women were given the right to vote and to hold office, which brought the electorate of the Philippines up to an estimated 14 per cent of the total population. A second amendment to the constitution was approved of by the National Assembly on 11 April 1940, ratified by plebiscite on 18 June and formally enacted on 4 December. Apart from bringing about a change in the term of office of the president and vice-president, it introduced a bicameral legislature, the Philippine Congress. In addition to the National Assembly, now converted into a House of Representatives, a Senate was created, as an effective check against what was described as 'mob psychology' and 'popular passions and impulses'. While these two reforms in fact prevented the Philippine government from developing into a genuine popular government, representing the mass of the population as well as the middle and higher classes, the system of block-voting in elections contributed to limiting political power even more to a small oligarchy. This method opened the opportunity of voting for a party rather than for individual candidates from any party. In theory no particular party was favoured under this system, but in practice it was beneficial to the Partido Nacionalista. This was better organized and had more followers at its disposal than the opposition parties, so it was in a better position to persuade the voters, and especially the semi-literates among them in the rural areas, that simply recording the word 'Nacionalista' on the ballot-paper would be far less cumbersome than writing down the names of many individual candidates.

Once in power, the Nacionalista politicians were facing problems which in two ways presented a challenge. The manner in which these were to be solved were an indication as to the talent of the Filipinos, or Asians in general, to govern themselves according to Western precepts of government — in the late 1930s a point yet to be demonstrated to a sceptical Western world. Secondly, judging by the ability of the leading politicians to tackle these problems, it was to be decided whether it would be justifiable to continue their rule from the transitional Commonwealth period into the future, when the Philippines became completely independent.

Outlining their policies the Nacionalistas had to take into consideration the fact that a strong opposition party, though absent now, was likely to emerge as soon as the government's activities gave rise to popular dissatisfaction that might be exploited by her political adversaries. Although the Philippines were ruled by a relatively small group of individuals, this consideration prevented the Nacionalistas from exercising their power exclusively to the advantage of the dominant classes.

The problems confronting the Filipino leaders had been more or less subordinated, until then, to the primary aim of national independence, but now they gained priority. They were related to the creation of a politically stable and efficient administration and an economically viable state. In the pursuit of this goal the executive branch of the government was reorganized by the creation of new bureaux and offices and the establishment of a series of advisory councils and commissions on the various aspects of administration. Educational facilities were tremendously augmented, with the emphasis on vocational rather than academic courses, as the latter were likely to create an intellectual proletariat in a society which did not offer enough adequate positions to academic graduates. The campaign to combat illiteracy was intensified. Measures to strengthen the defensive capacity of the country against any attack from outside, including compulsory military service, were designed and adopted. Nationalism remained a guiding force, aiming at making the Filipinos aware of their cultural heritage. In education as well as in other aspects of life great emphasis was put on Filipino traditions, customs and morals. To create a sense of unity among the people, one of the archipelago's many tongues, Tagalog, was raised to the status of national language, which was to become the official language on the date of independence.

It was logical that nationalist sentiments should continue to be directed against the economic influence of foreigners, and particularly against the Chinese. By stimulating or subsidizing private organizations which created facilities for Filipinos to take a more active part in the economy and to compete successfully in retail trade and other fields of economic activity which were controlled by the Chinese, the government sought to increase Filipino participation in the economic process and proportionately diminish the Chinese share. Early in 1940 a National Trading Corporation was set up; it was provided with capital from government funds and it aimed 'at breaking the stranglehold of foreign retailers' upon Philippine trade. The suppression of the Chinese was also effected by legislative means. On 2 May 1940 the National Assembly passed an immigration act which restricted the annual entry of 'immigrants of any one nationality' to 500; in spite of its professedly non-discriminatory character this act was evidently directed against Chinese and Japanese. In Manila, in 1941, a municipal ordinance was enforced, prohibiting all persons except Filipinos and Americans from engaging in any form of business in the public

markets: as the holders of market stalls were practically all Chinese this measure was clearly anti-Chinese, too.

Yet, in spite of all these vexations, the attitude of the Philippine government *vis-à-vis* the Chinese community was not uncompromising. But then, Chinese competition and their hold over some sections of the economy was hurting Filipino national susceptibilities more than that it endangered the country's economy as such. On the other hand a grave threat to the economic future of the Philippines was posed by the impending cessation of free trade relations with America, which would result in a progressive imposition of tariff duties on Philippine products entering the United States until the full tariff was applied from 1946 onwards. In the course of three decades the Philippine economy had been based on nearly unlimited access of its export products to the American market. Before the introduction of fixed quotas 99 per cent of Philippine sugar used to go to the United States and this product alone accounted for 63 per cent of all Philippine exports. As there was hardly any prospect of finding alternative outlets for either sugar or any other Philippine product, a closing down of the American market, to which the imposition of tariff barriers would inevitably amount, was likely to result in an economic disaster which might from the outset threaten the very existence of the Philippines as an independent state from the day of its birth. In Filipino circles this danger was fully appreciated. Attempts were made at readjusting the economy, but for a diversification and increase in the cultivation of other agrarian products time was too short and capital lacking; furthermore, many of the proposed alternative products were already raised in other countries. Industrialization, too, was made impossible because the unlimited American imports into the Philippines prevented the emergence of any significant manufacturing industry.

In political circles in the United States there was the tendency to regard an economic collapse facing the Philippines after independence as a problem to be solved by the Philippine government and not by the United States, in spite of its own responsibility for bringing about this situation. But when Quezon approached President Roosevelt on the matter in an attempt to work out on a joint basis a modification of the economic provisions of the Tydings-McDuffie Act, he found a more appreciative hearing, and in April 1937 an American-Filipino Commission was created to study the problem and formulate recommendations for a programme of economic readjustment. The report of the Commission was published in November 1938; it proposed that the preferential treatment of Philippine products on the American market be continued for another fourteen years after the date of independence. This suggestion was taken up by the proposers of the so-called Tydings-Kocialkowski Bill, and passed by the United States Congress as the Philippine Economic Readjustment Act on 7 August 1939. Thus the catastrophe which loomed over the Philippines was postponed until 31 December 1960, a delay which gave the Philippine

government more time to embark successfully upon a policy of overhauling the economic situation.

That American economic interests were co-operative now, may be ascribed to the ebbing away of the great Trade Depression in the United States which in the early 1930s had induced them to press for independence as a means to close the door to Philippine products. There was also the consideration that an immediate collapse of the Philippines after independence was not likely to enhance the prestige of the United States in the eyes of the Asian peoples or the traditional colonial nations in Europe. Finally it was realized that an economic crash could easily lead to political unstability and popular dissatisfaction. As social unrest might be taken advantage of by unwelcome oppositional groups which, if successful, would constitute a danger to American interests in the country as well as to the Filipino ruling elite, such an eventuality had to be avoided. This was understood, too, by the Philippine government: the Sakdal uprising had clearly demonstrated how widespread hatred for landlordism and discontent over agrarian oppression were in the rural areas. Consequently a programme of carrying out reforms on behalf of the lower classes was worked out.

By promoting 'social justice', as this programme was officially termed, Quezon seems to have been inspired by the agrarian reforms of the Mexican President Lazaro Cardenas, but unlike Cardenas he was not a revolutionary: his reforms were not only primarily directed at averting a social revolution from below, but they also carefully refrained from bringing about any essential change in the structure of society. One of the comments on the programme stated that 'social justice does not mean that injustice should be committed against the more fortunate classes of the people in order to improve the conditions of the less fortunate ones'. An eight-hour working day and a minimum wage of one peso a day were introduced for labourers, and an act was passed providing for written contracts between tenants and landowners. The government purchased some of the greater estates for subdivision into small parcels among tenant farmers. A National Land Settlement Scheme Administration was established for the opening up and developing of virgin lands for settlement in Mindanao, in order to relieve the population pressure on land in Central Luzon. All these reforms contributed to improving the living conditions of the labourers and the peasant masses, provided they were properly carried out, which was not always certain in a country in which the landlords had great power. But they did not tackle the fundamental social problems underlying agrarian distress and they consequently failed to suppress those social revolutionary politicians who used to work among the peasant population. It was particularly in Central Luzon that the radicalization of the masses was most evident, after the Socialist Party, in October 1939, entered into a coalition with the communists. Under a joint communist-socialist leadership the peasant and labourers' movement

in these areas became more militant, as was demonstrated by the increase in the number of strikes and other labour conflicts. Also the lower classes grew more self-conscious, politically, and in the municipal elections of 1940 the social revolutionary-orientated politicians managed to capture 8 out of 21 municipalities in Pampanga province, the centre of the movement. This changing attitude of the rural proletariat posed a serious problem to the Commonwealth government and the politicians of the Partido Nacionalista, and one which they would not be able to solve with their well-intended, but essentially palliative, programme of social justice.

5 The Conquest

THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR

WHEN the Tojo cabinet assumed office on 18 October 1941 Japan had not yet made her choice between war and peace, but under the circumstances a decision could not be delayed much longer. First there was the pressure of the economic blockade to which Japan was subjected by the United States, Great Britain and the Netherlands as a means of compelling her to mend her ways. This blockade brought grave consequences. To maintain the steel production Japan depended entirely on Korea, Manchuria and China. Japan had to make great efforts to increase the output of iron-ore in these territories; she had to change her industries from working American scrap to handling iron-ore imported from elsewhere, and finally she had to draw heavily upon her own stockpiles. More serious were the effects of the oil embargo. An investigation into the possibility of obtaining self-sufficiency by the development of a synthetic oil industry, undertaken in August, failed to produce hopeful results because Japan lacked the required materials and the necessary technical equipment. She therefore had to cut her consumption of oil to a minimum in order to prevent her stocks from dwindling at too rapid a pace; it was calculated that the existing oil reserves would be sufficient for two years only. The prospect that in the not very distant future Japan might find herself in a position in which she could neither fight a war nor stand up any longer against pressure from outside, assumed alarming proportions in the minds of the Japanese planners, and it was instrumental in forcing the issue. As a submission to the terms of the United States would, according to Japanese opinion, amount to giving up her international status as a great power in Asia, Japan saw no way out but to strike at the earliest possible moment.

The decision to embark immediately upon a course of war was also forced on Japan by political and military calculations. There were some

misgivings as to the eventual outcome of such a war, particularly among the naval chiefs, but they held the view that once the oil problem had been solved by the capture of the Netherlands Indies, Japan would have obtained a position in East and South-East Asia which would be sufficiently strong to face successfully any attack from the outside. The army leaders were even more confident: according to them the war would end in a final victory — even if the Americans were to become involved. Hardly any doubt existed among Japanese military and political circles that the United States would join the British and the Dutch against Japan sooner or later, in response to a Japanese onslaught on Malaya and the Indies. The possibility of an American entry into the war at a later date Japan had to avoid at all costs, because in that case the United States would be given time to build up her military and naval strength to a point where the Japanese might not be able to defend themselves successfully. For this reason the date of their joining the war was not to be fixed by the Americans themselves but by Japan: hence the decision not to strike against Britain and the Netherlands only, but also against the United States.

The choice between war and peace was made at the Liaison Conference of 1–2 November. The military leaders, having lost any confidence in the usefulness of the talks with the American government, pressed for immediate action 'in self-defence' against Great Britain, the Netherlands and the United States and, although some members of the cabinet, among them Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo, urged for a postponement of such action, their opinion prevailed. The only concession they were prepared to make consisted of a three weeks' delay, during which the negotiations with the United States were to be carried on. If, however, by 25 November no agreement had been reached Japan would have to fight.

On 5 November this decision was ratified at a formal Imperial Conference which also approved of the plans for joint military and naval operations in South-East Asia which the army and navy staffs had been drafting since April. While stepping up their preparations the Japanese completed the organization of a 'Southern Army', which was placed under General Count Hisaichi Terauchi as commander-in-chief, with his headquarters in Saigon. In a last effort to avoid the approaching war Nomura, at the instructions of Togo, submitted a new set of Japanese proposals to the American government on 7 November. In these Japan pledged herself to accept the principle of non-discrimination in trade, in China as well as in the Pacific, provided it was applied to other parts of the world too. Also the Japanese government undertook, within two years after the conclusion of a peace in China, to remove her forces from that country, except for certain parts of North China, Inner Mongolia and Hainan, where they were to remain stationed for a 'suitable interval' of twenty-five years. Furthermore Japan was willing to withdraw her troops from French Indochina if peace had been restored in China or an equitable peace in East Asia had been established.

These proposals, Japan felt, were the last possible concessions she could offer; she was certainly not prepared to accept a complete removal of Japanese troops from Chinese territory. In the light of Japanese military arrogance these were striking concessions indeed, but to Roosevelt and Hull they were inadequate. In spite of intercepted Japanese messages on war preparations the United States government failed to appreciate fully how strongly Japan resented the American attitude; she also tended to underestimate the Japanese willingness to fight rather than yield. Although Nomura, urged by Togo, pressed for a quick reply, the American government took its time, a posture which strengthened Japanese convictions that the United States was not interested in anything less than forcing Japan to her knees. On her part the American government could not afford to settle for less than just that. Not inclined to compromise she wanted the Tojo cabinet to prove her good intentions by withdrawing her troops from China and Indochina, abandon the Tripartite Pact, restore complete economic, financial and monetary control to China and pledge herself to respect the 'open door' policy. This was clearly unacceptable to Japan and by 18 November the talks reached an impasse.

At that moment Nomura and Saburo Kurusu, who was sent to Washington as a special envoy, attempted to break the deadlock. They suggested a partial agreement, providing for a return to the situation as of early July 1941, that is, before the occupation of South Indochina and the 'freezing' order. Although Hull was not very enthusiastic about it and continued to press for some concrete evidence of Japan's peaceful intentions, he agreed to discuss the matter with British, Dutch, Chinese and Australian diplomatic representatives. Nothing came out of this *modus vivendi* proposal, however, because on 19 November the Japanese foreign minister took his two envoys to task for having tabled the suggestion without prior consultation, and he instructed them to offer fresh proposals to the Americans. This second set of terms, already drafted on 5 November, had been kept in reserve in the event of the negotiations on the first proposals, submitted on the 7th, not being successful. According to these new suggestions the two governments were to undertake not to make any further armed advance into any region of South-East Asia or the Southern Pacific, to co-operate with one another towards acquiring raw materials from the Netherlands Indies and to restore their commercial relations on the basis prevailing prior to the 'freezing' order. The United States was to supply Japan with the oil she needed and to refrain from any activity prejudicial to the aim of securing peace in China. Japan reiterated her pledge with regard to the withdrawal of her forces from Indochina after the settlement of the 'Chinese Incident'.

To Hull these terms were too preposterous to be acceptable, but lest the United States be blamed for causing a break he did not abruptly reject them. As a counter-move he planned to offer a proposal for a temporary *modus vivendi*, according to which the Japanese would have to withdraw

all her troops from South Indochina, reduce the number of her forces in the rest of the French colony and agree to make no further advances, in exchange for an American undertaking to modify the export restrictions slightly. This was opposed, however, by Great Britain and China, the two nations which for obvious reasons saw no advantage in an American-Japanese agreement. Eager to avoid even the semblance of a 'Far Eastern Munich' Hull dropped his plan. Instead he presented a ten-point memorandum, containing a comprehensive proposal for a general peace settlement, which offered far stiffer terms to Japan. The Japanese would have to remove all their forces from China and Indochina, to surrender their extraterritorial rights in China, to join in a non-aggression pact of the powers interested in East and South-East Asia and to pledge themselves not to interpret the Tripartite Pact in any way that might prejudice the preservation of peace in the Pacific — all this in return for an undertaking on the part of the United States to remove some of the 'freezing' restrictions. This note of 26 November was a virtual ultimatum giving Japan the choice between surrender or economic strangulation; and by proposing these terms the United States closed the door for any further talks. In Japan it was understood as such; the decision to fight was taken in the last days of November and approved of by the Imperial Conference on 1 December. Frantic efforts by some Japanese leaders as well as urgent messages from Nomura and Kurusu to stop the impending disaster failed against Tojo's insistence that both the economic situation and the American policy left Japan no choice but to go to war.

On 6 December Japan replied to the American note. She accused the United States government of conspiring with Britain and other powers, of encircling her, of prolonging the war in China and pursuing a policy of imperialistic exploitation. In the light of all this she stated that it was impossible to reach an agreement through further negotiations. By that time the Japanese attack was already on its way: large troop-convoys were on the move from Cam Ranh Bay around the southern point of Indochina, heading towards the Gulf of Siam, while a special carrier-striking force was closing in on Hawaii, unnoticed by anyone. On 8 December 1941 (7 December, Washington time) the war began when Japanese troops landed at Singora and Patani in Southern Thailand and Kota Bharu in Malaya, and launched an attack on Hongkong. Japanese planes bombed Singapore, Wake island and some places in the Philippines, most disastrously Clark Air field base where half the American air force in the Far East was destroyed. But the most spectacular start of the war took place in Hawaii (7 December, local time), when Japanese planes and submarines raided Pearl Harbor and, with minimal losses to themselves, severely crippled the United States Pacific Fleet, destroying or putting out of operation 18 battleships and close to 350 planes and killing nearly 2,500 Americans. Combined with the strike on Clark airfield this raid was the greatest military catastrophe in the history of the United States.

On 9 December (8 December in Washington and London) the Netherlands, Great Britain and the United States declared war on Japan. The next day the Japanese gained another formidable victory, this time in the South China Sea off the coast of Malaya. A squadron of bombers and torpedo planes sank the two British warships H.M.S. *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, which were sailing north to protect Malaya against Japanese landings. In this engagement, a very one-sided affair which lasted slightly more than two hours, the Japanese wiped out British naval power in Asia and cancelled the third and last of the most powerful Allied deterrents that might have delayed or even checked their advance. A severe bombing of the naval dockyards at Cavite, on Manila Bay, also on the 10th, deprived the American Asiatic Fleet of a suitable base in the Philippines, while finally, the capture of Guam, the only American island in the Marianas, cut the lifeline between the United States and the American forces in South-East Asia.

THE OCCUPATION OF THAILAND

To these three dazzling military triumphs within three days Japan added a diplomatic success by forcing Thailand into her sphere of influence. In the preceding months it had become increasingly difficult for the government in Bangkok to maintain her traditional policy of preserving friendly relations with all the neighbouring powers. The weakening of Thailand's capability of playing these powers off against each other was partly due to the circumstances — the growing influence of Japan — but it was also the consequence of her anti-French campaign in early 1941. In taking revenge for what France had done to Thailand five decades earlier, Phibun Songkhram had the full support of Thai public opinion, and the annexation of Indochinese territory was a clear victory for Thai nationalism, but by embarking upon this course Thailand brought herself in a position in which she was virtually deprived of her freedom of action. In order to minimize any undesirable international consequence of the French-Thai conflict Japan stepped in and, while offering her mediation, she also made sure that the government in Bangkok undertook not to enter into an agreement with a third power by which she might get involved in any anti-Japanese coalition.

There existed strong pro-Japanese tendencies among Thai political leaders and in the course of 1941 larger supplies of rice, rubber, tin and other materials were being sent to Japan than before, but in general the Thais deplored the progressive linking of their fortunes with those of Japan. They were particularly shocked by the occupation of South Indochina in July 1941, because it made them appreciate in full what dangers to their independence might emerge out of this Japanese move. Although the Japanese had supported the Thai claims *vis-à-vis* Indochina and, in other

respects too, the ambitions of Phibun's regime were in harmony with the trend of Japanese policy of opposing European influence, the Thais on the whole did not relish the idea of Japan becoming too powerful, because they realized that a Japanese preponderance in the area would curtail their actions far more than had been the case under a European hegemony which, divided between Great Britain and France, had left them some room for manoeuvring.

When as a result of the occupation of South Indochina the United States adopted a stiffer attitude towards Japan, this seemed to create an opportunity for Thailand to test her traditional policy once again, in an attempt to avail herself of American support to avoid being totally drawn into the Japanese orbit. While Phibun Songkhram proclaimed Thailand's determination to defend herself to the last man against a foreign invasion and, on 11 September, the Thai parliament adopted a resolution to that effect, the government made an appeal to the United States to send arms and ammunition, particularly aircraft and artillery. At the same time a proposal was presented to the British government for a common defence of Malaya. Thailand did not get much support, however, because the Americans had hardly anything to spare and their defence was concentrated on the Philippines, not on South-East Asia's mainland. In the light of Phibun's opportunist policies, moreover, the United States did not have the guarantee that materials supplied to Thailand would not eventually fall into the wrong hands. Because of the premonition that Thailand might soon come under Japanese domination, either voluntarily or by force, the British planned to occupy the Kra Isthmus in November, but they delayed the action until they gained the approval of the American government. In fact the Japanese were hoping that Britain would make such a move as this would enable them to present themselves as the defenders of Thai independence.

The Japanese government decided on 23 November that, on the outbreak of the war, she would ask the authorities in Bangkok for permission to send her troops through Thai territory. On 7 December, late at night, the Japanese ambassador went to see Phibun Songkhram to deliver an ultimatum to this effect. Instead of Phibun, who was on an inspection tour, he met the vice-premier and the foreign minister, who told him that they could not make a decision on the matter. A few hours later, in the early morning of the 8th, Japanese forces landed in Southern Thailand and near the mouth of the Menam river, demonstrating that, whatever reply the Thais gave to the ultimatum, they were going to enter the country. There was some resistance from the Thai army but this was stopped later in the day by order of Phibun who had returned to the capital. In the Thai cabinet opinions were divided, but after the defence minister pointed out that the armed forces were in no position to defend the country successfully against the Japanese, Phibun, who advocated an acceptance of the ultimatum, carried the majority. It was agreed that Japanese troops

heading for Malaya and Burma would be allowed to pass through Thailand. In making this decision the government in Bangkok put Thailand militarily in the same situation as the French authorities had done with Indochina four months earlier. When British forces in a countermove against the Japanese invasion crossed the Malayan border into Thailand they were resisted by Thai troops.

Indochina, too, was given an ultimatum on the 8th. The Japanese seem to have expected that the French colonial authorities might have felt sufficiently encouraged by Japan's involvement in a general war to cancel the agreements of 1940 and July 1941. In such an event all the advantages of Japan's peaceful penetration would have come to naught and the smooth execution of her strategic plans would be jeopardized. Therefore Japanese troops occupied the vital points in Hanoi the moment their representative submitted the ultimatum to the governor-general. No new concessions were requested; the French authorities were merely asked not to deviate from the principle of 'common defence' in this, Japan's most momentous hour. Decoux demanded a day's delay, but on 9 December he did as desired. The acceptance of this ultimatum consolidated the status of French Indochina as a Japanese protectorate in a military sense, a Japanese vassal-state in a political and a Japanese colony in an economic sense.

In the next few weeks Phibun Songkhram went further, however, than Decoux — and this on a voluntary basis. By permitting Japanese troops to use Thai territory as a base for their attack on the British, the government in Bangkok jettisoned her traditional attitude in international affairs. In fact it compelled her to reconsider her foreign policy, and more in particular to decide whether her compliance with the Japanese ultimatum should be left at that or be followed up with a fully-fledged alliance such as the Japanese ambassador had proposed on the 8th. It was logical that, having gone thus far, Thailand should embark on such a course. It was believed that under the circumstances Thailand's future would be better guaranteed if she joined Japan, and this belief was considerably strengthened by the news about the H.M.S. *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, which convinced the Thais that British power in the area had come to an end. The prospect of territorial gains at the cost of Malaya also induced the Thai government to become Japan's ally. In the cabinet this new course led to a conflict with Pridi Phanomyong, but after his resignation for which the Japanese had been pressing, the advocates of a close alliance with Japan gained the upper hand. On 21 December a treaty was signed by which both countries undertook to assist each other militarily, politically and economically, in the event of a conflict with a third power; in a secret protocol Thailand pledged herself to support Japan in her war efforts against the United States and Britain, in exchange for a Japanese promise to help Thailand to regain her lost territories.

Formally this alliance was still primarily of a defensive nature, but the next step made Thailand an active participant in the war; and this was the condition which Japan was referring to on 8 December when she suggested the possibility of Thailand annexing some of the Malay states. The course of the war at the time did not give Phibun Songkhram any reason to doubt the ultimate victory of Japan or to be afraid of any adverse consequence of Thailand's choice against the Allies. Blaming the British for economic manipulations and the Americans for not supplying the aircraft Thailand had ordered during her conflict with Indochina, and charging both powers with air attacks on Thai territory, the government in Bangkok declared war on the United States and Great Britain on 25 January 1942.

THE MILITARY POSITION OF THE WESTERN POWERS

When the war in the Pacific started the capacity of the colonial nations to defend their positions in South-East Asia was totally inadequate. It is true that the possibility of an armed conflict in the area had occurred to Western politicians and strategists ever since Japan transformed herself into a strong military power and demonstrated her expansionist designs, but for a long time such an eventuality was regarded as only hypothetical. There was a general lack of appreciation of the factors, political as well as economic, which shaped Japan's policy, while the tendency to underestimate the determination of her political rulers or the organizing talents and the technical ability of her military leaders was as strong as the inclination to overrate the awe with which Western superiority was supposed to inspire Japan. Western strategy, or rather the defensive measures of most of the Western nations, centred around the assumption that any Japanese attack in a southerly direction was bound to come by sea. Consequently South-East Asia's defence was almost entirely based on the expectation that British sea power would be able to keep the Japanese at bay. In case of a war Japanese forces would have to take off from bases situated at a great distance from South-East Asia, which made it likely that the British navy would arrive in time from Europe to reinforce the naval strength already stationed in the area. The defence of Burma, the Netherlands Indies and Malaya started from the concept that the British war fleet, possibly in co-operation with Dutch naval forces, would be capable of maintaining control over the vital sea routes and, thus, function as a protective shield. Relying on Singapore, the greater part of South-East Asia was militarily not prepared for any attack.

But in spite of some improvements carried out, on and off, between the early 1920s and the late 1930s, the defence of Singapore itself was inadequately organized. The great naval base was under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Admiralty, with the result that it was well-protected

only against an attempt at invasion coming from the sea. Furthermore, air-support was insufficient. Because of this the value of the base as a *point d'appui* for any large squadron was highly dubious. At best Singapore's significance lay in its reputation as an impregnable British bastion, which might still serve to dissuade the Japanese from attacking it.

From late in 1938 a great deal of the self-assurance with which the Western powers used to look at their military position in Asia vanished when it was realized that the Japanese were posing a greater challenge than was hitherto expected. Preparations for defending the region were begun but they were greatly hampered by the outbreak of the European war in late 1939. In addition to this handicap, the calculation upon which the strategic concepts to defend the South-East Asian territories had been based proved fundamentally erroneous by mid-1941. By occupying South Indochina and establishing naval and air force bases there, Japan considerably shortened the distance her forces would have to sail towards their targets. This made it extremely questionable that any reinforcements from Europe would arrive in time, if such reinforcements could be spared at all. Furthermore large parts of South-East Asia had come within easy reach of the Japanese air force, which made the absence of any proper air protection a problem of momentous proportions. Finally the occupation of South Indochina provided Japan with an overland route to Malaya, and this seriously affected Singapore's position, not only directly by exposing the naval base to the threat of an attack by land, but also indirectly. By obtaining a foothold on mainland South-East Asia Japan changed the character of the approaching struggle from the naval conflict such as the Western powers had anticipated into a war on land as well as one at sea. Thus the fundamental significance of British maritime power as a protective shield was greatly reduced now that it could be neutralized by simply by-passing it.

Since late 1940 the Western nations, with the deficient means at their disposal, had stepped up preparations for the defence of their positions in the region, and after July 1941, with the Japanese closing in on them and the war becoming more imminent, this was done at an accelerated speed. The British sent additional troops and aircraft to Malaya and moved naval reinforcements to the South-East Asian seas, increasing their naval strength to four battleships, one aircraft-carrier, four heavy and thirteen light cruisers and a few destroyers. When the war broke out the ground-forces available in Malaya totalled nearly 89,000, of whom 20,000 were British, 15,000 Australian and 37,000 Indian troops. However a large part of the fighting services was poorly equipped and insufficiently trained.

Apart from preserving law and order it was the major task of the Dutch armed forces to preserve the neutrality of the Netherlands Indies in case of a conflict between the great powers. To resist successfully an outside attack the military potential of the colony was far too small. At the outbreak of the war the army consisted of 35,000 regulars, to which 25,000 conscripts

could be added by mobilization; they were used mainly for garrison duties throughout the immense territory. Java had some coastal defences only at Batavia and at Surabaya naval base, and wherever there were defensive works in the Outer Territories, these were designed for temporarily holding up the enemy rather than for beating him off — as in Tarakan and Balik Papan where the defenders, before withdrawing, needed some time to destroy the oil installations. The navy was likely to form the main line of defence in this archipelago, but the Dutch had neither battleships nor aircraft-carriers, only three cruisers, seven destroyers, fifteen submarines and an extremely pugnacious commander-in-chief, Admiral Coenraad Helfrich. As to an air force, the Dutch military leaders in the Indies seem to have been aware of the essential significance of this at an earlier moment than the Americans and the British, but they did not have the time to implement their plans. After the collapse of the Netherlands in May 1940 the Indies were greatly inconvenienced by the cessation of industrial imports from the home country, and the colony hurriedly started to produce war materials itself. In spite of the unavoidably improvised nature of such efforts in a territory which lacked any basic industrial apparatus, the Dutch were not totally without success.

The Philippines were far closer to the Japanese bases than any other part of South-East Asia, with Formosa still the southernmost starting-point for any grand-scale southward invasion. Consequently the Americans did not depend on Singapore or British naval strength for the protection of the islands, but this did not mean that their defensive capacity was any better than that of the Dutch or the British colonies. For some decades American military circles had considered the Philippines a territory which the United States would not be able to hold in case of a Japanese attack. Instead the Americans used to derive comfort from the view that Japan would not venture to attack the Philippines, as this would bring about a showdown with the greatest industrial power in the world, on which she had to rely for the import of vital materials. In the course of 1940, however, and particularly after July 1941, the United States reinforced the Philippine garrison. The Americans did so in a rather optimistic mood since they relied upon the power of the 'flying fortresses', heavy bombers with a large operation radius and a great bombing capacity. With an adequate force of such planes at their disposal, they hoped to be capable of repelling an invading army as well as effectively blockading the South China Sea against any southward-bound Japanese war fleet. Early in November 1941, in co-operation with the British, Dutch, Australian and New Zealand authorities, work started on the establishment of a chain of airfields in the South-West Pacific as bases for the flying fortresses. At the same time the United States sent additional troops, tanks, artillery, submarines and aeroplanes to the Philippines and in July 1941 a new command was created, the United States Armed Forces in the Far East, headed by General Douglas MacArthur. The mobilization of a Philippine

army was ordered, starting on 1 September. When the war broke out American armed forces in the Philippines totalled 31,000 troops, partly Americans, partly Filipino regulars, the so-called Philippine Scouts: Filipino conscripts numbered an estimated 100,000 to 120,000. The United States Asiatic Fleet, stationed in Manila, consisted of three cruisers, thirteen destroyers, six gunboats, six motor torpedo boats and thirty-two submarines.

Of all Western territories in South-East Asia Burma was by far the most neglected. It was subordinated to the same colonial power as Malaya, and as the defence of Britain's position in the region — and in British India — depended primarily on holding Singapore, the protection of Malaya was given priority, with the result that Burma received hardly any reinforcements. Furthermore there was the view that, situated behind an impenetrable barrier of jungles and mountains along the Thai-Burmese frontier, Burma would be relatively safe from any flank-attack over land. Under the Government of Burma Act military affairs were a reserved subject, but between September 1939 and the outbreak of the Pacific War the ultimate responsibility for them changed three times, a situation which was not conducive to a smooth organization of Burma's defence. When the war started Burma was ill-prepared, with a force consisting of two divisions, mainly Indians and non-Burman Burmese, who were inadequately trained and poorly equipped.

In spite of all efforts to strengthen the military potential, the defensive power of the Western nations was not increased. When the war broke out Malaya had not a single tank; Java had only twenty out of which eight were temporarily out of order. In Burma Austrian anti-tank guns were used, dating from the First World War. The Home and City Guards, a volunteer corps in the Netherlands Indies, were without fighting value; for the conscripts not enough arms were available. Among the troop reinforcements Britain sent to Malaya and Burma during the later part of 1941, there were many who had been trained for desert fighting, not for a jungle war. In the Philippines the American troops and the Philippine Scouts were well-trained but short of equipment, while the Filipino conscripts lacked equipment as well as training. Particularly alarming was the lack of fighter aeroplanes and of anti-aircraft protection, as a result of which no adequate air cover could be provided either for the ground forces, the navy, or the vital military installations. This deficiency in airpower almost totally neutralized the outcome of all attempts to bring about an effective strengthening of the military potential of the region, as was proved in the first days of the war when both the American flying fortresses, neatly lined up at Clark, and the H.M.S. *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* on the high seas off Kuantan turned out to be mere sitting ducks for the Japanese air force.

The final unfavourable aspect, seen from a Western point of view, was the total absence of any comprehensive plan for the defence of the region.

Since early 1941 joint staff conferences were formally held, but no common strategy emerged out of these. This failure was the result of the vastness of the area as well as of the Western emphasis on the defensive nature of their military co-operation. Consequently the choice of the place, or places, on which attention should be focussed, was with Japan, and as the Japanese had a wide choice and their adversaries could not possibly anticipate where they would strike, the Western powers were not in a position to draw up a strategic plan covering all eventualities. Their co-operation did not go beyond attempts to co-ordinate military preparations and drafting schemes for combining the forces at their disposal. For the rest the defence of South-East Asia was left to each of them separately. All chances of a successful military co-operation were reduced to nil, furthermore, when, by occupying South Indochina, the Japanese drove a wedge into whatever Allied defence system there could have been devised. Before launching her actual attack Japan had already won a decisive victory by destroying the region's strategic unity. After three days of war she had obtained complete supremacy at sea and in the air and, thus, won the fight for South-East Asia. Apart from a few pitched battles, the outcome of which was never really in doubt, the Japanese conquest amounted to hardly anything more substantial than a series of mopping-up operations.

The raid on Pearl Harbor was masterminded by the commander of the Japanese Combined Fleet, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, who wanted to cripple America's major force in the Pacific in order to prevent it from taking part in the initial stages of the war. Also the capture of Guam and Wake, the two American naval stations between Hawaii and Asia, on 10 and 23 December, belonged to the series of actions designed to ensure that the United States could not effectively intervene before Japan had realised her primary aims in South-East Asia and the South-West Pacific. Although related to the battle for South-East Asia these moves took place on the fringes of the main theatre of operations. So was the conquest of Hongkong, which surrendered on 26 December.

The operations in South-East Asia fell under the responsibility of the Southern Area Army and the naval Southern Force, totalling ten divisions and some independent brigades, three fleets and seventy air squadrons. Of the land forces one division was designated for Indochina and the remainder grouped into four armies for the actual drive towards the south: to each of these armies, which had been mobilized on 6 November 1941, a special area was allotted. Two fleets were taking part in the conquest of South-East Asia proper; the other was employed in the South-West Pacific outside the region. In addition to these naval forces the so-called Carrier Fleet, the special task-force which executed the raid on Pearl Harbor, saw action in some parts of the Indies. The Japanese navy possessed its own infantry, the special naval landings detachments. For the transport of the military forces a tonnage of close to 1,500,000 was available. All naval and ground actions were supported by the air force of both services. The

invasion force for South-East Asia and the South-West Pacific comprised only a fraction of Japan's military strength; her main battleship force was kept in reserve, the air squadrons participating in the conquest of the region represented less than half her air force, and while nine divisions were actually engaged in the fight, twenty-one were immobilized in China, fourteen in Korea and Manchuria and fifteen in Japan. The Western colonial empires in South-East Asia were conquered by a force of no more than 400,000 men, but unlike their adversaries the Japanese troops were well-prepared, well-disciplined and well-trained, seasoned by recent active service, adequately equipped and technically highly-skilled. In some of their campaigns, moreover, the Japanese followed an unconventional strategy which took the Western defenders completely by surprise.

THE CONQUEST UNTIL THE SURRENDER OF SINGAPORE

The first principal objectives of the Japanese assault were Malaya, the Philippines and British Borneo; once these territories had been captured or their defending forces neutralized, the next phase had to develop. When the war broke out the army designated to conquer the Philippines was assembled in Formosa and the Ryu Kyu Islands. By then the army for Malaya, by far the stronger of the two, numbering about 150,000 of the best Japanese fighting troops under the command of general Tomoyuki Yamashita, was already in the Gulf of Siam where in two slow transport convoys, it had sailed from its bases in Hainan and South Indochina. On 8 December landings were made at Kota Bharu, Singora and Patani. The Japanese main force, which landed in Southern Thailand, crossed the peninsula and invaded Malaya's west coast states; in a matter of days they won command of the air, pushed their way through the defensive positions at Jitra in Kedah on 12 December and advanced southward along the railway and main road. With no tanks at their disposal the forces under British command were no match for the Japanese who had tanks and who, whenever they met with some strong resistance, outflanked the defending troops either by going through the jungle and reappearing in the rear, or by effecting a naval landing operation further south on the coast. Time and again the British forces had to retreat: on 14 December they gave up Penang, on the 28th Ipoh. On 6–8 January 1942 a fierce battle developed at Slim River, but the attempt to arrest the Japanese advance failed with heavy losses. After this disaster General Archibald Wavell, who on 29 December had assumed supreme command over the joint American, British, Dutch and Australian (ABDA)-forces in South-East Asia, decided that the troops defending Malaya should withdraw to the northern part of Johore and make preparations for fighting the decisive battle there. On 11 January the Japanese entered Kuala Lumpur.

By the time the British, Indian and Australian defenders took up positions in Johore in a final attempt to stop the Japanese advance towards Singapore, the American defence of Luzon had already collapsed. The bulk of the American defending army in the Philippines was concentrated in this island, but like the British in Malaya it succeeded neither in protecting the airfields nor in preventing the Japanese from disembarking troops. After the disastrous attack on Clark the Japanese had obtained control of the air and by incessant raids on military targets they continued to prepare the ground for their operations. The first landings took place on 10 and 12 December, near Vigan and Aparri on the north coast and at Legaspi in the south-eastern tip of the island. These were only preliminary actions, carried out by small detachments, and they were regarded as such by the Americans who expected the main strength of the Japanese army to attack in Lingayen Gulf. Consequently the first landing forces did not meet with great resistance, and they established a firm foothold. The major Japanese drive, carried out by the 43,000-strong invading army under the command of General Masaharu Homma, was directed at the central portion of the island and on 22 December a large force went ashore in Lingayen Gulf. Yet, in spite of the fact that the Americans had anticipated this, they were unable to repel the invaders who in a few days surmounted American and Filipino resistance, joined forces with the earlier landing party, took Baguio on the 24th and opened up the northern route towards Manila. Meanwhile the situation had become far more serious for the defenders when on 23 and 24 December other forces landed in Lamon Bay, to the south-east of the capital. Immediately MacArthur realized that the Japanese were closing in on Manila in a pincer movement, and unable to stop them he decided to execute an old defensive plan which originally he had shelved as defeatist. This plan provided for the retreat of all troops to the jungle-clad mountainous peninsula of Bataan, where they were to make a last stand in the hope that reinforcements would arrive from the United States. Between 24 December and 2 January the operation was carried out: valuable military supplies were transported to the island fortress of Corregidor, and the troops withdrew to Bataan, leaving Luzon to the invaders. On 2 January the Japanese entered Manila.

British Borneo, an objective incorporated in the initial phase of their military plan, was strategically important to the Japanese, because it would safeguard their communication lines with Malaya, secure for Japan supplies of oil and facilitate her drive towards Java. On 15 December a landing was effected at Miri, where the oilfields were occupied without opposition. Eight days later a Japanese convoy anchored off Kuching, where it met with stiff resistance from the defence forces and some Dutch submarines which sank a couple of transport ships and landing craft. Nevertheless the landing was made and Kuching captured on the 24th. Under heavy Japanese attacks the troops under British command, including some units of the Sarawak State Forces, withdrew into Netherlands

Borneo. After the fall of Sarawak, North Borneo was open to Japanese attacks, which came from two directions. On 1 January 1942 Labuan island was occupied, providing the Japanese with a sheltered harbour. Less than a week later, on the 5th, Brunei was taken and on the 6th the Japanese arrived in Jesselton. While this part of North Borneo was invaded by troops coming from Indochina, the other side of the territory fell into the hands of forces which, originally based on the Palau islands, had occupied Davao in Mindanao on 20 December, and from there Jolo, the capital of the Sulu archipelago, on the 25th. From these two points the Japanese were in a position to launch their offensive against North Borneo, and it was from Jolo that the landing craft left which, on 19 January, occupied Sandakan.

Davao Bay, on the other hand, was made into the staging area for a far more ambitious Japanese operation, a three-pronged advance towards Bandjarmasin, Macassar and Timor, in order to cut the supply routes from Australia to both Singapore, still Japan's first major target, and Java, the culmination-point of their southward drive. The three forces to which this task had been given were all combined navy-army forces. Those in the western and central sectors left their base simultaneously, heading for Netherlands Borneo and the Celebes. On 11 January they attacked Tarakan island which was captured on the 12th, while the Dutch thoroughly destroyed the drilling plants and dynamited the oil-wells. The same day the Japanese overwhelmed the small Dutch garrison in the north-eastern tip of the Celebes. From these two points the invaders pushed forward into the Strait of Macassar and the Molucca Sea. The offensive came as a surprise, since the Allied commanders had not expected the Japanese to launch any large-scale attack in the Indies as long as Singapore and the Philippines had not yet fallen into their hands. But they immediately sensed the danger which this drive posed to their communication lines and they hurriedly assembled whatever planes and naval craft they had available in the eastern areas. On 24 January, when Japanese troops disembarked at Balik Papan and the Dutch defenders were setting fire to the oil tanks, a small force of four American destroyers and some Dutch submarines and airplanes sank six transports, thus inflicting on the Japanese the heaviest losses which any of their convoys sustained during their whole campaign in South-East Asia. But the capture of Balik Papan could not be prevented: the town fell the same day. On 24 January, too, a Japanese landing force, by-passing the eastern part of Celebes, went ashore at Kendari, which was taken together with its great airfield. Further to the east the Japanese, before entirely completing the first phase of their overall operation, already started to execute the second, with South Sumatra, Ambon, Timor and New Britain as its principal objectives. On the South-West Pacific front a strong combined navy-army force landed on New Ireland and New Britain in the Australian mandated territory of New Guinea, and captured Rabaul on 23 January. In the meantime the

third attack of the three-pronged advance from Davao into the Indies developed: it was pointed against Ambon, a strategically well-located island with a natural harbour, a great airfield and a seaplane alighting area. It was defended by a Netherlands Indies garrison, reinforced with Australian troops, but it lacked protection against the bombings and strafings which the Japanese air force was carrying out almost constantly. On 30 January the invasion came when Japanese troops made several landings on the island and, after some bitter fighting stamped out all resistance on 2 February.

Meanwhile on the western flank of the immense war theatre Yamashita's armed forces were pushing down towards their main target: Singapore. After the disaster at Slim River and the evacuation of central Malaya by the troops under British command, positions had been taken up along a line running principally across the north of Johore state, while a convoy of American vessels brought in reinforcements which the British hoped to deploy in time for the defence. In the central sector of this front an Australian batallion ambushed and killed a great many Japanese near Gemas, on 14 January, but the next day, facing the rapidly increasing strength the Japanese were bringing in, it had to fall back to Segamat. Further to the south, the Japanese who had occupied Malacca crossed the broad mouth of the Muar river on 16 January, but their further advance met with strong resistance by Australian and Indian troops in a sanguinary battle developing for several days. Yet, the Japanese pushed their way through, forcing the defending troops in Segamat, in the central sector, to withdraw on 21 January in order not to be cut off. After fresh Japanese landings, on the 26th and 27th near Endau and Mersing on the east coast, it was realized by Malaya Command that the mainland could not be held any longer. During the last days of the month the British army withdrew, either over the Causeway, or by making its escape over sea, to Singapore island. On 31 January the Japanese entered Johore Bahru.

Singapore was not designed to meet an attack from over land. There were hardly any defensive positions on the northern side of the island, facing across the Straits of Johore, and its heavy guns could not be pointed towards the mainland. Although Churchill, in monumental disregard of the fate of the hundreds of thousands of civilians, had ordered on 19 January that the whole island had to be fought for until every single unit and strong point had been destroyed and that the city had to be defended to the last, Singapore was doomed from the beginning. The commander of the Eastern Fleet had already transferred his staff to Batavia; the naval base at Sembawang was abandoned and being demolished. Most of the defending air forces had been withdrawn to Sumatra. The Chinese of Singapore organized a mobilization committee for recruiting labourers on defence works. Among them many, most of them communists, volunteered to fight the Japanese, and for this purpose communist prisoners were released from jail. Apart from the normal garrison, the defending

forces were either reinforcements which had recently arrived from overseas, relatively inexperienced and poorly trained, or troops withdrawn from Malaya, disorganized, exhausted, disheartened by the defeat and with a low morale. A smooth organization of the defence was furthermore hampered by lack of co-operation between the civilian and the military authorities and misunderstandings between the commanders in Malaya and General Wavell's joint ABDA-Command.

After reaching the Johore Straits the Japanese waited for about a week before they launched their attack, but in this week their artillery and air force constantly shelled and bombed the island's airfields and other military targets, as well as the great city itself. On 8 February they landed on the north-western coast, gaining a foothold which, in spite of fierce resistance, they expanded in the following days. Gradually the defenders were thrown back and when on 11 February the water-reservoirs were captured by the Japanese the fate of Singapore was sealed. By the 13th the Japanese reached the outskirts of the city where hastily organized Chinese defence teams, though inadequately armed, fought courageously. The battle caused almost intolerable hardships to the civilian population, which had swollen to nearly two million by refugees from the north. In these circumstances the commander-in-chief, Sir Arthur Percival, realized that further resistance was useless and on the 15th he unconditionally surrendered his forces and Singapore to the Japanese. It was the greatest military catastrophe and the largest capitulation in British history, in which around 60,000 men were involved. In its political consequences, however, the capture of Singapore by Yamashita's army, the downfall of the impregnable British bastion in the East before Oriental troops, was an event of far greater significance than its immediate military aspects. Whatever the ultimate outcome of the Pacific War, 15 February 1942 was the end of the British Empire; it was also the end of European colonialism in Asia.

FROM THE SURRENDER OF SINGAPORE TO THE FALL OF RANGOON AND JAVA

While the Japanese were fighting their way into Singapore, they had already launched an attack on Sumatra. In the course of January their air force did its preparatory work over the island, which was poorly protected. The Dutch expected the first Japanese assault to be directed against the economically rich territories of the East Coast residency, and they transported the rubber and tobacco stocks across Sumatra towards the west coast ports, in order to be shipped out of the invaders' reach, while they set fire to the oil installations. The Japanese attacked South Sumatra first, however. On 6–7 February they bombed Palembang air-field, destroying a large part of the British aircraft which had escaped from

Malaya and Singapore, and on the 14th paratroops, flown in from bases in Malaya, were dropped. The same day seaborne troops went ashore near the Musi estuary. They moved up to Palembang, joined the paratroops on 15 February and took the town, the airfield and the oilfields which could not be properly destroyed. The defenders, Netherlands Indies troops and some thousand British, retreated to Telok Betong, from which place they hurriedly left for Java.

The swift collapse of the Allied defence in South Sumatra caused a serious threat to Java, and this the more so since the Japanese had already secured the Bornean side of the western advance route to this island. On 27 January their troops landed at Pemangkat, captured Singkawang airfield and Pontianak on the 29th and forced the weak defending detachments to retreat into the interior. At the same time the Japanese were closing in on Java from the east. An assault force sailed around Celebes and landed near Macassar on 9 February; the town was captured the next day. In south-east Borneo the Japanese marched from Balik Papan down to Bandjarmasin, which was also taken on the 10th.

In February 1942 the Japanese advance also constituted a direct threat to the mainland of Australia, which in Allied military circles was already considered the main base for the struggle against Japan in South-East Asia. On the South-West Pacific front the Japanese had made several landings in Australian New Guinea. Far greater was the danger arising out of the capture of Timor. This island was considered vital for the defence of Australia and immediately after the outbreak of the war Australian troops had been sent there to reinforce the small Dutch garrison. As the Netherlands Indies authorities and the Australians did not consider it beyond the Japanese to violate Portugal's neutrality in the conflict, they did it for them; and in spite of the remonstrations made by the governor a small party of Dutch and Australian troops occupied Dili on 17 December. The government in Lisbon vehemently protested against this move, so that it was arranged that the Allied troops would withdraw as soon as a strong enough Portuguese force arrived to replace them. The Portuguese reinforcements, sailing from Africa, were still at sea when the Japanese attacked Timor. The invasion was preceded by a disastrous air attack on Darwin, in northern Australia, on 19 February, during which heavy losses were inflicted upon the assembled naval craft and aircraft. The next day Japanese paratroops were dropped at Penfui airfield, while naval forces landed, almost simultaneously, near Kupang and Dili. Both towns were captured after which the Japanese swarmed into the interior, encountering sharp resistance by the Dutch and Australians who managed to hold out for several weeks.

Meanwhile the Japanese were gaining another great victory in a different theatre of the war. Burma, like Java, was the objective of the third and final phase of the gigantic operation Japan had set in motion. It was here that the colonial power had to face not only the Japanese

invaders but also the hostility of the nationalist movement. Around the 'Thirty Comrades', mainly belonging to the Thakin group, a volunteer army had been planned and on 26 December 1941 it was officially created as the Burma Independence Army. It assembled in Bangkok and crossed into Burma together with the Japanese forces. Once in Burma it took on many recruits but most of them were untrained, undisciplined and poorly equipped, and as the Japanese command was not very keen on their participation in the regular fighting, they were generally kept away from the actual battle, although in some cases they took an active part in it. It was the principal task of the B.I.A., behind the Japanese lines, to control local administrative bodies in the conquered territories, while in the areas held by the British their main role was limited to sabotage and intelligence work. Among the elder nationalists, too, pro-Japanese sentiments grew stronger the moment the war started, but they did not openly show this before the British had gone, with the exception of Prime Minister U Saw. On his journey back from London he was caught by the outbreak of hostilities, and as his policy of supporting the British war efforts during the previous year had been based on opportunist considerations only, he did not hesitate to change sides after being rebuffed by the British government. He made contact with the Japanese legation in Lisbon, but this was detected by British intelligence and on his arrival in Haifa he was arrested on 19 January 1942 and sent to Uganda. In his place Sir Paw Tun, a noted Anglophile, took over the premiership.

The Japanese invasion came from Thailand from which it had been least expected. It started early in January 1942 and it was carried out by a force consisting of only two divisions under the command of General Shojiro Iida. Within two weeks it was evident that the formidable jungle mountains along the frontier, on which the British had placed so much confidence, were not impassable after all. Entering Burma in two columns, the Japanese overran Tenasserim and converged upon Moulmein, which was captured on 31 January. The Salween, where the defending armies made their first stand, was no more of a natural barrier than the mountainous jungle territory of the frontier had been. The Japanese crossed the river, took Martaban on 11 February, broke through the defences at the Bilin and pushed on towards the Sittang, upon which the British forces were falling back. As in Malaya the defenders were baffled by the tactics of the invaders who avoided the roads, abstained from direct frontal attacks and repeatedly outflanked the British positions.

The Sittang was the last natural barrier of any significance. Behind it ran the railway line from Rangoon to Mandalay and once this route was cut, the way to the capital would be open to the Japanese while, at the same time, an important evacuation route over land would be blocked. The battle at the lower Sittang developed into a disaster for the British when, on 23 February, the only bridge was blown up to prevent further Japanese penetration to the west, but ten battalions and practically all

the heavy equipment of these troops were still on the eastern side of the river. There was now a big gap in the British defences, through which the Japanese rushed forward, outflanking Pegu and cutting both the railway and the highway routes. For the defending army there was no choice but to evacuate the Delta and to retreat to the Irrawaddy valley; on 6 March the order to this effect was given by Lord Alexander, the British commander. The withdrawal was obstructed by the exodus of some 400,000 Indian refugees of Lower Burma who, facing the extremely hostile attitude of the Burman population and acts of violence committed by members of the B.I.A., fled to the north. On 8 March the Japanese entered Rangoon.

Java fell the same day. With the Japanese pincer-movement to cut off the island from its sources of supply and reinforcement in the process of being carried out by the capture of Palembang and Timor, the Allied commanders realized that Java was lost. In the wider context of the war this eventuality was considered a serious but not a fatal blow such as the loss of India or Australia would be for the Allied cause. Consequently it was decided to give the defence of these territories priority over Java, which was in fact abandoned. There were to be no more reinforcements and on 25 February the joint ABDA-Command was dissolved. Whatever Allied forces remained in Java and in the waters around fell under the responsibility of Dutch commanders. With Admiral Helfrich in command the character of the war at sea changed immediately, and before the Japanese could launch their assault against Java they had to fight the greatest naval battle of the entire campaign for South-East Asia.

Preceding the invasion of Java Japanese troops landed on Bali, on 19 February, and captured the airfield, and although a combined Dutch-American squadron attacked the landing convoy in Lombok Strait, on 20 February, they established a firm foothold on the island. The main Japanese force designated for the actual attack on Java consisted of two large convoys; ninety-seven transports in total. One of these left Cam Ranh Bay, in French Indochina, on 20 February, and moved southward to the western tip of Java; it was protected against possible British naval intervention by a Japanese fleet in the Indian Ocean. The other assault convoy left its base at Jolo and headed for East Java through the Strait of Macassar; it was covered by a naval force of two heavy and two light cruisers and sixteen destroyers. It was this escorting squadron, commanded by rear-admiral Sokichi Takagi, which near Bawean island in the Java Sea, met the force of rear-admiral Karel Doorman, consisting of five cruisers and nine destroyers. In the ensuing battle, which lasted for five hours on 27 February, the Allied squadron was severely crippled, losing two cruisers and three destroyers. The remaining Allied cruisers were sunk in engagements in the next two days.

The battle in the Java Sea delayed the Japanese invasion of Java for one day, but its outcome sealed the fate of the island. There was no Allied naval force left; neither was there an air force worth the name since the

American planes and crews left as soon as possible. The defending army consisted of some 40,000 Netherlands Indies, Australian and British troops, but after the loss of Borneo and Sumatra the oil situation was desperate. Furthermore co-ordination was almost absent, proper intelligence was lacking and morale declined rapidly. Compared with the stubborn, albeit unsuccessful resistance of the Netherlands Indies navy, the defence of Java was an anti-climax, which turned the Japanese campaign on the island into a nine day walk-over. On 1 March 60,000 Japanese, commanded by General Hitoshi Imamura, landed on the northern coast, west of Surabaya and at either side of Batavia. In a surprise attack they captured Kalidjati airfield, and while in West Java two columns converged on the Batavia-Buitenzorg-Bandung area, the Japanese in East Java advanced towards Surabaya, with one unit crossing the island in a south-westerly direction. On 5 March the Dutch evacuated Batavia, Buitenzorg and Surakarta, on the 6th Djokjakarta, on the 7th Tjilatjap and on the 8th the Japanese entered Surabaya and threatened Bandung. That day General Hein ter Poorten offered unconditional surrender of all Netherlands Indies forces, in Java as well as in the Outer Territories; and the remnants of the British and Australian units on Java formally capitulated on the 12th.

THE CLEANING-UP OPERATIONS

With the capture of Java the Japanese had reached the final objective of their drive towards the south, with the exception of Burma. Scattered around in the region, now under their domination, a few pockets of resistance were left as well as some areas which they had by-passed or outflanked and which were still controlled by weak detachments of their adversaries. Most of the latter were in the Netherlands Indies and they were covered by the general capitulation of 8 March. Thus the Dutch forces which had maintained themselves in the interior of East and South Borneo surrendered on 9 March, those in West Borneo on the 12th, while the British-Punjabi unit which since December had been retreating from Sarawak was taken prisoner on 3 April. In the Celebes the troops which had evacuated Macassar in early February, had withdrawn into the central part of the southern peninsula, hoping to establish a guerrilla base, but facing the hostile attitude of the population they had no choice but to surrender when the Japanese attacked them; this they did at Enrékang on 27 March. The next day Sumatra fell into Japanese hands. It was here that the Dutch military authorities chose not to comply with the terms of the general surrender, but with an earlier instruction of General Ter Poorten in which he had ordered the territorial commanders to disregard a comprehensive capitulation. They evacuated the East Coast residency and took up positions in the mountainous areas of North and Central

Sumatra. In early March the Japanese disembarked troops in Atjeh and the East Coast states; on the 12th they entered Sabang and Kota Radja, on the 13th Medan, while another Japanese force marched across the island and captured Fort de Kock and Padang on the 17th. The defending detachments retreated towards Lake Toba and the Alas valley, but their position became hopeless in the face of a rebellion in Atjeh which, starting locally and on a small scale in February, assumed large proportions in the early weeks of March. This uprising was not in any way related to the Indonesian nationalist movement, neither was it clearly connected with any Japanese sponsorship, except, perhaps, for the timing: it was stirred up by the same elements which had been the most implacable leaders of Atjehnese resistance against the Dutch in the Atjeh War, the orthodox *ulamas*. Confused as they were the Dutch considered the traditional aristocratic chiefs the main instigators of the revolt and on 11 March they arrested several of them. But the next day they had to give up Kota Radja and on their retreat towards the Alas valley they were constantly harassed by the Atjehnese. This situation reduced whatever chances they would have had to put up an effective fight against the invaders, who took Takengön on 19 March. With Atjeh in full rebellion and the Japanese closing in on them from two sides the Dutch forces in Sumatra surrendered at Kuta Tjane on 28 March.

During their cleaning-up actions the Japanese encountered the fiercest resistance, ironically enough, on Luzon, of their major targets the one where they already seemed to have scored an easy victory in early January. Over-confident after the capture of Manila they mistook the withdrawal of American forces to Bataan for a rout, and they considered the Philippine campaign virtually over; the Japanese High Command, in fact, weakened Homma's army by depriving it of its best division which had to take part in the invasion of Java. It is true that the 80,000 troops in Bataan, among them 15,000 Americans, were in a hopeless situation: there was shortage of food, ammunition, medicine; they had no air and naval support and, with the Japanese navy commanding the sea, reinforcements were not arriving — the only factor in their favour was the rugged terrain of the peninsula. Yet the battle of Bataan was the most ferocious in the entire Japanese conquest of South-East Asia. It started on 10 January with a Japanese offensive and after savage fighting the American and Filipino positions became untenable on the 22nd. Retreating, the defenders took up a new and shorter line of defence, and this one they held in spite of strong Japanese attacks. By early February the Japanese had already lost 7,000 men in combat and there was no sign that they would quickly overcome American and Filipino resistance. But MacArthur realized that his troops would not hold out much longer and, prodded by Quezon, who was furious at the idea of the United States giving priority to the war in Europe, he urgently cabled for aid. To Washington, however, the Philippines were already lost. President Roosevelt persuaded Quezon to leave

his country and on the 20th the Philippine president and the members of his cabinet left Corregidor by submarine. MacArthur, who was to take command of the newly-defined South-West Pacific Area, followed on 11 March; General Jonathan Wainwright succeeded him as commander-in-chief in the Philippines. By that time the position of the defenders had become desperate: weakened by hunger, fatigue and malaria, with hardly any hope left and with their morale gradually sinking. On 3 April Homma's army, reinforced with fresh troops, totalling 65,000, unleashed an all-out offensive, supported by artillery and tanks, aeroplanes and naval bombardment. The final battle lasted for a week in which the Japanese pierced through the American lines and swarmed over the tiny peninsula, until the commander of the Bataan forces, General Edward P. King, surrendered on 9 April. With 70,000 troops involved it was the greatest surrender in American military history.

The final capitulation in the Philippines came a month later when, after an intense shelling, Corregidor island was stormed by the Japanese on 6 May. Wainwright intended to surrender only the troops on Corregidor, but Homma forced him to sign a general capitulation of all defending forces and to transmit it over Manila radio to the American commanders. At that moment the position of the American and Filipino forces in Mindanao and the Visayas had become quite serious. In the Visayas Japanese troops had landed on Mindoro, Cebu and Panay, and in Mindanao they had launched a strong attack by landing troops at Cotabato, on Illana Bay, on 29 April, and at Cagayan, in the northern part of the island, on 3 May. Nevertheless the American military situation was not considered so desperate by the commanding general in the area, William F. Sharp, to justify a surrender that would also cover troops on islands, like Negros, on which the Japanese had not yet set foot. But Wainwright was afraid that the Japanese might slaughter the prisoners they had made at Corregidor if the Mindanao-Visayan forces did not lay down their arms. He communicated his fears to Sharp and the latter surrendered on 9 May, followed in the next few days by the various island commanders.

The major battle for Burma also ended in the first week of May. Just before the evacuation of Rangoon an armoured division had reached the defending army, but after Rangoon was lost all supplies and reinforcements could only arrive by air. The Japanese on the other hand could freely strengthen their army with forces from Malaya. They immediately continued their advance against the British and Indian troops who were falling back on Prome, and against two Chinese armies which, under the nominal command of the American General Joseph B. Stilwell, had entered Burma via the Burma road and were taking up positions around Toungoo. On 22–23 March the Japanese gained supremacy in the air by almost completely wiping out the Allied air force at its bases at Magwe and Akyab. On two fronts their ground forces pushed forward: along the Irrawaddy and the Sittang. The Chinese armies made a determined

stand at Toungoo, but on the 30th they had to give up the town. At the same time the defenders' positions on the Irrawaddy were broken near Shwedaung, in a fight in which the B.I.A. participated, and on 2 April Prome was evacuated. The retreating British, Indian and Chinese forces attempted to defend a line roughly running from Minhla over Taungdwingyi to Pyinmana, but in a rapid march the Japanese drove a wedge between the Irrawaddy and the Sittang sectors, threatening to encircle the Indian troops on the Irrawaddy and forcing them to withdraw again. On 21 April they captured Yenangyaung and the oilfields, which had been destroyed by the British. Even more serious to the defenders was the Japanese penetration into Karenni and the Southern Shan states; the Chinese forces were defeated at Loilem on 23 April and Lashio was taken on the 29th. Thus the Japanese cut the Chinese escape route over the Burma road; at about the same time they effected landings on the Arakan coast and marched upon Akyab, which they took on 4 May.

The crumbling of the Allied front on the Irrawaddy and the Japanese move into the Shan states marked the end of all attempts to check the Japanese advance in Burma. The major objective of the British was now to defend British India and consequently it became the primary task of General Alexander's forces to extricate themselves as quickly as possible from the Burmese war theatre. On 26 April the evacuation started, across the Irrawaddy to the Chindwin, while the Chinese forces which had defended the Sittang sector and were retreating from Pyinmana, were to go north through Mandalay. On 2 May the Japanese troops entered Mandalay.

The retreat of the British forces developed into a race with the Japanese, who in a surprise attack captured Monywa on 1 May and, blocking one escape route towards India, forced the withdrawing army to use one single track, to Shwegyin and from there up the Chindwin to Kalewa and Sittaung. In spite of the many casualties, low morale, malaria and fatigue, the bulk of the British and Indian troops managed to retire to India, although they lost most of their equipment on their way. The rearguard left Burma on 19 May, not one moment too soon, because the first heavy rains of the monsoon had already started. The Chinese units were the last to leave. On 3 May the Japanese captured Namkhan, on the 5th Bhamo and on the 8th they pushed forward to Myitkyina in order to prevent the Chinese from escaping into China. In fact only one division managed to retreat to China, following the route through Fort Hertz and from there eastwards. Another division crossed the Chindwin near Paungbyin, on 31 May, and fighting some stiff rearguard actions reached Imphal, in Manipur. The last unit retreated through the difficult Hukawng valley, and arrived at Ledo in Assam, towards the end of July. For the Japanese there was nothing more to do but carry out mopping-up operations in the Shan states, and occupy the Nicobar islands, in July; the Andamans they had already occupied in March.

In the Netherlands Indies, too, the Japanese were by then in the process of rounding off their conquest by occupying the last enclaves of Dutch authority and stamping out the last resistance. On 6 April they took possession of Ternate, between the 16th and the 30th the islands west of Sumatra and in May the Lesser Sunda Islands. There was no fighting, except on Timor, where small Dutch and Australian units were still holding out in the interior, and on Jamdena, the main island of the Tanimbar group. On 30 July the Japanese occupied the Kai-, Aru- and Tanimbar islands, but it was only on 16 September that resistance on Jamdena ceased, when the last party of the defenders managed to escape to Australia. Early in August the Japanese launched an attack against the remaining pockets of resistance in Timor; the last Dutch made their escape by night on board a ship on 11 December. With the major points along the northern coast of New Guinea captured by the Japanese during the first half of April, Hollandia on the 19th, the entire Netherlands Indies, with the exception of New Guinea south of the Central Range, was in Japanese hands.

With relatively small losses — an estimated 15,000 killed or wounded — and in a masterly planned and executed military campaign of gigantic size, Japan had, in five months, swept over South-East Asia, destroyed the Western colonial empires and taken command over this immense territory. In the second half of 1942 she encountered her first reverses of the war. Not following up the victories of her fleet against the British navy, in April, in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean, with a move towards Ceylon or British India, she focused all her attention on the Pacific area and Australia, but here she lost the battle of the Coral Sea in early May and that of Midway in June, two events which halted the Japanese advance. In August the Allied counter-offensive started when the Americans landed on Guadalcanal, in the Solomons. But South-East Asia was firmly under Japanese domination and it was to remain so until it came within the reach of the Allied forces again, two years later.

Part III
Part of 'Greater East Asia'

Part of Central East Asia.

Part III

1 General Aspects of Japanese Rule

INTRODUCTION

For the first time in its history South-East Asia had come under the authority of one single power; this was the only fundamental political change effected by the Japanese conquest and occupation of the region. Although Japan was an Asian state, her rule was no less foreign than that of the Western nations. As regards its general character, its basic principles and intentions and its *modus operandi*, Japanese domination did not essentially differ from Western colonialism in any way. Politically as well as economically South-East Asia and its peoples continued to be controlled by outside forces, and neither the larger degree of native participation in the governments, nor the Japanese appeals to nationalist sentiments, altered the fact that South-East Asia's interests were as clearly subordinated to those of Japan as they had been to those of the West. Whenever deviations from Western colonial practice occurred, such as the predominant position of military personnel in the decision-making elite, the attempts to mobilize the indigenous peoples, the complete running down of the economy or the warlordist methods of governing, these were due to the emergency situation created by the Pacific war rather than to any fundamental difference in principles. According to the Japanese concept of empire South-East Asia was a major regional division of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, consisting of nations which, in varying degrees of subordination, were to be either direct dependencies of Japan or client-states under Japanese hegemony. From a Western point of view the Japanese occupation might well be considered a distinct break in the development of South-East Asia, but for the region and its peoples it only meant the continuation of the *ancien régime* under different

management. Feelings of racial superiority and of contempt for South-East Asia's natives were as much part and parcel of Japanese domination as they had been inherent in Western colonialism.

As to the immediate problems of administering the conquered territories the principles of Japanese policy had been laid down at the Liaison Conference of 20 November 1941. They were aimed primarily at consolidating Japan's power, subordinating the region to Japan's requirements and expediting the acquisition of resources vital to Japan's national defence. Each territory was placed under a military government which had to restore order, to respect social and national customs and to utilize the existing administrative structures. As the needs of the Japanese armed forces were to have priority over the interests of the indigenous population, the authorities were to exercise full control over transportation, communication, financial and commercial facilities, and in order to ensure the economic self-sufficiency of military personnel they had to use local supplies of food and raw materials. The nationals of the Western powers as well as the Chinese should be persuaded to co-operate, and appropriate measures, such as deportation, should be applied to recalcitrants. The indigenous inhabitants had to co-operate, too, and they should be made to feel dependent on the Japanese armed forces. While outlining these principles, the Liaison Conference did not touch upon the future status of the territories concerned, except for the brief and, from a South-East Asian nationalist point of view, negative statement that the encouragement of any premature independence movement' should be avoided.

There were several Japanese plans for the 'Southern Regions', prepared by various executive bodies and differing from each other in many details, so that a generally accepted, well-defined blueprint for the constitutional position and advancement of the South-East Asian countries or their relations with Japan did not exist. In his speech to the Diet on 22 January 1942, Prime Minister Tojo made some remarks on general principles only. Emphasizing Japan's aim to establish a permanent peace in the region, he stated, referring to Malaya, that it was his government's intention to bring under Japanese power those areas which, strategically, were 'absolutely indispensable for the defence of Greater East Asia'. With regard to other territories he declared that in the future their position would be dealt with 'in accordance with the traditions and the culture of every race'. In this connexion he pledged to grant independence to the Philippines and Burma, provided they were prepared to co-operate. Indonesia was kept on the hook with some undefined promises for support of her development and welfare, on the condition, here too, that the Indonesians understood the Japanese intentions. Tojo's speech did not amount to any revolutionary departure from Western colonial practice in the 1930s, when the Philippines and Burma were well on the road towards independence, Malaya

had not yet made the first step in that direction and Indonesia had been put off more or less indefinitely.

Neither did Japan introduce any fundamental change in South-East Asia's major territorial divisions, which they inherited from the colonial powers. Apart from the transfer of four Malay and two Shan states to their ally Thailand, there were no boundary rectifications. Initially Malaya and Sumatra were united under one single military command, but this was revoked at a later date. The only measure which, in its consequences, might have come close to a Japanese attempt at politically breaking up a historically developed territorial unit, was the one which placed Netherlands Borneo and Indonesia's eastern islands under a naval régime, while Java and Sumatra, under separate commands, were ruled by the army. This division of responsibilities had been decided upon on 26 November 1941, when the military leaders agreed that the army be charged, in general, with the administration of densely populated areas demanding complex administrative duties, while sparsely inhabited, rather primitive regions be assigned to the navy.

To co-ordinate Japanese policy towards the occupied territories a Greater East Asia Deliberative Council was established, in March 1942, as an advisory body of the prime minister, and as a preparatory step towards the creation of a special ministry. Such a new ministry was advocated by the army and navy chiefs and by Tojo, not only as the obvious instrument to guarantee political cohesion and to increase the supervisory powers from above, but also as a means of reducing the influence of the foreign ministry which controlled relations with the formally independent countries within the Co-prosperity Sphere. In September 1942 the matter came up for discussion in the cabinet, with Foreign Minister Togo dissenting: he pointed out that the subject races would certainly consider a Greater East Asia Ministry an indication of their subordinate position, and might resent it as a camouflaged Colonial Office. But Tojo had his way, both in the cabinet from which Togo resigned and, a few weeks later, in the Privy Council which sharply criticized the project on formal grounds. Against the opposition the Greater East Asia Ministry was officially established on 1 November 1942.

In the structure of authority this new ministry did not bring about any fundamental change: it was an advisory body *cum* training institute for administrative personnel rather than a genuine executive department. Its functions were to supervise the actions of Japanese nationals throughout the area, to control subordinate officials, to select and train administrators, to direct the activities of development companies and, in particular, to make cultural propaganda by arranging goodwill missions, sending language teachers to South-East Asia and South-East Asian students to Japan, and by organizing literary and scientific conferences. Policy decisions were not made by the Greater East Asia Ministry, but by the cabinet and the Supreme Command while, except in Thailand and Indochina, the

administration over South-East Asia was in the hands of the territorial army and navy authorities. For military and administrative purposes the region was divided into eight areas, under the responsibility of the 14th Army in the Philippines, the 15th Army in Burma, the 16th Army in Java, the 25th Army in Malaya and Sumatra, the Thailand Garrison, the Indochina Garrison, the Borneo Garrison in British Borneo and the South-West Navy in Netherlands Borneo and the Greater East. With the exception of the Philippines and the territories ruled by the navy, South-East Asia was under the command of General, later Marshall, Terauchi, commander-in-chief of the Southern Area Army, with his headquarters, from March 1942, in Singapore or Shonan, 'Light of the South', as the city had been renamed. Terauchi's function was that of a military and administrative co-ordinator: he was directly responsible to the Supreme Command. Directives from above, sent to his General Bureau of Military Administration, were passed on to the subordinate commands. With the exception of the Borneo Garrison and, of course, Thailand and Indochina, each of the eight territorial commands had a Bureau of Military Administration, headed by a *gunseikan*, or director. In the territories ruled by the naval authorities civil affairs were in the hands of a Bureau of Naval Civil Administration, which had its headquarters in Macassar.

Apart from exploiting South-East Asia's economic resources to the fullest possible extent, Japan aimed at obtaining the assistance and co-operation of the region's population as a *sine qua non* to fighting the war successfully against the Allied powers. In order to secure this popular support Japan's policy was directed towards augmenting her own prestige in Asian eyes. Partly this was done by an intense cultural propaganda which had to convince the South-East Asian nations that Japan was superior to the West and that, consequently, it was she rather than the West who had to be Asia's guide and teacher. Another element of her policy consisted of creating the impression that the Japanese were promoting the cause of Asia's emancipation. By whipping up sentiments against the Europeans and Americans, by representing the war as a struggle for the liberation of Asia from Western exploitation, and by intimating that the *status quo ante* would never be restored, Japan attempted to influence public opinion. By authorizing political organizations which, under indigenous leadership, had to support the objectives of Greater East Asia, Japan tried to rally the nations of South-East Asia behind her.

In the few months of the Japanese advance it had been a great handicap for the Western colonial powers, with the United States the only exception, that their fight was not to any large extent supported by the population. The native rulers and the civil servants, of course, loyally co-operated with the colonial administration, and there were also local Asians fighting on the side of the European powers, as regulars in the colonial armies: the Amboinese and Minahassans, constituting four-fifths of the Netherlands Indies army, the Karen regiments and the Chin and Kachin troops in the

Burma Defence Force, the Malay Regiment and the Philippine Scouts. But, except in the Philippines, the Asian population showed, in general, hardly any interest in what was going on: to them the fight was primarily an affair between Japan and the colonial powers, in which they did not take sides. Among the nationalists, too, there was a tendency to consider the war a private feud between their present and their possible future colonial masters, and the outcome of the fight interested them only in so far it would affect their own struggle to liberate their countries from all alien control.

In all South-East Asian colonies, including the Philippines, there were politicians who, for various reasons, had set their hopes on a Japanese victory as a means to further their own ends, but on the whole they, too, adopted an outwardly indifferent attitude when Japan struck. Apart from the activities of the Burmese Independence Army which participated in the Japanese invasion, and the Muslim rebellion in Atjeh in February and March 1942, there were no instances of South-East Asians turning against their colonial rulers and actively supporting the Japanese beyond occasionally showing the invaders the way and removing the obstacles on the roads. There were, on the other hand, also nationalist politicians and organizations, the communists among them in the first place, who feared the Japanese more than they disliked the colonial powers. But, as in the case of those who actively assisted the invaders, those who took an active part in fighting the Japanese were a tiny minority, too. This support was given most strongly in the Philippines, the only country in South-East Asia where the nationalists had the idea that the war the United States was fighting was also their war. In Malaya it was the Malayan Communist Party, the help of which was accepted by the British at the last possible moment. But between the extremes of attacking and of supporting the colonial administration, and between the widespread popular hostility shown to Britain in Burma and the open rejoicings at the downfall of the Dutch regime in Java on the one hand and, on the other, the feelings of sorrow demonstrated in Malaya, the Asian masses were, in general, passive onlookers. The crumbling away of European control over South-East Asia before the onslaught of the Japanese was accompanied by a wait-and-see attitude of the nationalist leaders and by an almost complete indifference on the part of the population. The Japanese conquest made it clear that Western colonialism had utterly failed in arousing any feelings of loyalty or solidarity among the overwhelming majority of its subjects.

THE TREATMENT OF EUROPEANS AND EURASIANS

The collapse of Western colonialism and, more in particular, the swiftness with which it had taken place, had a strong psychological effect on South-

East Asia's peoples. They were dazed, at first, by the defeat of those whom they had believed to be invincible and by the sudden breakdown of what they used to regard as an unalterable state of affairs, but they also came to the realization that, in the light of the new circumstances, they had to reconsider their views. Consequently the age-old respect for the Europeans dwindled, and Western prestige in Asia received a blow from which it would never recover. The Japanese were not slow in capitalizing on this, by following up their military victory with a policy aimed at further disgracing the West in Asian eyes.

During the Japanese conquest there had been several instances of brutal behaviour *vis-à-vis* Europeans, committed either in the heat of the battle or immediately afterwards, in a state of fury over sustained losses, like the killing of Dutch citizens in Balik Papan in retaliation for the destruction of the much-coveted oil installations. But such atrocities had not been part of a system, and even the most appalling outrage, the forced march of over 35,000 American and Filipino captives from Bataan to a prison camp in San Fernando in April 1942, during which between 7,000 and 10,000 perished, was not the result of a preconceived policy: the 'Death March' disaster, although aggravated by brutal acts of Japanese guards, was primarily caused by the failure to organize properly the transportation of twice as many prisoners as the army commanders had expected to capture. Occasional bestialities and war crimes against Europeans were committed everywhere in South-East Asia, but the Western communities were spared the horrors of grand-scale killing and rape such as the Japanese perpetrated against the Chinese in occupied China, in Hongkong and in Singapore.

Systematic, on the other hand, were the actions designed to remove, as quickly as possible, the Europeans from the South-East Asian scene. European administrative officials, in so far as they had not fled or been evacuated, as in Burma and Malaya, were replaced by Japanese dignitaries in the top functions or in advisory posts, and by indigenous personnel at subordinate levels. In the industrial and commercial sectors, too, Europeans were dismissed. This procedure started almost immediately after the Japanese conquest: it was attended by the confiscation of European properties and concluded with the detention of the nationals of the Western powers, men, women and children, in separate urban districts, special buildings or concentration camps. Although some categories of Europeans, particularly those in technical functions, were allowed to stay outside the camps for a while, the operation was virtually over by the end of 1942, with the last Europeans rounded up and interned in 1943. In Indochina, the nearly 40,000 French citizens escaped this fate, at least until early 1945, and in Burma and Thailand the number of detainees was small, but in Malaya and Singapore some 4,500 people were involved, in the Philippines around 7,800, and in the Netherlands Indies over 120,000, of which 82,000 were in Java.

In Western circles it was widely believed that this Japanese policy of massive internment was deliberately intended to be a public humiliation of the 'white man'. Several incidents contributed to substantiate this opinion: forcing European prisoners to parade through the streets, as happened in Manila and Singapore, compelling them to perform hard labour, mocking at their plight in the newspapers, slapping them in the face or making them bow to Japanese guards. Yet, it is doubtful whether the desire to insult the Europeans was any significant motive for the Japanese to carry out the internment project with its tremendous organizational problems. In Japanese, and in general, Asian, eyes the former rulers could hardly be degraded any more after the ignominious defeat they had suffered. So also the accidental vexations were either invariable by-products of the relationship between conqueror and vanquished or, like the slapping practice and the bowing ceremony, a Japanese custom to which also the South-East Asians and the Japanese themselves were subjected. Brutalities towards European prisoners in the presence of indigenous bystanders tended moreover to be self-defeating, in that they evoked consternation and feelings of pity among the Asian onlookers.

By feeling humiliated the Europeans reacted to their fate as any defeated community would in any war situation, but in this particular case their emotions were coloured by the unprecedented fact that they had been conquered by an Asian nation and, in particular, that they had fallen from their privileged positions in the presence of the natives they had been dominating for such a long time. As this constituted a devastating blow to their racial pride, they were inclined to regard their sufferings as more unbearable than they would have in a war with a Western nation or in a Western environment. They also tended to ascribe the miseries emanating from their defeat to premeditated scheming of an Oriental enemy rather than to the fact, less easily acceptable in their traditional view of the world, that they had lost the battle for South-East Asia. It was exactly this, however, which in an inverted way dictated the policy of the Japanese military authorities to imprison the Western citizens. Unlike the drafters of the Liaison Conference's principles of 20 November they sensed that the Europeans would never be willing to co-operate in the creation of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere under the hegemony of an Asian power, and they set out to eliminate the potential dangers that might arise from the hostility of this cohesive group. Their suspicions in this respect also accounted for their policy of strictly watching the activities of nationals of neutral Western states and even of their German and Italian allies.

Another element of Japan's policy aimed at wiping out the abstract traces of Western rule, and at eradicating Western influences. In this the Japanese went further than merely taking steps which, in a way, might be ascribed to the war situation, like censoring and banning books, bringing the radio and press under their control, making it a crime to listen to Allied broadcasts and introducing the death penalty for a wide range of

offences considered injurious to Japan's interests. They also closed schools and re-opened them after the curricula had been thoroughly revised and the textbooks adapted to anti-Western, pro-Japanese and Pan-Asiatic doctrines. Attempts were made to suppress the Western languages and replace them by indigenous tongues: Burmese, Tagalog and Indonesian were declared official languages. In this, the Japanese were most successful in Indonesia; Dutch, which had never developed into a *lingua franca*, was forbidden and the use of Indonesian, the only practicable medium of communication, stimulated. Because of its wide currency English could not be eliminated so quickly in Burma, Malaya and the Philippines, and it was permitted to be used, although it was discouraged and steps were occasionally taken against it.

As a counterpart to this the authorities stimulated the use of Japanese which, in most countries, was raised to the status of official language and included in the school curricula, but this attempt failed as a result of both the widespread disinclination of the South-East Asians to learn Japanese and the difficult nature of the language. This was only one aspect of the policy to introduce Japanese or Pan-Asiatic symbols, particularly in those territories — Malaya and Indonesia — which Japan intended to incorporate directly into her Empire. Thus the Japanese national calendar was introduced: 1942 became 2602. The Emperor's birthday, 29 April, became a public holiday, including a ritual at which people had to stand facing the Imperial Palace in Tokyo. In many cases government employees and students had to go through early morning exercises, guided by an announcer over the radio. Great stress was put on the necessity of being liberated from the deleterious effects of the contacts with the Western world. General Homma, commander-in-chief in the Philippines, was quite specific in this when he, in an address on 31 July 1942, stated that the Filipinos should remember their Asiatic origins, aspire to become a genuinely Oriental people and get rid of the influences of American culture which he denounced as degenerate, materialistic, hedonistic and disruptive. Apart from emphasizing Oriental virtues as against Western vices, the Japanese propaganda machine also pointed to the selfish nature of Western rule and made it clear that, in order to avoid a restoration of colonialism, the Asians had no alternative but to accept Japanese guidance and to fight on Japan's side.

The Western nationals were, as enemy citizens, the major but not the only group which the authorities deemed politically dangerous and treated accordingly. The Eurasian communities, suspected of pro-Western feelings, were constantly told to alter their ways, to give up their expectations of preferential treatment and to regard themselves as Asians. The latter recommendation amounted to an invitation virtually to abandon their own identity, and this was particularly felt in the Netherlands Indies, the only country in South-East Asia in which Eurasians were considered Europeans under the law. Because of this they considered themselves Dutch, in spite

of the petty social discrimination to which they had been exposed, and as a result they were less inclined to become part of the indigenous society. Consequently, they were subjected to various vexations, ranging from compulsory registration to arrest, imprisonment or internment, and as internment of Eurasians applied to men only, this measure was bound to condemn their families to a life with hardly any means of subsistence. Occasionally the authorities encouraged them to co-operate, and they often set free batches of Eurasians from the camps to canvass among those outside. Although some did collaborate, the majority refused, in spite of the pressure and the promises. In Malaya and Burma they did not escape Japanese attention either, but accustomed to be regarded as British subjects only, they had fewer mental reservations against being considered part of indigenous society and making themselves inconspicuous this way.

THE TREATMENT OF CHINESE AND INDIANS

A very harsh policy was adopted towards the Chinese. The Japanese were well aware that in the previous years the South-East Asian Chinese had strongly sympathized with the government of Chiang K'ai-shek in its struggle against Japan and that they were not likely to show much devotion to the concept of Greater East Asia, or genuine willingness to co-operate. Because of this the Chinese were accorded extremely severe treatment. In all conquered territories they were put under strict surveillance of the *Kenpeitai*, the military police, subjected to forced registration or induced to enter Overseas Chinese associations which the authorities organized as instruments to supervise and control them. Their schools were closed and money was extorted from them under the cover of voluntary contributions, the sums being assessed by the Japanese and collected by Chinese associations. Furthermore the Japanese stigmatized them as the group which, in addition to the colonial rulers, had been responsible for depriving the population of the benefits of the economic resources of their own country. Thus they contributed to exacerbating further the already hostile local feelings towards the Chinese, and often special regulations were devised to weaken their economic position.

Accustomed to a certain amount of discrimination on the part of the governments in the past and of native dislike and distrust, the Chinese had acquired a state of mental resilience which, in addition to their inborn resourcefulness, enabled them to face the hardships to which they were condemned under Japanese rule. Yet in their approach towards the Overseas Chinese the Japanese had to be cautious; in areas where the Chinese were irreplaceable in economic life the authorities realized that too rigorous an onslaught on this community and too heavy a pressure might lead to a development which was likely to bring about economic dislocation. The important position of the Chinese merchant class and their

capital resources might also render valuable help to Japan. With this in mind the Japanese took steps to secure Chinese co-operation, as they did with regard to all communities, except the Europeans. On the whole these attempts were unsuccessful, however. In all countries the Chinese stayed aloof, or co-operated if they had to, but their sympathy remained with the government of Chiang K'ai-shek rather than with the pro-Japanese Wang Ching-wei regime upon which, as an alternative, the Japanese tried to focus their loyalty.

In Malaya military and security considerations neutralized the restraining influence of these economic speculations and, as a result, the fate of the Malayan Chinese was infinitely worse than elsewhere in South-East Asia. During their advance the Japanese already murdered numerous Chinese and violated women on a grand scale, but immediately after the capture of Singapore in February 1942 their violence assumed the proportions of a wholesale massacre. Chinese, either identified as anti-Japanese or picked up at random, were shot, killed by being drowned in the harbour, or tortured to death in an orgy of rape and slaughter which lasted several days and in which, according to conservative estimates, over 5,000 people perished. When the killing stopped the Chinese were promised protection, provided they co-operated, but as proof of their willingness to comply they were required to make a 'free gift' to the Japanese army. On 25 June the money thus extorted, 50 million Straits dollars, was presented to General Yamashita. In spite of the pressure and the fear of reprisals it was a mere trifle compared with the sums the Malayan Chinese community had raised in support of the Chinese government since 1937 or contributed to the British war chest since the outbreak of the European war.

There was a special reason why the Japanese singled out the Malayan Chinese for such particularly brutal treatment. In any South-East Asian country a non-cooperative Chinese minority of between 1 and 3.5 per cent of an essentially anti-Chinese population was considered an irritating factor, but in Malaya, where the Chinese accounted for nearly 34 per cent, and the Malays, although disliking the Chinese, were politically undeveloped and economically weak, they constituted a potential danger. Furthermore the Malayan Chinese had produced the only South-East Asian volunteer corps fighting the invaders during the conquest, and the fact that this force had been organized by the communist party worried the Japanese even more. As a result these volunteers, together with known communists, or people who had been prominent in the China Relief Fund, were the primary victims of the Singapore atrocities. In all South-East Asian countries the Chinese were destined to be treated badly, as was any group suspected of hostility, but it was only in Malaya that the Japanese resorted to this butchery which served to terrorize the Chinese, and thus deter them from embarking on any anti-Japanese action. This policy badly misfired, however: all over South-East Asia Chinese were engaged

in resistance work, but in Malaya Japanese cruelty drove the Chinese into armed rebellion, while even those who did not take an active part in it almost unanimously supported the anti-Japanese movement.

Japanese relations with the Indian communities were quite different. To the politically articulate Indians the Japanese were neither direct enemies as they were to the Europeans, nor the enemies of their country of origin, such as they were to the Chinese, but the enemies of their enemy, Great Britain. While Japan was the obvious oppressor of China, she could pose as the liberator of British India and, as a result, South-East Asia's Indian leaders adopted a similar attitude towards the Japanese as most indigenous politicians, with the one difference that the former centred their political aspirations on India rather than on the countries in which they were living. Many among them had their doubts about Japan, fostered by the anti-Japanese stand of some Congress leaders, but there was a widespread tendency towards sympathizing with the Japanese against the Allied powers, as well as, due to Gandhi's rather neutral attitude on the issue, a sincere willingness to co-operate with Japan in the interest of India's freedom. On their part the Japanese immediately made overtures to win South-East Asia's Indians to their side. In October 1941 a special political section, the so-called *F-kikan* had been established which, under the leadership of the able major Iwaichi Fujiwara, contacted local Indian civilians and surrendered Indian troops. To influence them the Japanese conducted a virulent anti-British propaganda, and when, during the conquest of Lower Burma, their policy of befriending the Indian community was in danger of being offset by the acts of violence committed against Indians by the Burman population and some of the wilder elements of the Burmese Independence Army, they stepped in and put an end to the slaughter. It was Japan's intention to make use of the wealthier Indians for the financial and economic backing of her New Order, and of the poorer classes for supplying the labour force she needed. The Japanese also set out to persuade Indian prisoners of war to join a projected Indian National Army. Over an actual invasion of India opinions were divided within the government and the Supreme Command, but if such an Indian army could not be utilized for this, it could at least be utilized for propaganda purposes.

The response to their efforts was by no means unsatisfactory. In two conferences of Indian representatives from all over Greater East Asia, held in Tokyo on 28 March and in Bangkok from 15 to 23 June 1942, the Indians pledged themselves to work in unison for India's liberation, and they founded a civilian and a military organization for this purpose. The Indian Independence League was led by Rash Behari Bose, an old-time nationalist who had been living in Japan since the First World War. Branches were established in all regions of South-East Asia, with the emphasis, of course, on Malaya and Burma where the largest Indian communities lived. It devoted its energies to political activity, designed

to arouse nationalist sentiments for the cause of British India, as well as to social work and medical relief for the immediate benefit of the local Indians. The Indian National Army, under the command of Mohan Singh, was composed of officers and men from the British Indian forces which had surrendered in Singapore; in a massive transfer of loyalty 40,000 out of 55,000 signed a pledge to join the army. Out of these the Japanese immediately armed 16,000 soldiers, who became the nucleus of the I.N.A., which later increased in size when the scheme of mobilizing the resources of the local Indian communities was gradually put into effect.

Initially the Indian movement did not flourish, in spite of the fact that the South-East Asian Indians were strongly moved by the spectacular internal developments in British India in the second half of 1942. The lack of enthusiasm was partly due to Japan's non-committal attitude towards those issues which interested the Indian leaders most: the date of the planned invasion in India, and the future status of the country within the Co-prosperity Sphere. The evasive answers to such pertinent questions led to much dissatisfaction. Many Indians were highly critical of Japanese policy in this respect and, suspicious of the hesitation of the military authorities to enlarge the I.N.A. and properly arm it, they sensed, and rightly so, that the Indian movement was primarily meant to be a show-piece of Japan's pro-Indian attitude rather than an organization spear-heading the liberation of India. Another factor which nearly brought about the disintegration of the I.L.L. was the absence of a capable leader: for all his enthusiasm Bose lacked the necessary capacities. The organization was too decentralized to be effective, moreover, while its relations with the I.N.A. were far from cordial. All these adverse circumstances, except Japanese evasiveness, changed, however, when, in July 1943, Subhas Chandra Bose appeared on the scene and took over the leadership of the Japanese-orientated Indian nationalist movement.

JAPANESE POLICY VIS-A-VIS THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION

The Japanese paid most attention, of course, to South-East Asia's indigenous races. Influencing public opinion in her favour, by condemning Western colonial domination and emphasizing her own merits, was only one element of Japan's approach. The other, in its consequences far more significant, aspect of her policy was directed at winning over the population to her side and at persuading the elite to collaborate. Japan's immediate objective was to secure continuity in the government of the conquered territories and to restore normality, peace, economic viability and political stability. After her victory Japan was in the first place interested in preserving law and order and in keeping the existing administrative hierarchy intact; civil disturbances or a breakdown of the bureaucratic machinery

were bound to jeopardize her prospects of successfully maintaining her newly-won empire and economically exploiting its resources. So the military authorities had to make sure that the civil servants carried on with their tasks, while the posts left vacant by the departure or the internment of European officials had to be filled as soon as possible. To achieve this Japan needed the co-operation of those indigenous leaders who, because of their prestige among the masses, might be useful in this respect: influential members of the traditional ruling elite, religious teachers, or politicians of the anti-colonial opposition.

On the whole Japan was quite successful in this. Asian civil servants, who had loyally served the colonial rulers and who were committed to Western values, might for a moment deplore the change of masters, but they were also committed to the doctrine that the administrative machinery had to be kept going in order to prevent chaos. They were motivated, too, by the consideration that their social position and the privileges accompanying it would be safeguarded best by staying on at their posts. In most colonial territories the transition from a Western to a Japanese dominated administration was effected in a smooth way.

In two countries the new overlords overhauled the central administrative structure. To preserve the existing governmental bodies, such as the Liaison Conference of 20 November 1941 had recommended, was not possible in Indonesia, which was divided among three military commands, nor practicable in Malaya where the Japanese wanted to establish a centralized administration. Thus the central executive organs of the Netherlands Indies government, as well as the Volksraad, were abolished; so were the regional representative bodies, while in Malaya the distinction between Straits Settlements, Federated and Non-Federated Malay States was done away with. For the rest, however, and in the other territories, the Japanese adhered to the above instructions: the provinces created in Java and Madura on 5 August 1942 corresponded with the former residencies, the only novelty being the special municipality of Batavia. In Malaya, too, provinces, under Japanese governors, were established in addition to Singapore as a special municipality under a Japanese mayor.

While in Indonesia and Malaya the Japanese replaced the Dutch and the British at the top of the hierarchy and Japanese or indigenous officials took over the higher posts formerly held by Europeans, there was no change of personnel at those levels of the civil service which used to be reserved for Indonesians or Malays. In the Philippines, too, Filipino officials carried on as usual, under a Japanese military regime which, sensing that the South-East Asian peoples should not be given the impression that, in terms of political advancement, they were worse off under Japanese than under colonial rule, immediately set up new, entirely Filipino-staffed executive and consultative bodies in the central sphere of the administration in place of the Commonwealth government. On 23 January 1942 General Homma installed a Philippine Executive Commission as a central

administrative organ, headed by Jorge Vargas, a former secretary of Quezon, as well as an advisory State Council, consisting of prominent political leaders. The Philippine Congress was abolished.

THE THAKIN ATTEMPT AT NATIONALIST REVOLUTION

As in the other territories there was no unwillingness on the part of the civil servants or the indigenous politicians to collaborate with Japan in Burma. Yet Burma was the only country where for a few months, immediately after the collapse of British rule, other elements took charge of affairs than those welcomed and supervised by the new masters. This was due to the fact that Burma was also the only country where, during the invasion, the Japanese had been actively assisted by nationalist armed forces. The activities of the B.I.A. gave the situation, as it developed between February and June 1942, the character of a Thakin-inspired nationalist revolution. Hailed by the population as liberators and expecting that the end of British domination marked the beginning of genuine Burmese independence such as had been intimated by the Japanese sponsors of the B.I.A., the Thakins suppressed banditry, restored order, reopened trade and appointed local administrative committees behind the Japanese lines. By May the Thakins and the B.I.A., which through a campaign of voluntary recruitment had swelled to a force of some 50,000, controlled most of the towns and a considerable part of the villages of Lower Burma as well as many towns in the northern part of the country.

The taking over of Burma by the Thakin revolutionaries and the B.I.A. created a situation the Japanese military authorities strongly disapproved of. There was no uniformity of regime. In many places the Thakins managed to establish effective and competent governments; in others, however, due to the lack of experienced administrators, they were unable to. In some areas they carried out whatever meagre programme of political and social reform they could, in others they called on representatives of the traditional ruling classes. There was hardly any supervision from above. Aung San was the highly respected commander-in-chief of the armed forces, but as a result of the chaotic conditions during and immediately after the Japanese conquest, the B.I.A. commanders were left on their own. The provisional central administration, installed by the Japanese in Rangoon in March, was charged with supervising the administrative bodies at local level, but it failed to do so. Unchecked by any higher authority some sections of the B.I.A. got out of hand; they started to settle accounts with political opponents, or they took to banditry. The most tragic events took place in some districts in Lower Burma where the ultra-nationalist partisans of the B.I.A. showed open hostility towards the Indian minority and towards the Karens, in particular the Christians

among them whom they suspected of pro-British inclinations. Growing communal tension exploded towards the end of May 1942 when, after an abortive Karen attack on Myaungmya the Burmans methodically set out to kill Karens and the latter retorted by equally indiscriminately massacring Burmans. The disturbances, an orgy of mutual killing, spread throughout the Delta and lasted for several weeks.

The major Japanese objection to the Thakins was the fact, however, that they represented a current of Burman nationalist opinion which the Japanese authorities regarded as unacceptable and even as a potential threat to their own interests. It is true that the Thakins did not have any clear-cut ideological programme beyond standing firmly on the platform of independence, but on this they were the most radical and outspoken and they were not likely to be put off easily with the vague promises the Japanese intended to make. They were enthusiastic young people, moreover, and they had a reputation for political and social progressiveness which, in spite of the fundamental shallowness of their concepts, might deter the traditionally conservative civil servants and the nationalists of the older generation from co-operating with the new authorities. Initially the Japanese commanders did not interfere with the activities of the B.I.A.; they still needed them as long as the military campaign was not over, while the popularity of the Thakins counselled them to proceed cautiously so as not to lose goodwill among the masses. But by June the situation had changed: the entire country had fallen under Japanese occupation, in several districts the B.I.A. had made itself unpopular by its undisciplined actions, the breakdown of administrative standards caused a general desire for a return to normalcy and in the Delta communal disturbances threatened to develop into a full-scale interracial gang-war.

It was at this moment that the Japanese acted. In late May they contacted Ba Maw and found him willing to accept a leading role in the administrative structure. It was a shrewd choice: Ba Maw was the most experienced of the politicians of the older generation and, while primarily functioning as a counterweight to the influence of the Thakins, he also commanded sufficient prestige among the radicals to ensure their co-operation. On 4 June 1942 the commander-in-chief, General Iida, set up a Preparatory Executive Committee, with Ba Maw as chairman, after which discussions started with other politicians over the organization of a provisional government. The next day Aung San gave in to Japanese pressure and ordered the B.I.A. to stop all political activities. As an indication that the Japanese were anxious to return to normal conditions, this Preparatory Committee and Ba Maw's leadership were instrumental in persuading most of the civil servants to stay on. When their co-operation was secured the Japanese moved against the B.I.A. in full force. They put an end to the B.I.A. administrations in a great many districts, they stamped out banditry and looting and ruthlessly intervened to stop the fighting between Burmans and Karens. In June the Thakin attempt to win

control had failed; administrative authority in Burma returned to those who traditionally exercised it, be it under Japanese instead of British supervision. On 24 July the B.I.A. was finally disbanded, and a week later, on 1 August, the Preparatory Committee was transformed into a provisional government, the Burma Executive Administration, with Ba Maw as chief administrator.

INDIGENOUS COLLABORATION WITH JAPAN

In making the decision whether or not to collaborate with the new overlords the indigenous civil servants or political leaders were rarely inspired by any feelings of loyalty *vis-à-vis* the Western powers. This was particularly true, of course, for the nationalist politicians who had been opposed to colonialism and who considered the Japanese conquest, if not a liberation, then at least a golden opportunity to realize their dreams of independence. But it was also true for those people who, for whatever reasons, had either acquiesced in or co-operated with the former government. They were bewildered at the rapid sequence of events and the swift collapse of colonial power. They felt betrayed and left behind without protection, and making up their minds what course to adopt in the new circumstances they ruled out the West as a serious factor. In Indonesia it was Sutardjo, the framer of the famous petition, who announced on 19 March 1942 that a new Indonesia would emerge and that all civil servants and other officials who were in function during the Dutch period had to carry on with or resume their duties. His attitude was symbolic of the position of South-East Asia's bureaucratic circles after the downfall of colonial rule.

Yet, neither the long-standing anti-colonial opposition of the nationalist politicians, nor the sudden disillusionment with, or the loss of confidence in the Western powers, as experienced by large sections of 'moderate' indigenous opinion were, as such, sufficient inducements to co-operate with Japan. These factors only created the psychological condition which facilitated collaboration, with additional factors primarily responsible for the actual choice. So there was the fear that a refusal to co-operate might irritate the new masters, and as most South-East Asians were under no illusion as to how the Japanese would react, they hesitated to make themselves personally suspect. Of a personal nature, too, was the realization, among civil servants in particular, that they would be abandoning a good position if they relinquished their duties. The decision of officials as well as of indigenous politicians to work under and for the Japanese did not imply that they were pro-Japanese. In many cases it was their simple answer to such questions as who was going to win the war, or what could be done to mitigate, as much as possible, the sufferings of the people. Among Filipino political leaders it was, for example, a favourite argument that,

by collaborating with Japan, they prevented the really pro-Japanese elements from coming to power and that, as a result, they spared the Filipino people a worse fate. In Malaya the Malays, while assessing the changed situation, realized that they lost the protection of the colonial government and, fearful of the Chinese, they felt that the Japanese were the only power capable of protecting them; because of their strong anti-Chinese sentiments the Japanese seemed even better in the position to do so than the British.

Collaboration with the new regime was not a matter of principle: the nationalist politicians did not identify themselves with Japan's goals, and in many cases they disliked Japanese policies and methods. Rather it was a tactical move. They sought to avail themselves of the chances which the Japanese occupation presented; as in the colonial period it was their ultimate goal to achieve political freedom for their countries and they intended to make use of the Japanese towards this end. By taking an active part in the Japanese-dominated administration or in the political organizations sponsored or tolerated by the military authorities, and by demonstrating their acceptance of Japan's war aims and the Greater East Asia concept — an attitude which, convinced as they were of a Japanese victory, was not all pretension — the nationalists attempted to create conditions which might further their own objectives. Thus, Ba Maw hoped to please the Japanese and persuade them to make concessions, in accordance with the announcement of General Iida on 1 August 1942 that the Japanese army would give its utmost assistance towards the creation of a Burma for the Burmese, provided the Burmese continued to co-operate. There was also the consideration, of Sukarno for example, and the Thakins, that collaboration with the occupying authorities might be helpful in covering up their nationalist activities and, in particular, that it might shelter them from the unwanted interest of the Kenpeitai. Finally it was expected that an alliance with the Japanese might give them the necessary support in maintaining, or improving their position *vis-à-vis* potential rivals, a calculation which, among other things, contributed to the collaboration of the Filipino oligarchy, the Indonesian Muslim leaders, or Ba Maw and his followers, in their attempts to stand their ground against social revolutionary tendencies, the secular nationalist politicians or the Thakin radicals respectively.

In addition to the absence of any feelings of allegiance towards the former colonial powers, there was another circumstance which, in general, made it easier for large numbers of indigenous public figures or political leaders to opt for collaboration with Japan; but since in many cases the people concerned responded to it subconsciously and instinctively, this factor was less conspicuous as an inducement. For most of the civil servants, reared in a traditionally autocratic environment, and also for many nationalist politicians, it was a reassuring thought that the Japanese would be no more inclined than the colonial rulers to produce any funda-

mental change in either the pattern of power structure or the framework of society, and that Japan's rule was not likely to endanger the status and privileges of the social classes they were representing. The basic similarity in social outlook and political ideas between the Japanese ruling groups and the conservative and authoritarian sections of the indigenous elite did not mean that the entire right wing of South-East Asia's leaders went over to Japan's side. There were quite a few conservatives who did not want to have any dealings with the new masters, such as the Burman veteran nationalist U Ba Pe, or the Filipino chief justice Jose Abad Santos. But for a great number of them their ideological affinity with Japan contributed to neutralizing whatever objections to collaborating with the Japanese they, for various other reasons, might have entertained.

The Philippines presented an interesting case in this respect. In no other South-East Asian country did so many factors operate against collaboration with the Japanese. The Filipinos were the most westernized people of the region, and as their national aspirations were about to be fulfilled, there was hardly any reason to feel frustrated over colonial policy or to take sides against the United States. The pro-American feelings, the belief in democratic ideals, however foggy, the sense of equality with and loyalty to the former colonial power and the conviction that Japan would ultimately lose the war were nowhere stronger than in the Philippines. But these were the sentiments of the common people. The Philippines was also the only country in South-East Asia where almost the entire ruling elite went over to the Japanese and, with its complete control over the social, economic and political institutions, provided Japan with her greatest political success, apart from Indochina, in the region. The arguments in support of this attitude were similar to the excuses advanced by those who co-operated with the Japanese in other South-East Asian territories, but the one well-grounded vindication of such collaboration, namely that it served to cover up the activities for the sake of the nation's freedom, was not valid in a colony which was on the verge of becoming independent.

Yet the status of near independence was the major reason for the Filipino el[illegible] groups joining Japan. By relapsing to alien control, the Philippines was the only country where Japanese rule, as such, came close to effecting the only real political change in South-East Asia in comparison with pre-war conditions, but the ruling classes had to keep up the appearance that nothing had fundamentally changed. Afraid that the anti-Japanese sentiments of the majority of the population might be taken advantage of by more radical leaders, and apprehensive of a possible growth of revolutionary tendencies among the peasantry in a situation of political upheaval, the feudal landowners and industrial tycoons, and, in general, the privileged classes which made up the Filipino establishment were no less than the Japanese themselves interested in political stability. Continuity would enable them to maintain their grip over the population

and to prevent any social revolution, certainly so as long as the Japanese were in power. Aware of the dynamics of Philippine social organization the ruling groups also intuitively felt that their high position, thus preserved, would serve the same purpose if Japan should be forced to give up her domination. The Filipino oligarchs acted strictly in accordance with the advice Quezon reportedly gave when he left the country in February 1942: 'Go ahead and make what bargain you have to with these people (i.e. the Japanese). Try to keep the Philippines together in one piece. Do it for the future Philippines.' But in fact they did so primarily to safeguard their own supremacy in Philippine political, economic and social life.

Whatever the motivations and the aims of the indigenous politicians who collaborated with Japan, the Japanese themselves pursued quite different goals. The long-term objective of Japan's endeavours in securing the co-operation of South-East Asia's leaders was to control the population more easily and to mobilize popular support for her war efforts and, in particular, for the maintenance, either directly or indirectly, of her domination. In attempting to safeguard her control over the region under the cover of the Greater East Asia structure, Japan's attitude was basically similar to that of the Western colonial powers, in spite of the differences in political strategy. In colonies like Malaya, Indonesia or Indochina, where the concept of Asian freedom had been anathema to the European rulers, any course of granting independence was no more Japan's aim than it had been the intention of the British, the Dutch or the French. In the 1930s the Philippines and, less progressively so, Burma, were on the road towards independence, but, because of the prolonged economic subordination of the Philippines to the United States and the attitude of appeased nationalism displayed by the political circles in charge in both countries, it was a type of independence which was bound to guarantee the continuation of Western hegemony, if not control. Similarly, the kind of independence Japan was willing to bestow upon these countries was not in any way designed to terminate her factual domination.

From the Japanese point of view South-East Asia's nationalist aspirations were useful only in so far as they were directed against Western colonialism and could be presented as a rationale for Japan's policy of fighting the Allied powers. For the rest they were not in harmony with her ulterior objectives; hence her opposition to 'premature independence movements' and her complaint that the nationalist movements were interested only in the freedom of their own countries rather than in the well-being of Greater East Asia. The Japanese noticed, with dismay, that the nationalist politicians were not inclined to adhere to the claims that national self-determination was incompatible with developments in the modern era, that only such countries which possessed all elements of national power could be really independent and that the weaker nations had to be protected by the strong ones. To the nationalists who, early in

1942, entertained high expectations, it was a disappointment when they came to realize that the liquidation of Western colonial rule did not automatically lead to the freedom they had been advocating. The Japanese occupation did not bring about the completion of South-East Asia's nationalist struggle; it only marked the beginning of a new phase in its development.

2 *The Japanese Military Administration*

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF JAPANESE POLICY

HAVING achieved their immediate objectives — the restoration of law and order and the take-over of the machinery of government — the Japanese set out to administer the conquered territories. As far as outward appearances went Japan seemed to be in a far better position to exercise unlimited power over South-East Asia than had the colonial rulers before her. Her armed forces had fully mastered the military situation, and they were also in complete command of administrative affairs. She enjoyed the almost unconditional support of the great majority of the bureaucracy, as well as, on a more conditional and tentative basis, the backing of a sizeable section of the indigenous political movements. Also, she completely controlled the region's economy, its resources and its means of communication. Finally, Japan was capable of occasionally displaying a harshness and ruthlessness which, surpassing any similar traits the South-East Asian peoples had experienced in their former masters, the French excepted, were bound to inspire terror and counsel obedience.

In practice, however, the Japanese were less absolute rulers than the European governments had been. On the whole the latter, particularly the French and the Dutch but also the British, had been quite effective in pushing through the policies they wanted, in neglecting issues which did not fit into their scheme of things and in embarking on projects which ran counter to the explicit wishes of the population. That, with the exception of the United States, the Western powers had disdainfully disregarded public opinion to the extent of almost losing touch with the major currents of indigenous political life, sprang from their belief that they could manage

without popular backing as, indeed, they contrived to do until the disaster of early 1942. But the Japanese were in a different position. From the outset their hegemony was challenged by outside forces and as the region they had conquered soon became a fortress besieged by the Allied powers, they needed the fullest support of its inhabitants. In attempting to obtain this support they could not afford to neglect public opinion, but as they did not really intend to comply with South-East Asia's basic demands, the emergency situation, forcing them to pay more attention to popular wishes also compelled them to utilize the opportunities, presented by the social and political conditions and controversies in each territory, as a means of strengthening their own position. While supporting one particular social class or faction of the élite, playing off different racial, religious or territorial groups against each other, or suppressing political opposition, the colonial governments had essentially done the same thing, but by conducting themselves as administrators and managers of a business concern rather than political régimes they had been able to create an outward impression of serene aloofness. The Japanese had to fight a war, however, and they were facing the increased self-consciousness of the indigenous peoples, for which they had been partly responsible themselves. Under stronger pressure than the colonial rulers ever had been, they had far less freedom of action.

In tackling the problems of government, analysing the tactics to be employed in their treatment of the various indigenous elite groups, and outlining the course to be adopted *vis-à-vis* ethnic or religious communities, Japanese policy was not homogeneous. There were differences of opinion between the home authorities and the people in charge in the conquered territories, rivalries between the army and the navy, and controversies between those who saw policy strictly in military terms and others who were aware that political considerations could not be entirely neglected in their planning. Sometimes the Japanese, engrossed as they were in the utilitarian value of the phenomena of South-East Asian society, disclosed a serious lack of understanding of the social and political forces confronting them, so that, after realizing this, they had to alter their approach. These factors gave Japanese policy a rather changeable appearance, but whatever the divisions within official circles or the shifts in emphasis in their dealings with indigenous problems, their rule showed some characteristics which were common to all conquered territories throughout almost the entire period.

As genuine independence and in some areas — such as Malaya which Japan designed to annex, or the 'Southern Islands' which had to 'be retained in the future for the benefit of the Empire' — not even a semblance of independence was really taken into consideration, the military authorities tended to avoid nationalist politicians when they set out to win support from among South-East Asia's elite groups. Intending to preserve the social and political *status quo* in each of the conquered

territories, the Japanese administration associated itself as much as possible with the conservative sections of indigenous society. But nationalist sentiments could not be neglected; neither were the nationalist politicians easily by-passed, now that their self-consciousness and sense of self-determination had considerably increased after the rapid downfall of European domination. There existed a contradiction between the political, economic and cultural control Japan envisaged establishing over South-East Asia on the one hand and, on the other, the appeal to nationalist feelings and nationalist politicians as instruments through which this hegemony was to be effected, but the Japanese selected these instruments rather carefully. In those cases when, in their quest of indigenous collaborators to help them rally the masses behind their policy, they could not avoid dealing with nationalists, they accorded their favours, in general, to the moderates whom they considered least harmful to their long-term interests and objectives. The radical politicians, whom they basically disliked, were officially given high advisory posts in the Japanese-sponsored organizations, but in these structures, representing all sections of the elite, they were kept in a minority position which intended to deprive them of the chance to gain the upper hand. Seeking support from among those indigenous groups which the Japanese deemed most suitable to serve their purposes, and creating large all-embracing mass movements to harness native society to Japan's interests, were the most striking characteristics of Japanese policy.

By patronizing large organizations, designed to cover all aspects of public life and to bring them structurally together into one more or less monolithic mass-movement, the Japanese introduced a new element into South-East Asian politics, new in the sense that the idea was carried into effect. The concept of such a comprehensive movement was not altogether new in South-East Asian nationalist circles — Sukarno was a prominent advocate of it — but under colonial rule it had not materialized. Neither was it new in the light of Japanese practice: in Japan itself political parties had been disbanded and absorbed, in 1940, into the Imperial Rule Assistance Association. Similar organizations had emerged in Manchuria and occupied China. This development towards totalitarianism in Japan as well as in the regions dominated by her was intensified by the emergency situation created by the war. It was intended to facilitate the mobilization of all forces and the utilization of all resources for the achievement of Japan's objectives. The mass movements were also instruments of gaining better control over popular activities. In the conquered areas of South-East Asia they were a means of making as fruitful use as possible of those leaders who were willing to co-operate in the pursuance of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere; at the same time they were a device to contain nationalist sentiments and neutralize those politicians who professed loyalty to Japan with other aims in mind. In several respects Japanese rule created the impression of divide-and-rule: this aspect was,

indeed, not completely absent in their policy and some of their actions did, in fact, contribute to aggravating existing tensions. It was the ultimate purpose of the Japanese, however, to bring about a semblance of national unity in the interest of a more effective prosecution of the war, rather than jeopardizes uch a prospect by deliberately fanning the flames of mutual discord.

MALAYA

In the Japanese approach and in the way their plans materialized in practice, there were variations by territory, depending on local conditions and responses. An all-embracing political organization was not likely to emerge in a country so racially divided as Malaya, and, from a Japanese point of view, it was not strictly necessary either since no Malayan nationalism posed a challenge to their domination. Self-rule and independence had hardly been issues in Malaya, and this in a sense favoured Japan's immediate goals as well as her plans for the future: to make the country an integral part of the Japanese Empire. The authorities did not have to pay attention to nationalist sentiments, or to 'give the natives rosy promises and sympathy', as it was put by Colonel Wataru Watanabe chief of the General Affairs Department of the military administration and the key figure in the Japanese government of Malaya and Sumatra from April 1942 to March 1943. Consequently the Japanese were more free than in the other occupied territories to select their indigenous helpers exclusively from among those groups of society which they considered best suited for their purposes. In view of the unique racial composition of Malaya's population it was no surprise that the Japanese were thinking primarily along communal lines while reviewing the potential sources of support. As the Chinese were basically anti-Japanese and the Indian community was to be employed in the wider context of the Indian anti-colonial struggle rather than in Malayan politics, only the Malays fitted into the Japanese scheme. The traditionally conservative attitude of the Malays and the fact that they made up the overwhelming majority of the bureaucracy in Malaya also contributed to the Japanese preference for the Malay community as the most likely source of collaborators.

While outlining the principles for the administration of the conquered areas on 20 November 1941, the Liaison Conference had pointed to the need to utilize the Malay rulers for the maintenance of law and order and for obtaining popular support. To achieve this, it was suggested that the position of the traditional establishment should be respected, and after some hesitation on the part of the authorities in Malaya themselves, this advice was heeded. The British administrative structure was done away with, but the Malay rulers retained their position, both as supreme religious authorities and as nominal heads of their states. Among the

Japanese in charge locally, doubts were often expressed as to the administrative capabilities of the rulers; it was in fact suggested that they be forced to relinquish their political prerogatives to the military régime. During the first months of the occupation they were indeed deprived of much of their powers, but intervention by Tokyo, from August 1942 onwards, compelled the authorities to cancel this policy. On 20–21 January 1943 a conference of the Japanese with representatives of the rulers of Malaya and Sumatra took place in Singapore, and there the position and the dignity of the latter were officially recognized by the commander-in-chief, General Yaheita Saito and the head of the military administration, General Hitoshi Nishioeda. This accommodating attitude towards Malay royalty was confirmed by the change of personnel in March and April 1943 and the military reorganization in which the 25th Army moved to Sumatra from 1 May and Malaya was assigned to the 29th Army.

In addition to the policy of soothing the Malay feelings of loyalty to the rulers, the Japanese decision to put Malaya and Sumatra under a single administrative apparatus might also have been intended to win the confidence of the Malay community. It is certain that, because of Sumatra's position *vis-à-vis* Singapore as the major strategic and commercial centre of the region, the Japanese were primarily motivated by military and economic considerations when they made this arrangement, but having made it they sensed the political assets of demonstrating sympathy with Pan-Malay feelings. They stressed the ethnic ties between Sumatra and Malaya and condemned the imperialist policy of the Western powers which had driven the two territories apart. On the whole, however, Japan was not greatly successful in this. Although the Malays on both sides of the Malacca Straits were related by anthropological and linguistic ties, and family bonds existed between the ruling houses in the peninsula and those of the East Coast residency, the outlook of the ordinary Malayan Malay was, in general, limited to his own state; and Pan-Malay sentiments were entertained only by some of the more or less radical intellectuals of the Kesatuan Melayu Muda, who represented a very tiny section of Malay opinion. The reorganization of early 1943, which detached Sumatra from Malaya and placed it under a separate military régime, nullified whatever political benefits the Japanese might have derived from their professed adherence to Pan-Malayanism.

The protection which the Japanese authorities accorded to Muslim institutions was of greater importance as a device to make their policy acceptable to the Malays. The Liaison Conference had stated that indigenous customs, particularly those based on religion, had to be respected, and after the conquest the military administration conformed with this directive. Whatever plans Japanese officials of the first period might have had in mind to deprive the Malay rulers of their prerogatives, their position as nominally supreme religious leaders in their states was not to be violated. According to Watanabe a policy of respect and protection

of indigenous customs and religion would put the peoples' minds at rest and induce them to co-operate with the authorities. In their efforts to gain popularity the Japanese not only acquiesced in some aspects of Islam which were unfavourable to them, such as the marked decline in the working efficiency of Malay employees during the fasting month, but they also went so far as to demonstrate sympathy with religion and take some cautious steps to support it. On 5–6 April 1943 a conference of Muslim representatives from Malaya and Sumatra, sponsored by the military administration, was held at Singapore. It was the intention of the organizers to impress those who attended the meeting with their interest in Islamic affairs in order to win the confidence of the Islamic leaders and, with their help, obtain the backing of the Muslim masses in Japan's war, which on the occasion was depicted as a 'Holy War for the freedom of our peoples and the establishment of a New Asia'. Japan was quite successful in this; many prominent Muslim leaders expressed their thanks to the administration for its religious policy and in a number of local meetings, in Malaya as well as in Sumatra, they brought the proceedings of the Singapore Muslim Conference to the notice of the population. But apprehensive of the danger of stimulating, through Islam, Malay nationalism, the authorities turned down a proposal of some Japanese officials to establish an Islamic Council for Malaya as an advisory body which, though religious in nature, would have given the Muslims a greater voice in political affairs.

As in other South-East Asian territories the Japanese occupation in Malaya led to the break-up of the pre-war political or semi-political organizations. The Kwo Min Tang disappeared, its members going underground, joining the communists or keeping silent. The essentially pro-British Malay Associations, not knowing what to do under the new circumstances, dissolved themselves. The radical Kesatuan Melayu Muda, which had gone underground after the British authorities arrested its top leaders before the outbreak of the war, came into the open after the surrender of Singapore, but although willing to co-operate with the new masters the party was banned by the Japanese in July 1942. As representatives of Malay nationalism and spokesmen of that section of Malay opinion which was critical of the feudal set-up of society, the ideas of the radical politicians were frowned upon by the military administration. Yet the Japanese did not proceed to crush the organization; as in the case of Sukarno, or the Thakins, they preferred this group to collaborate rather than to go underground. So the K.M.M., officially illegal, co-operated, but at the same time it used its collaboration as a cover for other activities, often in concurrence with the resistance movement. The only other organization which managed to survive was the Malayan Communist Party, but this was not because of Japanese tolerance. It had always been illegal, so that its position was not fundamentally different from that under British rule, but with the Chinese community facing the

cruelty and ruthlessness of the Japanese régime, the prospects for successfully conducting underground activities were far brighter than before, and the communists immediately embarked upon organizing the anti-Japanese struggle.

INDONESIA: TRIPLE A, PUTERA AND M.I.A.I.

In Indonesia, too, the pre-war political parties were banned in the first few months of the Japanese occupation. On 20 March, less than two weeks after assuming responsibility for Java, the military administration ordered the cessation of all discussions, actions and propaganda related to constitutional matters or the structure of government. This was quite disappointing to the Indonesian political leaders who expected, rather naively, that the Japanese had not come to establish their political domination but only to occupy the country militarily. After the collapse of Dutch rule representatives of all political parties had been busily engaged in drafting lists of ministers for an Indonesian cabinet, but the order to stop such activity put an end to their immediate hopes of filling the vacuum created by the departure of the colonial masters. Seen from a Japanese point of view, however, this move as well as the ban on political parties, issued at about the same time, were completely in accordance with Japan's plans: they were preparatory steps towards clearing the way for bringing all political action under her direction. While the old parties disappeared the authorities embarked on a policy of rallying those leaders who had become politically homeless into new organizations which, under Japanese supervision, were designed to support Japan as well as enable her to control the masses more easily.

The Japanese absorption in a policy of creating a large mass movement as an instrument to channel popular activities, crystallized in Java in the so-called Triple A Movement (*Gerakan Tiga A*). It was the outcome of their contacts with some politicians of the Parindra which, because of its bourgeois character, its strong connexions with the aristocratic bureaucracy and its preference for a corporative society, was the only pre-war nationalist organization the Japanese administration was really interested in utilizing for its own ends. Sponsored by the Department of Propaganda, the movement, nominally headed by a former Parindra journalist, Samsuddin, was launched on 8 April 1942. As it was chronologically the first of such experiments in the region, the Japanese were not yet fully aware of South-East Asian self-consciousness, and they made the tactical error of emphasizing too strongly that it was their major intention to impress the population with Japan's superior role in the new circumstances. In the initial stages the anti-Western propaganda was not unfavourably received, but the main slogans of the movement, 'Japan the Light of Asia, Japan the Protector of Asia, Japan the Leader of Asia', did not agree

with the hopes the Indonesian politicians were primarily cherishing and, in addition to the disappointment over the ban on independent political activity, this factor contributed to the general cooling down of popular enthusiasm. Several social and cultural organizations, both long existing and newly-established ones, were persuaded to join, but in spite of the vivid propaganda to that effect the hurried attempts to incorporate all sections of Indonesian public life into one united front failed to secure the genuine support of any Indonesian of great reputation, political or otherwise, although some of them were forced to participate. There was also resentment over the attitude of local civil servants who were inclined to utilize the campaign for enhancing their own prestige. Finally, the Japanese themselves did not fully agree with each other over the implications of the Triple A Movement, as there were serious doubts as to the value of an organization which was under rather obscure leadership and which lacked popularity.

It is not quite certain who persuaded the commander-in-chief, Imamura, to let Sukarno return to Java from Sumatra, where he had been in exile since 1938, but on 9 July Sukarno arrived in Batavia and within days he was greeted by Samsuddin as a co-worker in the Triple A Movement. Realizing that the role the Japanese wanted him to play provided him with an opportunity to agitate among the masses and to establish the unity of the people he had been advocating for years, he was willing to co-operate, but although he took part in the Triple A Movement he was not prepared to accept this united front in which the Indonesian interests were too glaringly subordinated to those of Japan. He envisaged a genuine partnership instead, and because of his tremendous popularity, which greatly impressed the Japanese authorities, Sukarno was in a better position than any other South-East Asian politician to state his terms in exchange for his undertaking to rally the people behind the Japanese cause. Contacting Indonesian leaders, representing all sections of public life, political, social, cultural and religious, both Islamic and Christian, he soon became the dominant figure. From Imamura he elicited the statement, in September, that the military administration was aware of the Indonesian disillusionment; although a larger degree of autonomy would be out of the question during the war, the commander-in-chief requested the people to have confidence in the wisdom of the Emperor. This was a far cry from the demand to glorify Japan's leadership unconditionally. At the same time Sukarno made the Japanese realize that the Triple A Movement was anything but a suitable instrument to obtain popular support. It was Sukarno's policy to preserve the many organizations which were participating in the movement, as well as the structural principle of the united front, a more or less monolithic mass movement on a corporative basis. But the new organization had to be purely Indonesian in character and it should emphasize the common Japanese and Indonesian interests rather than exclusively stress those of Japan.

To achieve this end Sukarno secured the assistance of three prominent leaders, each outstanding in his own sphere: Ki Hadjar Dewantoro, revered founder of the national school system and symbol of the traditional Javanese-Indonesian culture, Hadji Mas Mansur, former chairman of Muhammadyah and representative of Islam, and Mohammed Hatta as the spokesman for the Western-educated elite. This foursome made preparations for launching a new unitary organization which, as Sukarno announced at a mass meeting in Batavia on 8 December, was to take place on 1 January 1943. It took some more time, however, before the *Putera* (*Pusat Tenaga Rakjat*, Centre of People's Power) was actually established. The delay was partly due to Japanese hedging. Since the creation of the Greater East Asia ministry on 1 November the advocates of an outright annexation of the 'Southern Islands' had strengthened their position in Tokyo and they were not greatly interested in relying on noted nationalists. When Tojo, on 23 January 1943, announced that Burma and the Philippines were to be granted independence, he referred to the Indonesians only in terms of people who, if loyal to the ideals of Greater East Asia, were to be treated like Japan's own children. In Java itself an attempt was made to line up some former Parindra leaders and prominent members of the civil service against the foursome and in November Imamura was replaced by the less lenient General Kumakichi Harada. On the other hand the war was taking an unfavourable turn for Japan, and for this reason it was necessary to intensify the efforts to obtain popular support. To achieve any substantial result in this respect Sukarno could not be overlooked, however unwelcome his nationalist sentiments and irritating his stubborn insistence on partnership. On 8 March the Putera was officially inaugurated.

Like the Triple A Movement the Putera was intended by the Japanese to be an organization through which they would be able to control the population and channel its activities. Judging by its programme it aimed at imparting a strong sense of duty and responsibility to the people, at eliminating Western influence, at fostering the self-consciousness and determination of the masses, at encouraging physical training and at making the people participate in the defence of Greater East Asia. Outwardly the Putera was not so completely devoted to serving Japan's interests as the Triple A Movement, and this suggested a less strict attitude on the part of the military administration. A similar impression was created when the foursome was allowed to function as the organization's top authority, with Sukarno as the 'Great Leader'. This was not in any way a concession, however; by giving high positions to Sukarno and the nationalist élite the Japanese sought to allay nationalist suspicions, to tie the political leaders down to a Japanese-sponsored course and prevent them from embarking upon their own schemes. The latter, under the delusion that they had been given an instrument to strengthen the cause of nationalism, started to work immediately to this end, but within a few months they

were thoroughly disappointed. Already in April, after General Moichiro Yamamoto had become the head of the General Affairs Department, the Japanese made it clear that they would watch the nationalists closely. They strictly censored the press and by checking the setting up of Putera branches in the countryside they limited the organization's range of activities and prevented the Indonesian leaders from spreading their nationalist ideas among the masses. Outwardly the Japanese continued to support the organization, but in fact the Indonesian politicians were faced with a blank wall of Japanese indifference and obstruction.

As in Malaya the Japanese regime in Java demonstrated its respect for Islam and embarked on a policy of supporting the Muslims. In this the military authorities were, no more than in Malaya, motivated by any genuine interest in Islam for its own sake. Their efforts to bolster up religious consciousness and sponsor Muslim organizations were primarily dictated by the consideration that the religious leaders might be most useful in winning over the population to the Japanese side. In Indonesia, moreover, the presence of a strong nationalist movement also prompted the Japanese to accord their favours to the Muslims; for by backing the latter the military administration might be successful in tempering the pretensions of the political nationalists. Finally there was a practical reason for the Japanese to contact the Muslims, and in particular the orthodox religious leaders and teachers, the *ulamas* and *kiais*. The authority of the nationalist politicians as well as of the Muslim middle class intellectual leaders was very much limited to the urban centres, both as a result of the social organization in the rural areas, and the policy of the Dutch colonial government to prevent political influences from extending to the countryside. The religious teachers, on the other hand, commanded a large following among the rural population, and this made them the most desirable intermediaries the Japanese authorities could wish to utilize in their efforts to rally the support of the masses for their own purposes. The Japanese administration might be a clear continuation of Dutch rule in that it took steps against the penetration of the political movement into the rural areas, but compared with the practice of the Netherlands Indies government which had remained neutral or quasi-neutral towards Islam, preoccupied as she was with seeking support from among the traditional aristocratic classes, the Japanese initiated quite a revolutionary change by ostentatiously making use of the rural Muslim leaders. But this change was not so revolutionary that it led to an essential increase in the power of the Islamic leaders beyond those fields which were theirs by tradition. The position and authority of the aristocratic elements was as carefully maintained by the Japanese as they had been enhanced by the Dutch, and, whatever their efforts to employ the ulamas and kiais, they continued to utilize in the first place the services of the aristocracy for carrying out their day-to-day policies.

The 16th Army, to which Java was assigned, was better equipped for

cultivating Muslim leadership than the 25th Army in Malaya. To the military administration a special Department of Religious Affairs was attached, which made the first official contacts between the Japanese regime and the Javanese population. Staffed by Japanese and, after some months, Indonesian and a few Arab officials, this bureau covered a wide range of activities. It immediately set out to win the confidence of the population, both by professing interest in Islam and religious custom and by denouncing those aspects of Dutch policy, such as the supervision of religious instruction and the subsidies to Christian churches, which had been resented by Muslim opinion. Of a more substantial nature were the efforts to establish a central Islamic association which had to mobilize the Muslims and which might help the regime to dominate the population more effectively. The wish to bring about a greater unity of the Muslims as a means of serving Japanese ends happened to coincide with a similar desire among Islamic leaders, though the latter were primarily motivated by the interests of both Islam and their own position in the religious-orientated wing of the popular movement.

Of the pre-war Islamic organizations, the large reformist religious *Muhammadyah*, which specialized in social and economic work, and the association of orthodox Muslim 'scholars', *Nahdatul Ulama*, were tacitly allowed to survive, as was the federation of Islamic organizations, Madjlisul Islamil A'laa Indonesia, M.I.A.I. Both the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia and the Partai Islam Indonesia fell under the ban on political parties, and they were disbanded in May 1942. It was the intention of the military authorities to bring the Muslim political leaders under their control, and in co-operation with the Triple A Movement the Department of Religious Affairs sponsored, in July, a preparatory committee of which the former P.S.I.I. leader Abikusno Tjokrosujoso became the nominal chairman. It was expected that an intensive campaign of inciting the Javanese Muslims to unite was likely to result in the emergence of a large Islamic association, and that such a body, under the control of the conservative nationalists dominating the Triple A Movement, would replace or include, or at any rate neutralize, the M.I.A.I. which was still beyond Japanese supervision. This did not happen, however, in spite of Japanese prodding, because the structural unification of Indonesian Islam such as the Japanese envisaged as a means to bring the M.I.A.I. to heel, amounted to the virtual merger of several groups of people with very divergent ideas and social and cultural backgrounds. On 4 September the committee organized a conference of Javanese religious leaders in Batavia who demonstrated their loyalty to Japan but who were unable to agree on bringing together orthodox scribes and reformist intellectuals, religious village teachers and urban political leaders, conservative Islamic nationalists and radicals, into one central organization. It was decided instead to recognize the M.I.A.I. as the central directing board for the entire

Muslim community, charged with securing a proper place for Islam within Indonesian society and harmonizing Indonesian Islam with the requirements of the changing times.

As to the willingness of the M.I.A.I. to collaborate with Japan the military authorities had no reason to feel dissatisfied, as one of its aims stated that the federation would 'co-operate with all the means at its disposal for the establishment of a new society among the Muslims in order to attain co-prosperity within the sphere of Greater East Asia under Japan's leadership'. In the advisory body of the organization three seats out of eight had been given to Japanese officials. For the rest, however, the results of the Islamic conference were not what the Japanese had had in mind. After the dissolution of the Triple A Movement the M.I.A.I. was not structurally associated with any Japanese-sponsored mass movement which might have brought the Muslim elite groups under closer surveillance. But far more alarming, from a Japanese point of view, was the fact that the rather radically-orientated nationalist politicians of the former P.S.I.I. had managed to entrench themselves in the executive board of the organization. In view of the increasing influence of the Muslim urban leaders in the rural areas which the co-operation of the intellectual elite and the village teachers within the M.I.A.I. might produce, the Japanese feared that the unwelcome views of the P.S.I.I. would penetrate into the countryside. To counteract such an eventuality, which was the more likely since the M.I.A.I., in its programme of action adopted in November 1942, stated that one of its aims was to bring all the ulamas of Java into the organization, the authorities themselves set out to strengthen the direct contacts with representatives of orthodox Islam in the rural districts. Behind the back of the M.I.A.I. the military administration organized a reception for them in Batavia on 7 December 1942, as a first indication of the change in the Japanese approach to Islamic leadership. The campaign to win the confidence of the Javanese masses in this way was stepped up during the first half of 1943 with the Japanese flattering the orthodox religious leaders, promising them greater local power at the expense of their traditional rivals, the aristocratic *priayis*, and inducing them to co-operate. This policy reached its culmination in July when the Department of Religious Affairs started to organize special training courses for Islamic village teachers, to strengthen their 'understanding of the world situation', and to improve their morale, so that would be able to give the fullest possible support to the regime. This meant the people who had no political experience whatsoever and who, greatly impressed by the unprecedented cajolery of the administration, were easily suggestible, were to be enlightened on Japan's goals in her struggle for a Greater East Asia which were represented as basically identical to the aims of Islam. Through these indoctrination courses the Japanese indeed created an effective instrument for extending their views and ideals down to village level.

BURMA: THE BA MAW ADMINISTRATION

The situation in Burma differed from the one in Indonesia and Malaya in that there was a semblance of indigenous authority after the Burma Executive Administration was installed on 1 August 1942. Formally it exercised the same functions as the pre-war cabinets, but with no parliament in existence it was responsible only to the commander-in-chief of the Japanese 15th Army, who had full control over administrative affairs as well as legislative authority. Because of this the B.E.A. was, in fact, an advisory body to the military administration rather than a genuine executive council. Its members devoted themselves to their tasks with energy and efficiency, but their subordinate position *vis-à-vis* the Japanese field-command did not fail to arouse feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration in nationalist circles. Although General Iida was a reasonable man and the director of the military administration, Yoshio Nasu, too, had an open eye towards Burma's problems and demands, they had to give priority to the interests of Japan which, fighting a global war, needed Burma's resources as well as the fullest possible support of the population. While animated by the spirit of Asian solidarity and willing to co-operate in establishing the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, Ba Maw, on the other hand, had Burmese interests at heart. Not a servile man, he often showed his displeasure with the arrogant behaviour of the Kenpeitai or, more in general, Japanese meddling with civil affairs, but although occasionally able to induce the Japanese to mend their ways, he could not prevent the military administration from strictly controlling the activities of the B.E.A. in the central sphere and closely watching the Burmese bureaucracy at the local level.

In spite of his nationalist views Ba Maw was the most desirable politician, from a Japanese point of view, to head the interim administration. His experience with British rule had made him sufficiently anti-Western to accept Japan as an ally in his struggle against colonialism, while his disappointment over the working of the pre-war governmental system had strengthened his anti-parliamentary beliefs and prevented him from having too many qualms over participating in an authoritarian set-up. He had great prestige as a nationalist leader, even among the radical Thakins, who were represented in the B.E.A. by two of the seven members. This majority of nationalist old-timers was likely to guarantee that the interim administration would follow a moderate course, nationalist-orientated to be sure, but not pressing the issue of genuine independence too hard. To Ba Maw, who was convinced of a Japanese victory in the war, co-operation with the new masters was a necessity, if Burma was to have a chance of becoming a free nation in the future; he felt he could use his acceptance of the Greater East Asia concept as a means to persuade the Japanese into making political concessions. The composition of the Burma Executive Administration

was such, moreover, that he and his adherents would be the principal beneficiaries, in terms of actual political power as well as popularity among the people, should Japan live up to her promise and grant independence.

The Thakins had less confidence in Japanese promises and after the attempt, through the Burma Independence Army, to take over had been foiled by the military authorities in June-July 1942, they had every reason to feel disgusted with Japan. They also resented their minority position in the interim administration, as well as the small number of major governmental functions which Ba Maw allotted to them. In the countryside the roles were reversed, moreover, with the traditional civil servants returning to their posts and denouncing Thakin members to the Kenpeitai. But with the exception of some communists like Thein Pe and Soe, the Thakin leaders decided to participate in the B.E.A., to which two of their most able politicians, the communist Than Tun and the socialist Mya, were appointed. Furthermore Aung San became the head of the newly-established Burma Defence Army. The co-operation of the Thakins with the Japanese authorities was based on the consideration that it provided them with the only opportunity to work for Burma's future. They were not willing to wait until it suited the Japanese to grant independence, since such a course conflicted with their national pride and youthful impatience, and also because it would result in a transfer of political power to their rivals. For the alternative, underground resistance, the time was not yet considered ripe, but by collaborating with the military régime and Ba Maw's B.E.A., the Thakins were offered the chance to prepare themselves for such an eventuality. They did so by sponsoring workers' and cultivators' associations and strengthening their contacts with the population.

Apart from building up an administrative apparatus and repairing the damages caused by the Japanese conquest, it was the task of the interim administration to assist the military authorities in mobilizing Burma's economic resources and her manpower for Japan's war efforts. As elsewhere in South-East Asia a process of political reorganization was set into motion, pointed towards the creation of a nation-wide mass movement which would cover all aspects of public life and include all sections of the people. The pre-war political parties were disbanded and in their place the *Dobama Sinyetha Asiayone* was formed as a national front in August 1942. It was a combination of the former Thakin association, Dobama Asiayone, and Ba Maw's Sinyetha Party and, like the B.E.A. in the administrative field, the D.S.A. seemed the expression, in the structural-organizational sphere, of the willingness of the two factions of the Burman nationalist movement to join forces in the pursuance of a common goal. But in the D.S.A. the emphasis was on the Thakins rather than on the politicians of the older generation. The front was organized by Mya around the associations of labourers and peasants which he and Than Tun had been promoting, and it was a Thakin leader, Nu, who became the first secretary general. Controlled by the radicals, the Dobama Sinyetha Asiay-

one, just as the Putera in Indonesia, was not the type of mass organization such as the Japanese envisaged. But with the moderate politicians in control of the Burma Executive Administration, the military authorities themselves closely supervising the Burma Defence Army and the Kenpeitai watching the Thakins, they did not interfere directly. They made an effort, however, to support another elite group, and although this was in keeping with their general policy of creating all-comprehensive monolithic movements to regiment the population more effectively, it might also have been an attempt to neutralize the influence of the nationalists.

In Indonesia and Malaya the Japanese were Muslim with the Muslims; in Burma they were Buddhist with the Buddhists. Their interest in Buddhism was more credible than that in Islam but their activities to ingratiate themselves with the Buddhist Burmans essentially served the same purpose as their similar efforts in the Islamic countries. Supposedly intending to promote understanding between the Burmans and Japan through their common faith, the military administration sought to organize the monks and utilize their prestige to rally the population to its cause. The initial attempts were immediate failures, however. Between March and June 1942 three associations of monks were founded by Japanese officers, but because of their rivalries and their unwillingness to co-operate with each other they did not bring the desired unity of monkhood any nearer. The nationalists, on their part, were hardly more successful in this. In accordance with the Burmese view that monks had to remain physically separated from mundane society, they took the precaution of reserving for them a special section in the Dobama Sinyetha Asiayone, but this set-up was still considered too political and too much of a laymen's affair to be attractive. The next move was initiated by the B.E.A. which, in April 1943, announced the formation of a *Maha Sangha* Association. After some hesitation the prominent religious leaders of the majority Thudama Sect gave their support, as did the Japanese régime. From 26 June to 2 July a conference of Buddhist authorities, held in Rangoon, selected an executive committee and drew up a charter which emphasized the need to form one national organization and urged the monks to co-operate fully with the Burmese interim administration in maintaining Burma's independence, in increasing friendly relations with Japan and in establishing a Greater East Asia.

The Maha Sangha Association did not serve its purpose; it never became the large executive body in which religious authority was centralized and on which the B.E.A. or the Japanese military regime could rely. It was no more than a quasi-authoritative organization which happened to be ecclesiastic in outlook and orientation and which, as so many other organizations, was linked to the administration, but it was not subservient to the extent that the Japanese wished. In spite of the pressure exerted upon it, it refused to proclaim the war Japan was fighting a Holy War. But the greatest disappointment for the Japanese was it that the Association

was not capable of securing the co-operation of the Buddhist Order as a whole; its charter, too evidently a departure from the traditional aloofness of monkhood from worldly affairs, dissuaded a great many religious leaders and village monks from joining, and the Rangoon conference had failed to establish the central ecclesiastic authority necessary to force them to do so. The absence of a central leadership, on the other hand, prevented the monkhood, traditionally so loosely organized, from prohibiting individual members from being used for Japan's purposes, and it was on this level that the administration scored its greatest success in its attempts to employ Burmese Buddhist leaders. But the Japanese, in Burmese eyes followers of an impure form of Buddhism, showed a particular propensity to hurt Buddhist feelings. During the military conquest the army frequently used sacred buildings for bivouacking and slaughtering purposes. Most Burmese, to whom monks represented supreme spiritual leaders, resented the behaviour of the Japanese who tended to regard them as economically unproductive parasites. A nation-wide uproar was caused when the administration employed monks to innoculate people, including women, against diseases, or demanded their co-operation in a campaign to exterminate rats. Actions like these were not likely to inspire the Buddhist Burmese with great enthusiasm for the Japanese cause.

The Maha Sangha Association was one attempt of the Burma Executive Administration to forge a greater unity among the people. In order to achieve this and to create one single supra-party several other organizations had been set up, either by the Japanese or by the interim government. In this the policies of Ba Maw coincided with those of the Japanese regime as well as with those of the Thakins, but the objectives were quite different and as, for all their outward camaraderie, they mistrusted each other thoroughly, it occasionally happened that all three were working in the same field. Thus the Buddhists were approached by the Japanese, the Thakins and the B.E.A., be it without success, due to the elusive attitude of the Order and the great many psychological errors committed by the organizing parties. Similarly in June 1942 the Japanese sponsored a Burmese youth association, which Ba Maw later attempted to incorporate into his National Service Association, a non-political organization for social reconstruction, established in December 1942. As to the national minorities, both the Japanese authorities and the Burmese administration made efforts to win their confidence. Traditionally hostile to the Burmans, particularly since the communal disturbances of early 1942 during the B.I.A. episode, the Karens had not much trouble in accepting Japanese protection in lieu of the alliance with the British. As a result the Japanese were quite successful in promoting Karen organizations and in obtaining the co-operation of respected Karen leaders, like San Crombie Po. On their part the Burmans tried to woo the Karens; Ba Maw had appointed a Karen member to the B.E.A., and in the course of 1943 he established a Karen Centre Organization as a counterweight to the pro-Japanese associations.

With three essentially rival groups, the Japanese, the elder nationalists of the interim administration and, on a less official though not illegal basis, the Thakins engaged in establishing functional organizations as component parts of a nation-wide drive to mobilize the total manpower of the country, it was hardly astonishing that a single national front did not materialize. Much stress was put on 'One Blood, One Voice, One Leader', as well as on close co-operation of all Burmese towards a common goal, but the desired 'concentration of power and control, of action and of means and ends', to which Ba Maw referred in his 'New Order Plan' of 1943, was not forthcoming. Neither was the structural unity of the various official organizations achieved in any way. In this respect the situation in Burma showed a marked contrast to the political developments under Japanese supervision in Indonesia or the Philippines. It was the attitude of the Thakins with regard to tactical problems which was primarily responsible for this. In all three countries there were nationalists who advocated the support of the military administration and participation in the Japanese-authorized political bodies, as this would offer them the best opportunities to foster their nation's, or their own, interests; in all three, too, there were political leaders who did not expect such a course to serve any good purpose. The latter wanted to achieve their nationalist aims through other means and in Indonesia and the Philippines they refused to collaborate with the new masters: they either kept aloof from the officially sponsored or tolerated institutions, or took part in the resistance movement. In these two countries the efforts to bring about some sort of structural unity under Japanese auspices encountered, in general, only one difficulty of a fundamental nature, related to the need to harmonize the contradictory objectives of Japan and those of the élite groups. In practice this dilemma was solved, however, by the policy of the nationalist leaders who, while co-operating with Japan and professing adherence to her war aims, pressed for the granting of concessions and worked on projects which not only met the Japanese requirements but also contributed, in a legal way, to the realization of their own visions.

In Burma the situation was complicated by the decision of the Thakins to participate in the new administrative and political set-up. They did not do so, as did Ba Maw and his followers, to promote the cause of Burma's freedom in co-operation with Japan, but to be in a safer position to prepare for more forceful, if possible underground, action at a later stage. This meant that any mass movement that was to be established in Burma had to include the radical nationalists who held opinions on the functions and the ultimate purposes of such an organization which were substantially different from those entertained by both the Japanese sponsors and Ba Maw. This condition proved to be an unsurmountable obstacle to monolithic organization, because in addition to the general difficulty arising out of the clashing interests of Japan and Asian nationalism, it posed for South-East Asia the unique problem of working out a compromise, within the context

of Japanese-imposed legality, between the views of those nationalist leaders who were not prepared to go against Japan and those who were. The major official associations which emerged as potential elements to be incorporated into a nation-wide, all-comprehensive structure, were only outwardly directed towards a common goal. The Dobama Sinyetha Asiayone was nominally under the leadership of Ba Maw, but Nu ran the party, and with the Thakins working among the rural masses and the urban proletariat feelings were aroused which were likely to undermine Ba Maw's prestige. The Burma Defence Army was headed by Aung San, who wanted to transform it into an instrument of radical Burmese nationalism, but it was under strict control of the Japanese military authorities; for these two reasons the army was hardly as attractive an element in the set-up as the moderate nationalists envisaged. In some respects the National Service Association, *Myanma Wunthanu Aphwe*, was reminiscent of the Japanese Imperial Rule Assistance Association, but compared to this exemplary model it was structurally incomplete. It was not a great success either; in spite of Ba Maw's efforts to that effect it failed, for instance, to eclipse the highly popular Japanese-sponsored East Asia Youth League. The Labour Service Battalions, finally, into which labourers were recruited for Japanese construction projects, represented precisely that aspect of Japanese domination which, more than any other, evoked popular resentment against the régime as well as against the Burmese political leaders at high levels who seemingly condoned this form of slavery. Under the control of different groups with well-concealed contrary intentions, and through their activities causing quite divergent reactions among the population, these four organizations could not possibly merge into a single structure. The launching, in April 1943, of the so-called 'Four Armies' combination, consisting, in Ba Maw's parlance, of the Leaders' Army, the Blood Army, the Circle Army and the Sweat Army, came closest to the desired national unity, but it amounted in fact to nothing more than a very loose alliance of the four associations. With the proper instrument for regimenting the people lacking, and one faction of the collaborating nationalists secretly working against them, the Japanese were not successful in harnessing the population to their cause.

THE PHILIPPINES: THE VARGAS ADMINISTRATION

The Philippines were ruled by Japan under the same formula of government as the one applied to Burma. Formally the Philippine Executive Commission was given legislative and executive authority, but in reality it was merely an executive agent of the Japanese command and an intermediary through which the new masters supervised provincial governors and local officials. In the Philippines the façade of indigenous

authority was no more than in Burma a guarantee against Japanese interference. But despite the basic similarity of the administrative machineries in the two countries, there were differences. The Philippine Executive Commission enjoyed, in practice, less freedom of action than, within the limits set by the Japanese, its Burmese counterpart did. In their collaboration with Japan the ranking Filipinos, like Vargas as chairman of the Commission, or Benigno Aquino as commissioner for internal affairs, acted more as puppets than did Ba Maw and his colleagues. This was not because they were more strongly pro-Japanese than the latter: those who were, like Benigno Ramos, Pio Duran, or the veteran generals Aguinaldo and Artemio Ricarte, were deliberately kept in the background. Neither was this difference in attitude primarily caused by the fact that the Japanese behaved, in general, far more ruthlessly in the Philippines than they did in Burma. The major factor responsible for the accommodating and seemingly spineless conduct of the Filipino politicians *vis-à-vis* Japan was the unique circumstance that they lacked the popular backing which was required to convince the military regime of their usefulness. As they had to rely more on the Japanese than the Japanese could rely on them, the Filipino leaders were not indispensable; consequently their bargaining position for concessions was very weak.

It was in the Philippines that Japan failed completely to win over the population to her side. From all appearances, the prospects of effectively controlling the people and utilizing the country's resources were far brighter than in Burma or in Indonesia. The Japanese managed to secure the co-operation of the bureaucracy and of almost all prominent politicians, which meant that it was not just the representatives of some political groups who joined them, but the most prestigious Filipino leaders who were traditionally accustomed to command and to being obeyed. In the Philippines, as elsewhere, there was a difference of opinion between those political leaders who were strictly in favour of legal action and those who were not in principle opposed to illegal operations but, contrary to the developments in Burma, the parting of the ways on the collaboration issue was effected almost immediately after the Japanese conquest. It was also of great significance that the dividing line between the advocates and the opponents of underground action seemed to correspond, more distinctly than anywhere else in South-East Asia, with the one separating the more or less social revolutionary leaders from the supporters of the *status quo;* for with one single exception, Jose Abad Santos, the entire oligarchy opted for active collaboration. Because of their identical social interests and political views, and the near absence of any ambivalence as to their tactical stand, the collaborating politicians in the Philippines displayed, as a group, a greater cohesion than in Burma. Furthermore, personal ambitions apart, there was hardly any fundamental issue, such as the one related to the position of Islamic leadership in Indonesia, which might have posed a potential threat to the group-solidarity of the collaborators.

As instruments through which the Japanese might captivate the public mind and extend their influence among the masses, the Filipino political leaders were less useful, however, than their Burmese or Indonesian colleagues. They could not justify their actions as a move in the struggle for independence such as Sukarno or Ba Maw were able to. This proved to be their greatest setback; the overwhelming majority of the Filipinos, instinctively and on a rather irrational basis entertaining strong pro-American sentiments, never regarded the Japanese as liberators, as the Burman and Indonesian masses initially did. Unable to provide the people with any valid reason why it should co-operate with the new masters, the traditional leaders failed to shift Filipino allegiance away from Quezon and Osmena, the Commonwealth government-in-exile. Consequently the collaborators were confronted with a thankless and distasteful task, caught as they were between Japan's demands and the vehemently anti-Japanese attitude of the population. Aware of official American hostility to Filipino collaboration, they also felt some doubts as to the wisdom of their stand from a patriotic point of view, but having opted for collaborating with Japan out of concern for law and order and for their own social and political status, they were unable to extricate themselves from the awkward position into which they had been manoeuvred. The oligarchy rendered extremely valuable assistance to the Japanese by maintaining administrative continuity and supporting Japan's policies without, however, earning the gratitude of the military authorities who tended to blame them for their failure to induce the Filipino masses to co-operate fully in the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. On 2 June 1942 they had already prevailed upon Vargas to replace the less enthusiastic members in the advisory Council of State by more dedicatedly pro-Japanese politicians.

Compared with the energy with which Ba Maw's interim administration and Sukarno embarked upon collaborating with the Japanese, the Philippine Executive Commission and the Filipino establishment in general presented a rather listless spectacle, but this was due to the absence of a genuinely inspiring objective rather than to any disinclination to fulfil their task. Their lack of success annoyed the Japanese who proceeded to perform many of the organizing activities themselves. The military administration in the Philippines was no less equal to the task of regimenting public life and bringing it under its control than anywhere else in South-East Asia. Judging strictly by outward appearances the results were even more promising than in Burma, where the procedure was left to Burman politicians, or compared to Indonesia where the Japanese regime, although formally bearing direct responsibility for the development, made extensive use of enthusiastic Indonesian leaders. But because of the popular hostility they encountered in the Philippines, the Japanese resorted to a policy of intimidation which adversely affected their image of 'fellow Orientals' who had come to liberate the people from the yoke of Western colonialism.

Soon after the occupation of Manila the Kenpeitai went to work in a grim way; within a few weeks hundreds of men and women were beheaded, in public and without trial, for their refusal to co-operate, and on 7 May chief justice Jose Abad Santos was shot for the same reason. This deliberate terrorism badly misfired, however, as it did in the case of the Malayan Chinese: it only served to strengthen further the anti-Japanese sentiments.

That, in their dealings with the Filipinos, the Japanese were far more bent on a policy of intimidation than in the other South-East Asian countries, was also illustrated by the fact that in the Philippines the so-called Neighbourhood Associations were introduced earlier than anywhere else in the region. The relevant order, issued by Vargas in August 1942, provided for the establishment of such basic units, composed of about ten to fifteen families each, placed under a local leader and charged with civic duties initially but soon afterwards with policing functions as well. These cells were responsible for the preservation of law and order; they had to make regular reports on people in the community and to denounce promptly any disaffected member or suspicious character. The entire group, and its leader in particular, were to be severely punished in case the Japanese arrested a 'bandit' who had not been reported. Of all Japanese devices for controlling the population of South-East Asia, this was the most vicious, as it tended to debase the Filipinos by encouraging betrayal and espionage and to create an atmosphere of mutual distrust. But the system failed to break the people's self-respect as well as the spirit of opposition and resistance.

In addition to such efforts to cow the population into submission by cruelty, the Japanese employed the same methods to persuade the Filipinos to co-operate as they utilized in other occupied territories. Cultural organizations and other associations were brought under the control of the military administration in an attempt to unite them into an all-embracing mass movement. Apart from the political parties and educational institutions, the Christian churches were the primary object of Japanese attention. In order to win over the ecclesiastical authorities to their cause, they made immediate overtures to the Catholic Church, utilizing the agreement of March 1942 between Japan and the Holy See as a lever to convince the Filipinos of their good relations with Catholicism. The military administration showed great interest in the Christian faith, professedly for humanitarian reasons, but in reality to secure the support of this most powerful source of authority in the country. The reaction of the Catholic hierarchy was not unresponsive and as early as 17 March 1942 Archbishop Michael O'Doherty gave the assurance that the Church would co-operate 'in the establishment of peace'. For all their cordiality the Japanese were not prepared, however, to allow the Church to retain such privileges which they considered contrary to their own interests, and through the Philippine Executive Commission orders were issued which

limited the wide freedom of action the Church traditionally enjoyed. Thus, in accordance with their general policy of taking the indoctrination of the youth into their own hands, the Japanese abolished religious education in July 1942. The regime also set out, in May, to 'eradicate foreign domination', that is: to isolate the many American members of the clergy, among them several bishops. But on the whole the attitude of the Japanese was one of conscious accommodation of the Church. They sought to check the secular orientated Filipino politicians who were pressing for depriving the Church of its right to land-ownership as well as of its tax-exempt status. In order not to alienate the Catholic community they also proceeded cautiously with their policy of eliminating Western elements and indeed they obtained the approval of the Papal Nuncio to accord diocesan authority to a Filipino bishop, the leader of the *Acciôn Catolica*, Cesar Guerrero. In December 1942 Pius XII, in a message to the Filipinos, expressed sympathy with the just cause for which Japan was fighting. It was a great Japanese achievement that they managed to dissuade the high-ranking clergy from openly opposing their rule. It is true that the Catholic authorities did not prove to be of much use as allies in the campaign to control the population, because in spite of the declarations in support of the concept of a Greater East Asia the Church neither showed great enthusiasm for having itself utilized for that purpose, nor did it prevent many local priests from joining the underground resistance movement. But it was of momentous importance that, in a country in which approximately 80 per cent of its population were Roman Catholic, the Japanese administration avoided incurring the hostility of the Catholic Church as an institution. Towards the dissident Independent (Aglipayan) Church, the protestant denominations and the Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu the Japanese followed a similar policy.

With regard to the pre-war political parties the Japanese authorities did not entertain any illusion as to their usefulness, and soon after they entered Manila they announced that they refused to recognize them. As elsewhere in South-East Asia the official prohibition of all political activity, on 8 July, was a preliminary move in the development towards establishing an all-comprehensive mass movement, but it was not immediately followed by a ban on political organizations. After the Japanese conquest the parties lost much, if not all, of their *raison d'être* now that parliament had been abolished and legislative authority was transferred to the Japanese. The military administration was not in a great hurry to dissolve them officially; they were not liquidated until the creation of a Japanese-inspired united front, early in December. To give the impression that this was in accordance with the desire of the Filipino politicians to establish the New Order, in the pursuance of which the old party structure had to disappear, it was announced on the 4th that the political organizations had dissolved themselves. In the place of the Partido Nacionalista, the Popular Front parties, the group representing the old Sakdal move-

ment and Aguinaldo's Philippine Veterans Association, a new organization emerged, the so-called Association for the Service of the New Philippines, *Kapisanan sa Paglilingkod sa Bagong Pilipinas*, or *Kalibapi* as it became popularly known.

Under the auspices of commander-in-chief Shizuichi Tanaka, who had succeeded Homma, this movement was proclaimed on 8 December 1942 and officially launched on the 30th. Of all organizations which the military authorities sponsored in South-East Asia as monolithic structures based on a totalitarian ideology, this one came closest to the ideal envisaged by the Japanese. It was patterned after the Imperial Rule Assistance Association in Japan and devoted to spreading propaganda for the cause of the Co-prosperity Sphere. Stating as its official aim that it would unify the Filipinos in order to extend positive co-operation to the Japanese forces in the reconstruction of the country, it refrained from exclusively emphasizing the primacy of Japan's interests; as such it was potentially better adjusted to the task of broadening mass participation in the execution of Japan's plans than the Triple A Movement in Indonesia. With Vargas its ex-officio chairman, Aquino its director general, and Pio Duran and Benigno Ramos among the other top functionaries, the Kalibapi, unlike the Putera in Indonesia or the near-equivalent organizations in Burma, was led by politicians who were motivated by barely any other consideration than obeying the Japanese as a means to preserve the oligarchy's high position in the Philippine power structure. Consequently, the military régime had no reason to counteract their activities for fear that these might advance indigenous nationalism rather than Japan's objectives. Furthermore, the Kalibapi, operating through the Neighbourhood Associations, was more successful in extending its control and influence over the local communities than any other similar organization, with the possible exception of the Djawa Hokokai which was established early in 1944 in Java — though the latter laboured under the marked coolness with which prominent nationalist leaders approached the experiment. Theoretically the Kalibapi was, on all accounts, the most effective instrument set up by the Japanese for the purpose of enlisting popular support in South-East Asia.

In concert with the Philippine Executive Commission the leaders of the Kalibapi did their utmost to make the programme a success. A huge propaganda campaign was set into motion to bolster the people's morale, and Aquino made trips throughout the country in a frantic effort to enlarge the movement's membership. All existing non-political organizations were placed under its supervision and numerous cultural and social projects were encouraged. So also, various training institutes were established for the indoctrination of the people, from government officials down to factory workers, and in May 1943 a special junior branch was set up. In spite of all their efforts, Vargas and Aquino failed to make the Kalibapi, or Japanese policy in general, acceptable to the population.

Huge crowds were occasionally herded together to take part in a parade or a massive demonstration, but usually only a small group was voluntarily present, the majority consisting of government employees who had to be members of the Kalibapi and attend its meetings, or people who had been bribed into coming with free cigarettes or clothes. It soon became evident that neither propaganda nor pressure were sufficient to win the confidence of the population. Annoyed, the Japanese started to look for Filipino politicians better equipped for their task than Vargas and Aquino who, despite their devotion, seemed to lack the necessary charismatic leadership. In this respect their attention was drawn to Jose Laurel and Manuel Roxas. The former was one of the members of the Philippine Executive Commission, for justice until December 1942 and for the interior after that date; he was also the newly named chairman of a so-called pacification body which had to take charge of a fresh campaign to curb the increasing guerrilla activities. On 6 June 1943 he was critically wounded in an assassination attempt, an event which greatly raised his prestige in Japanese eyes. Roxas was the most prominent pre-war politician still present in the Philippines; claiming ill-health he had managed so far to be excused from actively participating in politics under Japanese auspices. It was these two leaders whom the military authorities held in reserve when they started to introduce a political change in the course of 1943.

THE MOBILIZATION OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA'S YOUTH

In all territories dominated by Japan, special attention was given to the younger generation. Considering youth easily suggestible to influence by their propaganda, they immediately started to carry out a programme to that effect. They closed the schools and revised the textbooks, established cultural institutions to re-educate the teachers and adapted the curricula to the principles and requirements of the New Order. Education of all types was closely watched at all levels; public schools, under direct Japanese control, were more liable to fall prey to the Nipponization policy of the authorities than the non-governmental educational institutes, but the latter did not escape Japanese intervention with regard to their curricula, the training of their teachers and their staff policy, irrespective of whether they were run by religious or secular bodies.

This Japanese interest in the youth of South-East Asia did not stop at indoctrinating the younger generation in the schools. The authorities also sought to bring them together into youth organizations which, affiliated to the large mass movements, were to be potential supplies of future collaborators. In some cases a youth section of a former nationalist party became the core of the new organization, as in Java, where the Parindra

youth group formed the nucleus of the *Barisan Pemuda Asia Raya*, Greater Asia Youth Corps, which was launched on 11 June 1942 as part of the Triple A Movement. The organization, in principle also including Chinese and Arabs, spread rapidly, either by other youth groups associating with it, or by individual students of secondary schools who were persuaded or coerced into joining. Initially the members were primarily engaged in sports and boy-scout activities, but towards the end of the year the leaders in charge of the B.P.A.R. brought about a change in its orientation. According to them priority should be given to physical training as a better means of preparing the younger generation to defend the nation. In order to allay Japanese suspicions the Indonesian nationalists reorganized the B.P.A.R. along the lines of the youth corps in Japan and even gave it a Japanese name, *Seinendan*. Starting locally from November 1942 onwards, the new youth movement was centralized for Java on 29 April 1943; it also spread to Sumatra and some of the territories under the rule of the naval authorities. The Japanese considered the organization a welcome addition to the existing labour battalions and they were not slow in utilizing it for such activities as food production, harvesting, irrigation, rice requisition and air-raid protection. They tolerated the drilling of the members in a semi-military way, including fighting with wooden sticks, but in spite of the insistence of the nationalist leaders that the Seinendan should take a more active part in the defence of Greater East Asia, the Japanese did not allow a purely military training to be given.

On the initiative of philanthropic circles an East Asia Youth League was sponsored in Burma. It was launched on 28 June 1942 and, asin Indonesia, its membership was not restricted to the majority race but included ethnic minorities as well. Its main feature was that it was essentially non-political; it mobilized Burmese youth for reconstruction programmes of social service and as it earned wide popularity it was quite successful in this respect. As an instrument of control or as a training institute for future leaders it was useful neither to the Japanese nor the Burmese administration, however, since the leader, Ba Gyan, avoided allowing the organization to be drawn into political activities, despite Ba Maw's efforts to incorporate the League into the National Service Association. No military or semi-military training was given; the organization concerned itself primarily with cleaning up and sweeping activities, with building air-raid shelters, assisting in sanitation measures and opening libraries. Yet political ideals did not fail to impress the younger generation, but the members of the League were more attracted by the views of the Thakins than by those of Japan or Ba Maw's administration. In a rather ambiguous speech, in July 1944, Nu incited them to build up 'physical and mental and moral strength' to provide leaders for a future generation, while hinting that Japanese rule and Ba Maw might not last for another year. It was in the light of this statement that the East Asia Youth League made its choice when it finally decided to become involved in politics.

In the Philippines the youth association was structurally a division of the adults' organization; on 18 May 1943 a Junior Kalibapi, *Kabataang Kalibapi*, was established by Vargas. It was meant as an instrument to 're-orientate' young Filipinos, to instil in them 'the spirit of sacrifice and service to the nation' and, at the same time, to check the increasing wave of juvenile delinquency. The members of the youth movement were occasionally utilized in food producton campaigns or for public service duties, and they were also physically trained. Because of the popular hostility *vis-à-vis* Japan the organization was not any more successful than the Kalibapi itself in enlisting support for Japan's cause.

3 *The Change of Tactics: 'Independence' and Reforms*

THE UTILIZATION OF MANPOWER: THE ROMUSHA TRAGEDY

IN the course of 1943 Japanese policy in the occupied territories underwent a change which was caused primarily by the fact that the war against the Allied powers definitely entered the defensive phase. Although a British attack on Arakan was repelled and a drive from Manipur into Burma in the early months of 1943 failed to be successful, the Japanese were less fortunate in the other sectors of the immense war theatre. After a sanguinary battle which lasted for half a year the Americans took Guadalcanal in the Solomons on 8 February and in early March the Japanese lost a naval engagement in the Bismarck Sea. Having recovered from the initial shock produced by the Japanese assault, the Allied powers. this time more adequately equipped with troops and material, embarked upon a long range strategy to conquer the Japanese strongholds in the Pacific Ocean. The Japanese defended themselves ferociously, but they were unable to prevent the Allied forces from slowly closing in on them and penetrating deeper into their territory. In June the first landings were effected on the northern coast of Australian New Guinea, which initiated a long and laborious campaign for the re-conquest of the island. From July until November the Solomon Archipelago and the seas around were the scene of a series of great naval and air battles and of concurrent Allied landings on the islands, resulting in the eventual elimination of Japanese power in this area. In November Tarawa and Makin, in the Gilbert Islands, fell into American hands and towards the close of the year the Allied forces posed a direct threat to the Japanese major bases at Rabaul and Truk, as well as to the Marianas. During these engagements Japan

suffered heavy losses, in men and in materials, which were not likely to be recouped easily, while Allied submarines and aircraft caused severe damage to her merchant fleet, endangering her lines of communication.

Facing constant reverses in the war Japan was confronted with the increasing need to step up the drive to prepare both psychologically and materially the countries under her domination for their defence. All resources had to be utilized more effectively than before and the peoples in the region had to make a more substantial contribution to the war effort. In providing material support both the mass movements and the indigenous bureaucracy proved to be convenient instruments. These organizations, the prestige of their leaders and the authority and administrative experience of native officialdom could be taken advantage of to persuade more easily or force the population into taking an active part in the more unpleasant duties attending the process of building up the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. It was in this respect, particularly in the utilization of South-East Asia's manpower for various labour projects related to Japan's military needs, that Japanese domination was most callous and inhuman.

Apart from some minor groups or youth organizations which were indirectly employed for such purposes, there were three categories of people mobilized for or coerced into serving Japan as labourers or coolies. In the first place the Allied prisoners of war, who were used for military and semi-military projects, such as the construction of air fields, roads and railways, but also as labourers on the wharfs or in mines and factories. It depended on several circumstances how they were treated, but in general food was inadequate while working conditions were bad, particularly for the Western prisoners who were not accustomed to performing manual labour in a tropical climate. A second group of labourers were the so-called heihos, belonging to the Auxiliary Service Branch of the Japanese armed forces. Most of them were recruited from among the former indigenous soldiers of the colonial armies, and they were largely employed in transport units or defence construction projects. They worked directly under Japanese commanders and in rank they stood below the lowest Japanese soldier, but although they were occasionally subject to abuses the heihos were reasonably well treated, receiving fair pay and rations. They were, on the whole, better off than the far greater category of indigenous labourers, or *romushas*, who were mobilized into the so-called Labour Service Battalions. With promises of adequate salaries and good working conditions tens of thousands of unemployed, distressed peasants from South-East Asia's rural problem areas were persuaded to work on military defence projects, and where persuasion failed press-gang methods were often resorted to. The labourers, thus impressed, were utilized, in many cases together with the Allied prisoners of war, for the repair of roads, the construction of airstrips or the building

of railways, not only in their countries of origin but all over the region. From the half a million coolies recruited in Java around 300,000 were sent overseas to destinations from the Solomons in the east to Burma in the west. Made to perform slave labour under revolting conditions, they were treated with particular harshness, receiving insufficient food and hardly any medical care. No Japanese undertaking in South-East Asia caused such an appalling wastage of human lives as this labour service programme. During the journey overseas many were already killed when their transport ships were hit by Allied bombs or torpedoes. But in the labour camps many more died from home-sickness, exhaustion, starvation, disease or sheer negligence. It is estimated that of the 300,000 Javanese coolies sent to work outside Java over 230,000 perished, that of the 75,000 Malayan Indian labourers employed at the Burma-Siam railway 45,000 died and that 30,000 Burmese romushas were also killed.

The Burma-Siam railway was the most ambitious of the major construction projects which the Japanese carried out; as the 'Railway of Death' it was also the most notorious. It was intended to provide the army with a direct rail communication between Moulmein and Bangkok, in order to avoid the hazardous sea route. Construction of this line, from Banpong in Thailand over the Three Pagodas Pass to Thanbyuzayat in Burma, started in September 1942. With no excavating machines or proper engineering equipment available, the work was done entirely by manual labour. Allied prisoners of war, mainly British, Dutch and Australian, totalling 60,000 and, according to the estimates, a number of some 300,000 Asian romushas were employed for the building of this railway through desolate and pestilential mountain and jungle territory. Because of the increasing losses of Japanese shipping on the Singapore-Rangoon route, it was ordered in February 1943 that the line had to be completed by August, and this induced the Japanese guards to drive on the labourers even more mercilessly than before. Food was scarce, housing extremely bad, medical supplies were scanty and due to the hardships and the diseases mortality was shockingly high. The Burma-Siam railway was completed in October 1943; along the line 16,000 European prisoners and over 100,000 Asian coolies had lost their lives. A similar project was undertaken, though on a smaller scale, in May 1944: the construction of a railway from Pakan Baru to Muara in Central Sumatra, because of the need to maintain communications between East and West Sumatra in a period when the high seas became increasingly dangerous for Japanese shipping. The work was completed in August 1945, and although conditions were generally less bad than those prevailing along the Burma-Siam railway and fewer prisoners and Asian coolies were involved, there were many casualties here, too.

The recruitment of peasants for coolie work caused serious dislocation in the rural areas, not only because the departure of so many people adversely affected the economic situation, but also because the families

of those taken away did not receive any financial compensation. The most significant aspect of the romusha tragedy was, however, that the atrocious working conditions, the humiliation and the brutal treatment to which the coolies were subjected aroused widespread indignation, particularly among the younger intellectuals. Not only the Japanese were blamed as those who were primarily responsible for introducing a type of slave labour which, on such a huge scale, had long been abandoned by the Western colonial authorities, but also many top-level political leaders as well as the bureaucracy in general were reproached with supporting the scheme or, in case of the latter, helping to implement it. For this reason nationalist politicians occasionally embarked upon programmes to ameliorate working conditions and provide, if possible, better amenities: thus Ba Maw, who initially enthusiastically supported the Burma-Siam railway project, sent Thakin Mya on an inspection tour to Thanbyuzayat after he was informed of the terrible conditions under which people were forced to work. But these efforts did not result in an improvement of the situation and much less in abating popular resentment. In the case of the Indian prisoners of war who were used as forced labourers, it was Subhas Chandra Bose, leader of the Indian independence movement since mid-1943, who protested to the Japanese authorities, but he was told that Japan had the right to utilize those captives who had refused to join the Indian National Army.

THE MILITARY AUXILIARY FORCES

The I.N.A. was one example of a military volunteer corps such as the authorities sponsored, or allowed to be organized, in South-East Asia. In general, the Japanese were not very enthusiastic about mobilizing the population this way, but not being in a position to reject the offers made by political leaders to co-operate with Japan in militarily defending the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, they authorized the setting up of organizations to that effect. Yet they had doubts as to both the wisdom of distributing weapons to indigenous volunteers and the intentions of the nationalist leaders who had been pressing for such military units to be formed. Consequently they attempted to make sure, by carefully controlling the apportionment of arms and strictly supervising the activities of the armed forces and their leaders, that the situation did not get out of hand. Genuine, nominally national armies, though of a limited size, they only allowed to the Indians as a community and to Burma as a country. In Java and Malaya they did not go beyond organizing military auxiliary groups. That this distinction was made was due to a difference in the legal status of the territories concerned; Burma and the Indians were permitted to possess a national army as the armed forces of a national government which the Japanese were in the process of setting up in 1943, while Indonesia and Malaya were not to be accorded any independence.

Neither could the Japanese afford to give anything less than a national army to the Indian nationalists as an instrument for which they were pressing in order to fight the British, or to Burma as a substitute for the Burma Independence Army which had fought on their side during the conquest. After the demobilization of the B.I.A. in July 1942, some of its officers, most prominently Aung San, were persuaded to accept responsibility for setting up a new national army, and on 26 August the Burma Defence Army was officially installed with Aung San formally in command. This was not the old B.I.A. in a new garb; the force was small, only 4,000 in number, candidates were thoroughly screened before being enlisted, and there was a tight Japanese control. Anything like a recurrence of the unauthorized and indisciplined actions of the Burmese armed forces in early 1942 the Japanese regime was anxious to avoid. So was Ba Maw, although he and his adherents in the interim administration resented the strict Japanese domination over the army.

In Indonesia and Malaya the authorities did not want to jeopardize their policy of tempering the influence of the nationalists by granting these countries the privilege of possessing a fully-fledged army. In Java the requests to form a volunteer corps to assist the Japanese in defending the island in case of an Allied invasion came from the Putera, and on 3 October 1943 commander-in-chief Harada gave his assent. On that date the Army for the Defence of the Fatherland, *Tentara Pembela Tanah Air*, or *Peta*, was officially established under the nominal leadership of the nationalist politician Gatot Mangkupradja, but in fact under Japanese command. There were many volunteers, for a great part members of the Seinendan youth organization, but also from Muslim circles. The battalions were placed under Indonesian officers, but they were trained by the Japanese who were loath to distribute arms: usually weapons were handed out only during drills. The estimates of the total number of Javanese incorporated in the Peta, either voluntarily or by drafting, ranged from 60,000 to about 120,000. In November 1943 the Japanese authorized the setting up of a 'People's Army', or *Lasjkar Rakjat*, in Atjeh, which was soon dominated by the Muslim youth organization. An auxiliary defence force similar to that of Java and also called, though in a different spelling, *Pembela Tanah Ayer*, was organized in December 1943 in Malaya. It drew its members from among the radical and nationalist-orientated Malay youths, and it was nominally headed by Ibrahim Yaacob.

Of all occupied territories the Philippines was the only one where the Japanese, for obvious reasons, organized neither a national army nor an auxiliary defence force. In this country their dislike of the idea of arming the indigenous people was particularly strong, and this, in view of the anti-Japanese sentiments of the Filipinos, was quite justifiable. There was only a police force, the Philippine Constabulary, established in May 1942, which was enlarged in size late in 1943 after the Japanese had replaced the interim administration of Jorge Vargas by a fully-fledged Philippine

government. As an independent state within the Co-prosperity Sphere the Philippines was entitled to possess a national army, but the proposal to that effect, half-heartedly made by the Japanese, was withdrawn when the new government opposed it. While strong guerrilla forces were operating against Japanese rule, neither the Japanese nor the Filipino political leaders were very much in favour of supplying arms which might easily slip into the hands of the underground movement.

THE GRANTING OF 'INDEPENDENCE'

Sponsoring mass movements, organizing youth associations, recruiting labourers and permitting the setting up of auxiliary military units were but one aspect of Japan's efforts to discipline, indoctrinate and employ the population in order to make the greatest possible use of South-East Asia's resources. From the beginning of the occupation this tendency to subordinate indigenous society to Japan's immediate aims as well as to her long-term requirements had always been present. So was the attempt to adapt society to Japanese standards through a policy of Nippónization. But during the first year, when the war against the Allied powers seemed to go well, the authorities had, in general, refrained from pushing this policy too far. In 1943 the military situation changed, however, and consequently the most urgent problem with which the Japanese and the indigenous politicians co-operating with them were confronted was not the building up of the Co-prosperity Sphere but the defence of Greater East Asia. In view of this the authorities intensified their policy of regimentation, so as to control indigenous society and mobilize its manpower more effectively. But while imposing increasingly heavy burdens on the population and demanding greater sacrifices, the Japanese realized that they had to make the goal worth the trouble. Mere promises of a better future under Japanese guidance or statements that the Allied powers had to be prevented from re-installing their colonial rule were patently insufficient in view of the increased self-awareness of South-East Asia's peoples. To obtain full support, it was imperative that the population, through its leaders, be given the impression that they were not only fighting, and suffering, for the sake of Japan, but that they, too, had a tangible stake in the outcome of the battle.

Hence the other aspect of Japan's policy consisted of demonstrating an outwardly more accommodating attitude *vis-à-vis* South-East Asia's basic demands in order to ingratiate herself with the leading elite groups who, as the primary beneficiaries of the reforms in the political sphere, might step up their efforts at inducing the population to contribute more actively to winning the war. This new policy did not represent any fundamental change in the principle of Japanese domination; it was a change in tactics only, and the new course was carried out in different ways depending on

local conditions. Thus Burma and the Philippines were accorded the status of independent countries within the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, while Malaya and Indonesia had to content themselves with advisory councils and a greater share of indigenous officials in the higher echelons of the administration.

The formula of Japan's policy *vis-à-vis* Burma and the Philippines was quite simple. The interim administrations were to be transformed into fully-fledged governments, and as a demonstration that Japan recognized Asian nationalism, independence was to be granted. On the date of independence the Japanese military administration would cease to function. The new governments had to conclude treaties with Japan and declare war upon the United States and Great Britain. It was the intention of this Japanese policy to impress upon public opinion that there was a close link between Japan's fortunes in the war and the independent status of these countries. Thus popular adherence to Japan's aims and a more substantial support for her war efforts might be secured, and if this device should fail to work the indigenous governments themselves might be employed to apply the necessary pressure. Both countries were referred to by Prime Minister Tojo in his speech to the Diet on 22 January 1943, in which he proclaimed it to be Japan's aim to grant independence in view of the substantial progress made in the degree of co-operation rendered to Japan in the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. Less than a week later he reiterated this promise in the House of Peers, adding clauses like 'in the shortest time possible' and 'within a year'. As co-operation with Japan in occupied South-East Asia was the least impressive in precisely Burma and the Philippines, because of the silent obstruction of the Thakins and the vehement anti-Japanese attitude of the average Filipino, these statements were evidently an incentive to enlist collaboration rather than a reward for services rendered. They were also meant to bolster up the authority of the indigenous political leaders *vis-à-vis* their rivals in the administrative set-up and their opponents in the underground movement.

Ironically enough this new policy in Burma coincided with the departure of some of the more lenient officers among the high Japanese authorities. In March 1943 Iida was succeeded as commander-in-chief of the newly-formed Burma Area Army by a tough militarist, General Masakazu Kawabe, while a little earlier Nasu had been replaced as director of the military administration by General Takesuke Isamura, a schemer whom the Burmese disliked from the start. Yet, the military administration raised hardly any objections to the course of events as decided upon in Tokyo, a clear indication that the local commanders, too, were just as eager to obtain more popular support. This was the more imperative since Burma, although in its outlying districts only, had again become a theatre of military operations — a development also necessitating the

reorganization of the Japanese troops, which had been the reason for the change in command.

The new fighting was the result of an Allied offensive, carried out partly as a combined British-Chinese attack in Northern Burma for the purpose of re-opening the land route to China, and partly as a simultaneous ground and naval assault on Akyab. The attack in Arakan, from Chittagong southwards, started on 21 September 1942, and in December the British were able to capture Maungdaw. As the naval reinforcements for the seaborne expedition were not likely to arrive in time, it was decided to push on overland towards Akyab, but here the British encountered strong resistance, and in May, after a skilful Japanese counter-offensive, they were forced to retreat. The planned drive in the north did not come off at all, because of the reluctance of the Chinese to take the offensive and the failure of the Americans to start work in time on a projected road from Ledo, in Assam, towards Myitkyina. The only part of the offensive in Upper Burma which was carried out was the one originally planned as a supporting operation, a daring drive by a specially-trained penetration and sabotage force, known as the Chindits, to disrupt Japanese lines of communication and collect intelligence. Starting from Manipur in mid-February 1943, this mixed British-Gurkha brigade moved in several small columns towards the Myitkyina-Mandalay railway, which they damaged. In early March they crossed the Irrawaddy and for several weeks they ranged far behind the Japanese lines, eluding Japanese forces as long as possible. They were not able to reach the Kachin Hills, however, and on 24 March they were ordered to return to India. It had been an experiment only, but one which made a deep impression on the Japanese military authorities, who began reinforcing their troops in Burma and accelerating work on the Burma-Siam railway.

They also stepped up preparations for a political change. On 11 March Ba Maw, accompanied by Aung San, Mya and a pro-Japanese politician went to Tokyo to thank the Japanese government for her concessions and to discuss the circumstances under which independence was to be granted. They were informed that a declaration of war on the Allied powers was to be the main condition. For the purpose of working out the declaration of independence and the basic treaty with Japan an Independence Preparatory Committee was established on 8 May. It consisted of political leaders with widely divergent views. Apart from members of the Burma Executive Administration Thakin Nu, the veteran nationalists U Chit Hlaing and U Thein Maung, the Karen leader San C. Po and some representatives of trade and industry were included. Isamura was added to the committee as adviser, but he did most of the work and the strict Japanese supervision of the proceedings was intensified by overt intervention whenever attempts were made to retain some of the liberal and democratic features of the pre-war constitution. Consequently the new constitution was fully authoritarian in nature, establish-

ing an undisguised dictatorship. Although it was stated that 'all powers of government and all authority, legislative, executive and judicial are derived from the people', the Head of State, or *Adipadi*, was accorded full sovereign status and powers, which were not to be challenged by any elected representative body. The Adipadi was the chief executive as well as the chief legislator; he appointed the cabinet, which was responsible to him, and he was assisted by a nominated Privy Council of elder statesmen to advise him on those matters referred to them.

Relations with Japan were settled in two documents. The basic 'Treaty of Alliance' pledged full military, political and economie co-operation in the prosecution of the war and in the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. Of a far more obnoxious nature was the military agreement which, for obvious reasons, was kept secret: Japanese armed forces were accorded full freedom of military and naval activities, while the Burmese army and police continued to be placed under Japanese military control. The clause, finally, that the Japanese authorities were empowered to nullify any action of the Burmese government of which they disapproved, made almost a farce of Burma's independence. This became clear on 4 July 1943 when Tojo announced that two of the Shan states, Kengtung and Möng Pan, were to be given to Thailand. On this the Burmese had never been consulted, and to offset the bad impression which this show of Japanese generosity made in Burma, Tojo promised Ba Maw and Nu, who travelled to Singapore to meet him later in the same month, that the remaining Shan states, the Karenni states and the Wa region, which had always been treated as special territories by the British, would be incorporated into the new State of Burma. Ba Maw availed himself of the opportunity to complain of the arrogant behaviour of army personnel, but he was put off with Tojo's assurance that the military authorities were to be replaced by civilian advisers.

On 1 August 1943 commander-in-chief Kawabe formally dissolved the Japanese military administration at a ceremony at which Burma was solemnly proclaimed an independent and sovereign state and an equal member of the Greater East Asia Sphere. The declaration of war against the Allied powers was issued and the treaty of alliance with Japan duly signed. This treaty was supplemented by another agreement, concluded on 25 September, in which Japan consented to incorporate the Shan states and the other special territories into 'New Burma'. Ba Maw was installed head of state; he also became the prime minister of the new cabinet.

Facing the hostility of the population and an increasing guerrilla activity the Japanese were even more pressed to play their trump-card of independence in the Philippines. In Tokyo and Manila opinions were divided on the issue: the Japanese general staff and the field command of the 14th Army dissented on the grounds of military considerations, but Tojo was in favour of the scheme and so was the political section of the military administration in the Philippines, which was greatly concerned with

winning Filipino friendship. It was the latter group which had on 12 December 1942 already submitted a tentative draft for a declaration of independence to the cabinet, and in spite of military opposition Tojo included the suggestion in his speech to the Diet in January 1943, and set out to implement it. On 5–6 May he paid a brief visit to Manila to inspect the conditions of the Japanese forces, and to meet ranking Filipino leaders as well as the officials of the military regime. Meanwhile the Philippine Executive Commission and the Kalibapi intensified their efforts to whip up popular enthusiasm, and although there was no obvious improvement in Filipino sentiments in general, they nevertheless managed to make a great impression on Tojo by organizing a huge rally to express gratitude on the occasion of his visit. Tojo declared that he was convinced more than ever of the propriety of an early independence, and he promised that Japan would help the Filipinos to emerge from the chaos and turmoil of the past into a glorious national existence in the future. Greater East Asia minister Aoki reiterated this pledge a few days later. As a first indication of the change commander-in-chief Tanaka was relieved of his post on 29 May and replaced by the more lenient General Shigenori Kuroda.

The date of independence had not yet been divulged by Tojo in his discussions with the Filipino politicians, but on 16 June he announced in the Diet that 'the honour of independence will be accorded to the Philippines in the course of the current year', and two days later Kuroda, on instructions from Tokyo, ordered the Kalibapi immediately to form a Preparatory Commission for Philippine Independence. This body, consisting of twenty members with Laurel nominated as chairman, was duly organized on the 19th, and its major task was to draft a constitution. It took some time before an agreement was reached, and on 10 July Tojo, accompanied by the Greater East Asia vice-minister Kumaichi Yamamoto, paid a second visit to Manila, urging the members to press on with their work, but on 4 September the constitution was finally promulgated and ratified three days later by a special 'Popular Convention' of 117 Kalibapi delegates.

In accordance with the views of Laurel and Roxas, who considered this a *sine qua non* for winning popular approval, the new document was superficially very much similar to the Commonwealth constitution of 1935. There were quite a few differences, however. Under the constitution of 1943 the president was the all-powerful executive, not in any way checked by the legislative branch: he had an almost absolute veto and during a recess of the legislature he was empowered to rule by decree. He was appointed by the National Assembly consisting of 54 ex-officio members, the provincial governors and mayors of chartered cities — all nominated functionaries — and of an equal number of local representatives. Popular suffrage for the latter was restricted to members of the Kalibapi. Although compared with the factual conditions prevailing under Nacionalista rule before the war, these deviations from the basic Commonwealth law did not, in

practice, amount to any essentially different system of government, the more authoritarian nature of the 1943-constitution was as clearly a sign of the times as was the Japanese-sponsored Burmese constitution of the same year.

On 28 September the National Assembly, into which several high-ranking pre-war politicians had been appointed to emphasize once more the continuity of government, elected Laurel as president. A few days later Laurel, Vargas and Aquino travelled to Tokyo where Tojo told them that Japan expected the new republic to declare war on the Allied powers. Fearing that such a move would destroy all chances of being accepted as national leader by the Filipinos, Laurel refused and dissuaded the Japanese from further insisting, and the 'Treaty of Alliance' which was the outcome of the discussions omitted this point. It provided for close political and economic co-operation in the prosecution of Greater East Asia, while in the military field the Japanese continued to enjoy complete freedom of military and naval activity in the Philippines. On 14 October 1943 the pact was formally signed. That same date General Kuroda proclaimed the end of the Japanese military administration at a ceremony at which the independent Republic of the Philippines was officially inaugurated.

The third independent government, that of India, which was established to enlist more support for the Japanese cause, was a government-in-exile, since the country it was supposed to administer was still under British rule. The Indian independence movement, which the Japanese had been sponsoring, was in a bad condition, both as a result of the hesitant attitude of many Indian officers who distrusted Japanese intentions, and the serious quarrels between the civilian branch and the Indian National Army. But on 2 July 1943 the radical nationalist Subhas Chandra Bose, arriving from Germany, took over its direction. He was an unquestionable patriot, not likely to become a mere puppet of Japan, and he had great prestige as an ex-president of the Indian Congress. As these factors enabled him to win the confidence of the South-East Asian Indians as well as the former officers of the British Indian Army, his leadership infused the Indian Independence League with new vigour. With tremendous energy he reorganized the movement and the armed forces, created facilities for recruitment and training and made propaganda for the liberation of India. The Japanese authorities were not greatly interested in a military operation in India on which Bose impatiently insisted; nor did they regard the Indian National Army as the major spearhead of any such offensive but merely as an auxiliary force engaged in guerrilla activities and intelligence duties. Furthermore the Japanese were reluctant to supply the I.N.A. adequately with arms and military provisions. They could not afford, however, to rebuff Bose, as he and his followers might be valuable allies. It was because of this that they appeased the Indians by allowing them to set up their own government.

On 21 October 1943 Bose proclaimed the establishment of a provisional government of the free and sovereign state of *Azad Hind*, Free India; he also announced the determination of the Indian National Army, *Azad Hind Fauj*, to enter India. The same day war was declared on the Allied powers, while a treaty of friendship was signed with Japan. Initially the seat of Bose's administration was in Singapore, but early in January 1944 it moved, with the army, to Rangoon, on the consideration that Burma was closer to India. In the only Indian territory under Japanese domination, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, authority was transferred to the new government. But more important than this symbolic deed was the fact that the Azad Hind government, which claimed the right to represent the Indian communities outside India, turned the South-East Asian Indians from foreigners into citizens of their own administration. This was not merely a device by which they could be coerced into joining the I.N.A. or contributing money to the cause of Indian independence. It also gave them a clearly defined legal status which they never had before and which provided them with a protective cover from high-handed and arbitrary actions of the Japanese as well as from discriminatory measures by the indigenous authorities.

The procedure of granting independence to some of the countries under Japanese control was followed up by a conference of prime ministers in Tokyo on 5–6 November 1943. Apart from Tojo and other Japanese ministers, for example Aoki and Shigemitsu, the meeting was attended by Wang Ching-wei, the head of the Chinese counter-government in Nanking, Chang Ching-hui, premier of Manchukuo, Ba Maw, Laurel, Prince Wan Waityakorn as representative of Thailand's Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram and Bose as observer on behalf of Azad Hind. It was the purpose of this 'Assembly of Greater East Asia Nations' to issue a joint statement and, at the same time, to create the impression that the Co-prosperity Sphere was not a collection of Japan's satellites, but that the political leaders were allowed to take an active part in the formulation of a common policy. But Japan dominated the scene, with Japanese officials attached to each delegation and the entire agenda of the proceedings arranged in advance. In a joint declaration the Assembly condemned British and American aggression in the Far East, emphasized the principles of mutual respect for the sovereignty and independence of each nation and underlined the necessity to co-operate, politically, economically and culturally, in the pursuance of building up the New Order.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN INDONESIA

Absent from this meeting were representatives of Indonesia, but Indonesia was not among the countries to which Japan was prepared to grant a certain amount of autonomy. Although in his speech to the Diet in

January 1943 Tojo made no promise about independence for Indonesia, he seemed to have been in favour of making a formal statement to that effect. So were Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu, and, perhaps, the Greater East Asian Minister Aoki who, in March, undertook to bring the matter up for discussion in Tokyo, but the military and naval authorities in Indonesia were against such a course. The decision on the policy to be adopted was taken towards the end of May and ratified on the 31st by the Imperial Conference. On the grounds that a formal commitment to accord eventual independence might endanger Japan's strategic and economic interests and also weaken her bargaining position in case the war should end in a draw and lead to a negotiated peace, the Supreme Command was absolutely opposed to granting independence. Tojo yielded; it was decided that the Indies were to be incorporated into Japanese territory, but that the inhabitants would be permitted to have some voice in the administration, according to their abilities. The decision was kept secret so as to allow for an alteration of policy in case this might be considered appropriate in the future.

In spite of this secrecy, the Indonesian leaders noticed the stiffening Japanese attitude, and it came to them as a shock, but Sukarno persisted in collaborating with the military authorities, even to the extent of intensifying his campaigns against the Allied powers. He did so partly because there was no alternative course yet, partly, perhaps, out of the consideration that the Japanese, impressed by the large mass meetings he was able to arouse to enthusiasm, might realize how important it was not to lose the confidence of a political leader with such a mastery over the crowds. A glimmer of hope flared up when the speech of Tojo in the Diet, on 16 June, became known: 'in view of the praiseworthy co-operation of the Indonesians' the Japanese government declared as her intention to take measures, step by step, to allow the people of the islands, Java in the first place, to participate in their own government to the extent commensurate with their cultural conditions. In a radio broadcast Sukarno was not slow in interpreting these words as a Japanese pledge of independence, but he and all nationalist-orientated politicians with him were crudely brought down to earth when, on 7 July, Tojo paid a visit to Java, studiously referred to 'Southern Islands' rather than to Indonesia and, while repeating his promise, declared that Japan expected the 'inhabitants of Java' to mobilize all forces, to assist the Japanese army, to subordinate their cultural and economic activities to the requirements of the Japanese government and to contribute 'in this manner' to bringing about the New Order.

The constitutional reforms providing for a greater participation of Indonesians in the administration were formally announced by General Harada on 1 August 1943. They amounted to nothing more than the revival of the Volksraad and the regional representative councils of the Dutch period. By decree of 5 September local advisory committees, *Shu Sangi-kai*, were established in the provinces, as well as a Central Advisory Committee,

Chuo Sangi-in, for Java as a whole. To the Indonesian nationalists these Japanese creations were definitely far from satisfactory, both in view of the high expectations they had cherished after the downfall of colonial rule, and also in comparison with the pre-war situation. The members of the provincial councils were partly appointed by the provincial governors, partly elected by village heads. The Central Advisory Committee had 23 appointed members, 17 elected by the provincial councils, 3 by the local council of Batavia and the Principalities. There were no Japanese members. Although with 41 out of the 43 members the Indonesians were numerically far better represented than in the Volksraad with 30 out of 61, the functions of the central body as well as of the regional councils were strictly limited to giving advice on those matters as the provincial governors or, in the centre, the military administration deemed fit to lay before them. They had neither legislative and co-legislative authority, nor the rights of petition and interpellation. At the first session of the Central Advisory Committee, on 17 October, the director of the military administration, Shinsichiro Kokubu, announced that it was the aim of the new body to ensure greater administrative efficiency; for 'guidance and supervision', moreover, a Japanese-staffed secretariat had been added. At about the same time Indonesians were nominated to posts in the central and local administration, but usually not to posts which gave them real authority, and the two indigenous officials who were appointed as provincial governors were assisted by Japanese vice-governors.

JAPANESE POLICY VIS-A-VIS INDONESIAN NATIONALISM: MASJUMI AND DJAWA HOKOKAI

For the Indonesian nationalists this was a rather humiliating experience which greatly dampened their enthusiasm for collaborating with the Japanese authorities. Sukarno, however, accepted the post of chairman of the Central Advisory Committee and, while encouraging the people to support the war and thanking Japan for her generosity, he attempted to make the best of his position. Openly criticizing the military administration was out of the question since the Japanese mood had perceptibly changed, in spite of the seemingly more accommodating attitude, but he was able to give expression, in a subtle way, to his disillusionment for the moment and to his hopes for the future. The Indonesian nationalists were well aware of Japan's misfortunes in the war and they expected that these might induce her to grant concessions in exchange for greater and more spontaneous popular support. Furthermore, the Central Advisory Committee, however impotent because of its limited powers, was a more suitable body to work for the Indonesian cause than the old Volksraad, in which the nationalists could never have obtained a majority. The political leaders realized, finally, that their co-operation with the authorities in

mobilizing the population provided them with a potentially powerful instrument for spreading their own influence.

In Japanese circles there were some doubts as to the wisdom of a policy of basically ignoring the Indonesian nationalist demands, and thus contributing either to Sukarno's losing confidence in them or to the waning of his prestige, two results which were likely to jeopardize Japan's efforts to win Indonesian support. To avoid this, the authorities invited him, with Hatta and a Muslim representative, to Tokyo in November 1943, to express officially his gratitude for the constitutional reforms, but in reality to cajole him into more readily accepting Japan's views. This stratagem failed to work; although visibly impressed by the flattery, Sukarno appealed to Tojo to give Indonesia the same treatment as the Philippines and Burma, and he was deeply disappointed when his request did not meet with a favourable response. After his return he had an additional reason to feel dissatisfied, when the military authorities sponsored the establishment of a Muslim united front which, from his point of view, might well be considered a Japanese move to support an alternative power factor and weaken his position.

Although the Japanese were quite capable of playing off one section of Indonesian public opinion against the other, it is doubtful whether their activities with regard to Indonesian Islam were motivated by any attempt at divide-and-rule. The major concern of their policy was to obtain as much support as possible from among the population, and in this respect they clearly realized that Islam was a sufficiently powerful force to be accorded the treatment of an ally. Hence they were inclined to allay Muslim suspicions as to Japan's intentions. The traditional bow in the direction of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo was no longer made compulsory during religious service. The Arab language, which the authorities had attempted to abolish as means of religious instruction, was maintained. Only in one respect, in their control over religious schools, the Japanese were not prepared to budge. But, in spite of Islamic resentment over this issue, the military administration was, on the whole, quite successful in inducing the Muslims to collaborate and to bring about the united front which the Japanese considered a *sine qua non* for effectively mobilizing the population.

The reorganization of the Islamic movement was not only the ultimate outcome of the Japanese attempts, undertaken since early 1942, to foster structural unity as an instrument for supervising the Muslims more easily, but since mid-1943 it also became part of their far wider policy to effect a complete transformation of Indonesian public life in order to adapt it better to the changed circumstances. The first indication of this trend had been the administration's permission in April 1943 to reshape the youth organization according to the Japanese model, and it became more evident with the setting up of Peta in September. In view of the emergency situation created by the unfavourable turn the war was taking, it was not

possible for the military regime to maintain the two organizations, the Putera and the M.I.A.I., which it had tolerated as a compromise between Indonesian nationalist insistence and Muslim sensitivities on the one hand and its own interests on the other, but which no longer adequately served Japan's purposes.

Since its reorganization in September 1942 the Muslim federation, M.I.A.I., was doomed to impotence because of Japanese obstruction. Its programme of action referred, among other things, to organizing the ulamas, but this was exactly what the military administration wanted to prevent. As a result the federation was not able to carry on any action in the political field, while other actions were bound to be regarded as political in a religious disguise. Thus, when in the first half of 1943, the M.I.A.I. undertook to centralize the so-called *Bait al-Mal* campaign, which had started locally in the Sundanese areas a year before as a plan to systematize the receipt and disbursement of religious tithes, the Japanese objected, because they considered it a move to seek contacts, behind the back of the military regime, with the local religious teachers. The maintaining of such contacts the authorities wanted to keep in their own hands, and in case any group from among the Islamic elite should be utilized as an intermediary between the government and the Muslim rural masses, it should be the essentially non-political Muhammadyah or the Nahdatul Ulama rather than the M.I.A.I. While obstructing the M.I.A.I., preventing it from expanding into the rural areas and limiting its influence to Batavia, the Japanese were rather well disposed towards these two other organizations, which they considered as more suitable instruments for controlling Muslim activities and adjusting Indonesian society to Japan's needs. In this respect it was significant that it was a Muhammadyah leader, Mohammed Mas Mansur, who symbolized Islam in the Putera quadrumvirate and played an important part in that organization; it was as meaningful an event that he resigned as vice-president of the M.I.A.I. two days after the Putera was launched. In the advisory councils set up in the second half of 1943 the administration saw to it that the Muslims obtained a substantial representation, and in October the Japanese head of the Department of Religious Affairs was replaced by a Muslim scholar, Husein Djajadiningrat, while Mas Mansur was given a high advisory post in that bureau. Together with Sukarno and Hatta a Muhammadyah leader travelled to Tokyo in November.

By that time the reconstruction of Muslim public life had already taken effect. In September 1943 the administration granted legal status to Muhammadyah and Nahdatul Ulama; for the M.I.A.I. leaders it was proof that they were definitely out of favour, and on 24 October chairman Wondoamiseno officially disbanded the federation. A month later, on 23 November, the *Madjelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia*, Advisory Council of Indonesian Muslims, or *Masjumi*, was established, as a central Islamic body under the chairmanship of Hadji Hasjim Asj'ari and with Mas Mansur

and Abdul Wahab as prominent leaders. According to its programme it aimed at bringing about the unity of the Muslim community and at strengthening the ties between all Islamic organizations in Java, in order to contribute more appropriately to assisting Japan in her struggle for the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. The setting up of Masjumi constituted the crowning event of Japanese policy *vis-à-vis* Islam. Far more than the M.I.A.I., which had been an urban reformist affair, the new organization covered orthodox as well as reformist elements; Muhammadyah and Nahdatul Ulama, the only legal Islamic associations, participated in it. It was open, however, to other organizations after these had been formally recognized; furthermore, individual ulamas and kiais were allowed to join, by permission of the Department of Religious Affairs, a provision which gave the Japanese authorities a large amount of control over the movement. Thus the military administration had been successful in achieving its aims in several respects. Dominated by that section of the Islamic elite, the Masjumi, which was acceptable to the Japanese, far more than the M.I.A.I., was a suitable intermediary between the rural masses and the authorities. By forging closer interrelations between this élite group and the orthodox local leaders under the cover of the new organization, the Japanese created, moreover, an instrument of influencing and mobilizing the population more effectively. Finally, the Masjumi, as a central organization, enabled the Japanese to supervise more effectively the activities of the kiais and ulamas. The administration might have made great efforts to win the confidence of the masses through the local village teachers and religious leaders, but in their hearts the Japanese were as afraid of Islamic 'fanaticism' as the Dutch had been. This was one of the reasons for rejecting the demand, late in 1943, to form special Muslim volunteer auxiliary forces in addition to the Peta.

The establishment of the Masjumi and its rapidly growing influence due to the support given by the military authorities aroused the resentment of the nationalists as well as of the traditional aristocratic class. As the Japanese could not afford to risk any widespread discontent among either of these two elite groups, they set out to involve them, too, in the process of reorganizing Indonesian life and subordinating it to their requirements. The *Djawa Hokokai* was the result of their activities to mobilize all sections of Indonesian society and create an all-embracing mass movement to substitute for the Putera which, being too nationalistic for the Japanese taste and constantly obstructed, had become a failure. On 1 January 1944 General Harada declared that 'the Army, the Administration and the People had to be united', and a week later he ordered a new organization to be set up. The Djawa Hokokai was officially launched on 1 March. Unlike the Putera it was not a purely Indonesian organization, but it included the ethnic minorities. Half a year earlier the Japanese regime had already abandoned its policy of rebuffing the Chinese and Eurasians. In August 1943 the Japanese tolerated the organization of a Chinese

Residents Association; they also lifted the ban against Chinese schools and in September they appointed two Chinese representatives in the Central Advisory Council. In December 1943 travel restrictions for Chinese in Java were removed. Eurasians, too, were allowed, in September, to found their own association. It was not before 1 May 1944 that both Chinese and Eurasians were exempted from paying the odious registration fee, but the trend towards a more lenient Japanese attitude was already clearly evident as a precondition for obtaining the co-operation of both communities.

In a far more overt way than the Putera the Djawa Hokokai was made subservient to Japan's interests: it aimed at the 'total mobilization of the population in order to attain the objectives of the Greater East Asia War and of the Co-prosperity Sphere'. Its name, 'People's Service Association for Java', emphasized the aspect of serving Japan rather than of forging popular unity such as had been the case with Putera. Unlike the Putera, moreover, the new organization was under the immediate direction of the head of the military administration, General Kokubu, but like the Putera, it sought to expand its influence among the ordinary village people in order to secure their co-operation with the Japanese authorities, and of all Japanese-sponsored movements in Indonesia this one was the most systematically organized. It operated through the system of 'Neighbourhood Associations', centrally supervised cells in the countryside which, supposedly aiming at bringing about *gotong rojong*, the traditional Indonesian mutual aid on a communal basis, intended in fact to mobilize the rural masses for Japan's war efforts. In this set-up the nationalist politicians were relegated to the background, although some of them, like Sukarno and Hatta, were given important posts in the central directorate of the organization in addition to two Masjumi leaders, Hasjim Asj'ari and Mas Mansur. The more significant functions at local level were performed by members of the aristocratic class, who were considered more suitable instruments to enable the military administration to extend its control down to the lowest spheres of rural society. By penetrating into the villages and organizing the peasantry, either through the religious teachers or the traditional chiefs, the Japanese managed to strengthen their domination over Java considerably.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN MALAYA

In view of the critical war situation Japanese policy in Malaya underwent some changes, too. As elsewhere in South-East Asia the Japanese encouraged the inhabitants to make greater efforts towards establishing the Co-prosperity Sphere and pursuing Japan's victory. There was no need for them to make any promise about self-rule, as they had to in Indonesia; and they were even less obliged to grant independence as in Burma and the

Philippines. But in order to obtain the co-operation it needed, the military administration had to modify its tactics towards the various racial groups as well as its attitude towards Malaya as a whole. While continuing to impose Japanese customs and symbols, the authorities did not refer any longer to the country as Japanese territory; instead they stressed the building of a 'New Malaya' as their ultimate aim. They also set up local councils as representative bodies.

In June 1943 Tojo sent a directive to that effect to the military administration, and the next month General Masuzo Fujimura, director of the General Affairs Department, made it known that plans were developed to permit native participation in advisory bodies. This project materialized when on 3 October the Japanese announced that consultative councils were to be established in the provinces and in some towns. This reform did not, any more than in Indonesia, introduce genuine representation or increase the indigenous voice in the decision making sphere. The elective principle was entirely absent: the members were appointed by the Japanese provincial governors or the mayors of the towns, and the latter were to be the presidents of the councils, assisted by the Malay rulers as vice-chairmen in such provinces which were conterminous with Malay states. Outwardly the new bodies resembled the former State Councils, but their powers were purely advisory, and they met only when summoned by the Japanese chairmen.

New in this set-up, however, was the inclusion of all races. As in Indonesia the authorities realized that any policy of strengthening the war efforts was likely to fall short of the expectations if the Japanese continued to regard the Malays as the rightful owners of Malaya and the Chinese and Indians as subordinate races. It was necessary to secure the co-operation of the Chinese in the first place, and this even more urgently so than in Indonesia, for the economy had to be kept going with the help of Chinese business. With this in mind the Japanese put an end to some of the most vexatious anti-Chinese regulations: they stopped compulsory registration, and in April 1943 they lifted the ban on the transfer of money to China. On several occasions between May and July high officials stressed the necessity of promoting Chinese activities. When the consultative councils were established the Chinese were given a large representation in Singapore, Penang and Malacca. In October it was announced that the proportion of Malayan officials in the administration was to be increased and that all races were to be equally eligible for appointment in the bureaucracy. It was not only towards the Chinese, but also towards the Indians, as an ethnic community and as a religious group, and towards the Christians, that the military administration had to reassess its policy, in order to avoid creating the impression of partiality towards the Muslim Malays. On 14 September 1943 the Japanese established a religious committee in Singapore, including Chinese, Indians and Eurasians as well as Malays, and

thus representing Chinese religion, Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity as well as Islam.

As an attempt to sponsor national unity in order to encourage the population to respond favourably to the appeals for co-operation, this more conciliatory attitude *vis-à-vis* the Chinese community, the Indians and the Eurasians did not amount to anything comparable with their similar efforts in other South-East Asian territories. Due to the communal controversies in Malaya the Japanese could not afford to go further than they did, since any gesture designed to accommodate the Chinese was bound to cause dissatisfaction among the Malays. The loyalty of the latter the Japanese were not prepared to lose for any advantage that might result from the doubtful co-operation of a community which, as a whole, remained adamantly anti-Japanese. For this reason the authorities continued to ingratiate themselves with the Malays, and they set out to soothe Malay suspicions. Like the British before them, confronted with the racial complications of Malayan society, but far more dependent on the goodwill and support of the population than the colonial regime had ever been, the Japanese followed an improvising and vacillating course. But on the whole, their policy did not deviate in any fundamental way from the British practice of favouring the Malays, in particular the conservative and feudal sections of this community.

There was some discontent among the Malays, partly over Japanese derogatory remarks about some of their customs and habits, partly over the administration's occasional interference with the rulers' religious prerogatives. General Fujimura, who in August 1943 became the director of the military administration, was convinced of the need to obtain the co-operation of both the rulers and the Muslims, and, while not abandoning their attempts to accommodate the non-Malay groups, the Japanese stepped up their policy of satisfying the Malays and of using the princes and Islam for their own ends. They did so by bestowing decorations upon the rulers, raising their allowances and persuading them to devote all their efforts to waging the war until victory was achieved. On 15 April, at a meeting with Kenji Doihara, commander-in-chief of the newly-established 7th Area Army, based upon Singapore, the rulers recognized Japan's objectives and agreed to lead their subjects in co-operation with the Japanese.

This attitude towards the Malay princes and Muslim institutions was a device to induce the Malays to participate more vigorously in activities which would effectively serve Japan's immediate war aims. In December 1943 the authorities embarked upon organizing a Labour Service Corps for Muslims, and the Peta auxiliary defence force. The characteristic feature of Japanese policy to appease all sections of public opinion in addition to those groups whom they favoured in the first place, was clearly demonstrated by the manner in which they sought to accommodate the anti-colonial Indonesian-orientated Malays who were opposed to the feudal set-up of Malay society, and who used to complain about the preferential

treatment accorded to Malay royalty. From January 1944 onwards women were recruited into the Labour Service Corps, which contributed to the emancipation of Muslim women in a community dominated by rather orthodox Islamic views. More significant, from a political point of view, was the appointment of Ibrahim Yaacob as commander-in-chief of the Peta, which gave the radical Malays a chance to assert themselves more forcefully than they had ever been able to before.

4 The Vassal States

JAPANESE POLICY VIS-A-VIS VIETNAMESE NATIONALISM

THE situation in Indochina differed from the other Japanese-occupied territories in that the country was, in fact, under dual control. The colony's economy was geared to Japan's requirements and in a military sense Indochina was completely subordinated to the Japanese, but politically and administratively the French authorities were ultimately responsible. Seen from the Japanese point of view this was contrary to the principle that Western influence in Asia had to be eliminated, but as long as the behaviour of the colonial administration did not give them any cause for complaint, the Japanese preferred to recognize French sovereignty. Under this formula Japan was released from the task of directly administering Indochina and, relying on French officials and policemen, medical personnel and technicians, she was able to reserve her own people for similar duties elsewhere in the region. A liquidation of the French administrative machinery might also result in economic dislocation, and this Japan wished to avoid because of Indochina's significance as producer of rice and raw materials.

But although the French administration remained responsible for the political developments in the colony, Japan did not stand aloof. Her attitude was partly conditioned by considerations of vigilance, since the Japanese were perfectly aware that the French were co-operative only because there was no alternative. They also realized that the same colonial mentality which had induced the administration to opt in favour of the Vichy regime, contained strong anti-Asian racialist elements which precluded any sincere co-operation with Japan. Hence the Kenpeitai had already made its appearance towards the end of 1941, supposedly to protect the Japanese military from Chinese agents, but in reality to watch the

French authorities carefully. Japan's interference in Indochina's affairs was partly the consequence of her political credo that in the future there would be no longer any room for European influence in Asia. This was made clear by General Iwane Matsui, the butcher of Nanking, who during a visit to Saigon in July 1943 stated to Vietnamese newspapermen that Japan was going to liberate the Asian countries, whether or not the Americans, the British or the French liked it.

But while the Japanese had to consider only the sentiments of the Asians in the colonies they had militarily subdued, it was in Indochina that they also had to take account of the colonial administration. Consequently they had to proceed in a more cautious and subtle manner. It is true that Japan did not envisage independence for Indochina because of what she considered 'the Annamite lack of capacity for self-government', but this consideration apart she was not in a position to stimulate overtly any independence movement as long as the territory was officially under French sovereignty. Neither were the Japanese capable of openly sponsoring political organizations to support Japan's war aims. Through their diplomatic mission, their intelligence office, their military police and their agents in the commercial firms, they were able, however, to contact indigenous nationalist organizations and political leaders in an attempt to win the confidence of the population. The conditions were not unfavourable. By yielding to Japanese diplomatic pressure the French colonial system suffered as severe a loss of prestige as the other European regimes in South-East Asia which had succumbed to Japan's military violence. In Indochina, as elsewhere, the Japanese example and Japan's successes in the war greatly impressed the intellectual elite and the conservative political leaders. It was from among those groups that the Japanese, behind the backs of the French authorities, set out to recruit supporters for their cause.

Initially the diplomatic mission and the Kenpeitai focussed their attention on dissatisfied individuals or those who were at odds with the French regime. Such persons who were allowed to enter the service of the Japanese were issued identity cards protecting them from being arrested by the French police. Thus the Japanese obtained the help of numerous indigenous agents who were trained as spies, gathering information on the movements of French troops, or who were incorporated into the Auxiliary Service Branch of the Japanese army. They also approached indigenous nationalist organizations in order to build up a group of followers from among the intellectual elite who might be at their disposal in case a conflict with the colonial authorities should force them to replace the French civil servants.

The nationalist parties which qualified for playing such a role were in a state of decline, however. The Phuc Quoc had not yet recovered from the consequences of its rebellion in late 1940. Towards the end of the 1930s the Cao Dai movement had become increasingly pro-Japanese but

it had been hit by French repressive action: its main temple, at Tay Ninh, was closed and the leader of the sect, Pham Cong Tac, sent into exile. The other religious sect, the Hoa Hao, had been closely watched by the colonial regime since its leader, Huynh Phu So, had been predicting the defeat of France and the victory of Japan. These were the organizations which the Japanese considered to be suitable instruments for interfering in Vietnamese politics. All three were more or less pro-Japanese in orientation; the Phuc Quoc and the Cao Dai were quite influential among those social classes whose support the Japanese were most desirous to obtain, while the Hoa Hao sect commanded a large following among the peasant masses of Cochin China, without displaying any of the unwelcome characteristics of a social-revolutionary leadership. In their quest for popular politicians the Japanese also contacted people like Tran Trong Kim, the advocate of the national language, and, in particular, Ngo Dinh Diem, the Catholic mandarin who had aroused high expectations in nationalist circles as Emperor Bao Dai's minister in 1933.

The interference of the Japanese with Vietnamese nationalism was aimed primarily at bringing the leaders of the various organizations together in order to effect a closer co-operation between them. It was under their auspices that, already in early 1942, a Cochin Chinese branch of the Phuc Quoc was established, to be led by Tran Van An. In the same year they took the Cambodian nationalist Son Ngoc Thanh under their care: he had organized a Buddhist demonstration in Phnom Penh which had been dispersed by the French military, but when he was threatened with arrest the Japanese permitted him to escape to Bangkok from where he went to Tokyo. This silent struggle between the Japanese and the French reached its peak when the colonial administration, in an attempt to put an end to the persistent propaganda of the Hoa Hao movement, wanted to exile its leader to Laos. On 12 October Huynh Phu So was 'kidnapped' by the Japanese and transferred to Saigon where he was placed under the protection of the Kenpeitai. The Japanese failed to prevent the French from closing down the last great Cao Dai temple, in Phnom Penh, but they managed to win the confidence of Tran Quang Vinh, one of the sect's leaders in Cambodia who, with their assistance, re-established the Cao Dai movement in Cochin China, in February 1943. To achieve their ideal of a structural unity of the nationalist organizations, the Japanese arranged a meeting between him and Tran Van An in May 1943, and a closer co-operation between the Cochin Chinese branches of the Cao Dai sect and the Phuc Quoc was effected.

In spite of all their efforts the Japanese were not greatly successful in obtaining the co-operation of the population. In order not to lose the much-prized assistance of the colonial authorities in the military and economic sphere, they could not afford to prejudice the French against them in the political field. In a sense they had gone quite far already when, in July 1943, the Kenpeitai did not allow the French political police to

arrest some nationalist leaders. The diplomatic mission and the military police were aware that the French were not in a position to make any moves against them, realizing that, if a rupture should occur, the colonial regime and not Japan would be the greater sufferers. But Governor-General Decoux had the power to register a formal protest with the Japanese government against the activities of her representatives in the colony, as indeed he planned to do in mid-1943. It was evident that in such a case the government in Tokyo would have shielded her agents in Indochina, but it was also clear that the cabinet and the military authorities in Japan were very anxious not to disturb the good relations with the collaborating colonial regime for the sake of some dubious advantage of local interest. Particularly now that the war with the Allied powers had taken an unfavourable turn and, because of Japan's economic policies, the Vietnamese masses were showing signs of discontent, it was essential for the Japanese that the French should remain responsible for preserving law and order, and thus incur the odium for any repressive action. Towards the close of 1943 the Japanese restrained their political activities, and they did not interfere when the French police embarked upon a drive against followers of the Phuc Quoc and other nationalist elements. They only took Ngo Dinh Diem under their protection, and arranged for the escape of Tran Trong Kim and Tran Van An. At the same time, however, they intensified their efforts to mobilize the Vietnamese for military and construction projects, recruiting them into the semi-military branches of the Japanese army or, as labourers, into the auxiliary services, but officially this was not political intervention, since it could be justified with reference to the agreement on 'common defence'.

Accounting for the failure of Japan's endeavours to win the confidence of the people, the obligation to consider French susceptibilities was far less significant a factor than the attitude of the Vietnamese themselves. First, there was the consideration among many nationalists that under a Japanese hegemony Vietnam would be hardly better off than under colonial domination. In addition to this it was realized that in Indochina Japan was not the liberator from colonialism that she professed to be in other South-East Asian territories: she permitted French rule to carry on. To the Indochinese peoples the Japanese era did not in any way represent a new beginning, not even in a restricted sense as elsewhere in the region; in fact, the *ancien régime* was continued under Japanese direction. The fact that independence, and even independence under Japanese auspices as was granted to Burma and the Philippines, was out of the question as long as Japan had to take the French administration into consideration, deprived the Vietnamese politicians of the incentive to side with the Japanese for the purpose of achieving their nationalist aspirations. Thus the contacts between Ngo Dinh Diem and the Japanese had a negative result. Furthermore, numerous nationalists, particularly the supporters of the old Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, were orientated towards China, and al-

though from a social point of view they fitted in well with the Japanese scheme, they were not willing to collaborate with Japan.

The aloofness towards Japan displayed by the majority of the Vietnamese was to a large extent due to the circumstance that the Japanese were in the habit of approaching those nationalist leaders and organizations which, because of their social orientation, happened to command a relatively small following among the mass of the population. In spite of their efforts to sponsor mass movements the Japanese were essentially afraid of genuine popular organizations, and they attempted to win support primarily among the conservative sections of public opinion. In most South-East Asian territories they managed, indeed, to raise mass movements which they were able to more or less manipulate with the help of the elite groups, but in Vietnam the prime condition for success in this respect was almost completely lacking. There was such a wide gap between the rural masses and the traditional mandarins, the landlords, middle class elements and the urban intellectuals, that the latter hardly constituted a suitable instrument through which Japan might influence or dominate the population. As a result the Vietnamese were not captivated by the Japanese efforts to win their confidence; instead they were far more attracted by those indigenous politicians who associated themselves with the traditionally very strong social revolutionary sentiments and who were organizing the anti-Japanese resistance.

THE POLICIES OF THE DECOUX REGIME

The failure of the Japanese attempts to obtain the co-operation of the Vietnamese people notwithstanding, the colonial authorities were thoroughly alarmed and they embarked upon a course to counteract the effects of their rivals' policy. It was true that the number of Japanese troops in Indochina did not exceed 35,000, and that the French consistently referred to their presence as a 'stationing' rather than an occupation, but this did not detract anything from the fact that they were there and that they would be able to destroy French rule at one blow should it be so decided in Tokyo. When the Greater East Asia minister, Aoki, arrived in Hanoi in April 1943 for a brief visit, Decoux refused to pay his respects, as the Japanese diplomatic mission required him to do, but the fact that the Japanese eventually yielded on this ceremonial point did not in any way alter Indochina's position as a vassal state or diminish the subordination of the French administration to the Japanese government. The *présence française* was maintained and the colony was distinctly under French — not under joint French-Japanese — rule, but it was French sovereignty by the grace of Japan and as long as it suited the Japanese.

In those years French rule was completely dominated by the tenets of Marshal Petain's 'National Revolution'. No longer hindered by the

supervisory powers of a French parliament, the colonial administration was able to go its own way, and the authoritarian nature of the regime was further strengthened by the dissolution, on 8 November 1940, of all elected bodies in Indochina. Indigenous nationalists and communists were as vehemently hunted down as before, but in addition to these elements, traditionally considered hostile in a colonial environment, other people were persecuted as real or reputed adversaries of the Vichy government: Gaullist or pro-Allied Frenchmen, Jews and freemasons. In this respect the Decoux administration evinced a zeal and maliciousness which greatly surpassed that of the Pétain regime in the home country, and it was this factor which more than any other degraded the French colonial system in the eyes of the indigenous intellectuals.

Yet, in spite of the rudeness and the fascist characteristics of his regime, Decoux embarked upon a policy that the colonial administration in Indochina had never set out to implement, not even in the most progressive days of the Third Republic. A new ideology was announced, that of the 'Indochinese Community', designed to stimulate feelings of mutual solidarity among the French and the natives, in order to bring about an 'Indochinese consciousness', which might neutralize the differences between the various peoples and contribute to the emergence of an 'Indochinese Nation'. In the political sphere this Indochinese solidarity was to find expression in a federal structure, the 'Indochinese Federation' in which all nations and ethnic groups were to enjoy a certain amount of autonomous development. The French element was to be the binding force and France, of course, had to remain the dominant power, but rather than stressing feelings of loyalty towards the home country, Decoux emphasized the particular characteristics and traditional institutions of each of the Indochinese peoples. He even went so far as to encourage some sort of national consciousness.

This 'Federalism', as the new programme was officially termed, amounted in practice to an increase in the number of indigenous officials, as well as to a greater degree of equal treatment. Thus the number of Vietnamese civil servants in the higher and medium functions doubled between 1940 and 1944. Differences in rank between French and Indochinese members of the bureaucracy were abolished and the salaries of the latter raised to an equal level; social intercourse was promoted and it was advocated that Europeans should conduct themselves politely when addressing Vietnamese. The identity of the Indochinese peoples was emphasized by actions designed to raise the prestige of the indigenous dynasties and their governments. Such actions were usually of a ceremonial nature only, but with regard to Luang Prabang the administration went further when, by the treaty of 29 August 1941, the status of the kingdom as a protectorate was properly defined for the first time since the establishment of French domination. On that occasion three provinces were added to the state while a cabinet was also created with Prince Phetsarath as prime minister.

More revolutionary than this essentially traditional policy of ingratiating the colonial regime with indigenous royalty, was the decision to encourage, in the Vietnamese territories, the use of the national language *quoc ngu* in the administration and in education. In the educational field, particularly, Decoux displayed a far greater activity than any of the previous administrations; numerous new schools were established, creating wider educational facilities for indigenous children, while at the same time vocational and technical instruction was promoted at different levels. The regime was greatly interested, moreover, in the younger generation: a youth movement was organized into which about 100,000 Vietnamese were admitted. The ideal of solidarity of the French and the Indochinese which inspired Decoux' policies also led, finally, to a closer co-operation in the economic field.

The concepts of an 'Indochinese Federation' and an 'Indochinese Nation' constituted a new colonial theory, and new, too, was the manner in which some points of the scheme were carried into effect. Several details of the programme, particularly those encouraging Vietnamese national sentiments, did not fail to deeply disturb the European community in Indochina. But Decoux' policy did not amount to an essentially new orientation of French rule; although the reforms were dangerous novelties according to the traditional standards of colonialism, they were in fact quite harmless. First, the concept of the 'Indochinese Federation' was based on the realization that something had to be done to thwart the Japanese attempts to win the confidence of the population, and this might well be achieved by introducing a theory designed to be, at least, equally attractive as Japan's Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. Secondly, many of the reforms were embarked upon out of sheer necessity. The number of native civil servants was increased primarily because it had become impossible since 1940 to recruit officials in France. The educational drive was a French attempt to counteract the Japanese efforts to sponsor instruction in the Japanese language. Encouraging the setting up of small industries in Indochina was not the outcome of a new colonial orientation but the result of the Allied blockade which prevented French industrial products from being imported. Finally, the comprehensive programme of public works, which included, among other things, the construction of roads and bridges and large land-reclamation projects, could be carried out rather easily since it was no longer necessary to ask permission from the authorities in the home country, and it was intended primarily to raise the regime's prestige and to impress the indigenous population with technical marvels.

In the political field there was no change at all. In spite of the emphasis on equal rights and autonomous development, political power remained firmly with the French who continued to control the most important matters at federal level. In practice Decoux' 'Federalism' was no more than a clear continuation, in a paternalistic garb, of the old centralized

system. The encouragement of some extent of national feelings among the natives did not mean that any real concession was being made to indigenous nationalism. Decoux made a few promises and concessions to the conservative and traditionalist elite which, as one of the mainstays of French rule, had to back the colonial regime against the Japanese who were actively working among the same social groups. The French attempts to enhance the prestige of the princely families were also primarily aimed at strengthening the position of the colonial government. The power of the indigenous rulers was not extended, a more essential role in their territories' administration was not given to them, and occasionally the French regime treated them in the old-fashioned heavy-handed way, as in 1941 when, after the death of King Monivong of Cambodia, Decoux put strong pressure on the royal family to prevent the succession of Prince Monireth, who was the first in line but whom the French considered too independent of mind, and in his place his young nephew Norodom Sihanouk, apparently a more pliable man, was appointed.

This being the manner in which the high-seated were dealt with, it is hardly surprising that at lower levels the Indochinese were not given any voice either. At the centre a Federal Council was set up, on 27 June 1941, consisting of 25 indigenous members, all nominated on account of their merits and loyalty. Such a completely Indochinese body was not very well received by the French colonial community which had not yet come to perceive the deeper intentions of Decoux' policies. The governor-general himself realized that he had gone too far, but he continued to adhere to his theory and he justified the change in the composition of the council with reference to the sentiments of Indochinese solidarity. The new council, established by decree of 31 May 1943 and termed 'Grand Council for Indochina', was of mixed composition, to 'emphasize the oneness of the indigenous population and the French'. The indigenous members, 30 out of 53, all nominated, were respectable persons but they lacked the spirit to embark upon anything that might irritate the colonial government. They also lacked the power to do so, since the new council had only an advisory function.

In general, Decoux' policy failed to appeal to the Indochinese, particularly in the Vietnamese territories. In the first place it was proved by the war situation that Indochina was far better capable of standing on her own feet than had been assumed so far, and that this was possible with the assistance and through the efforts of the indigenous population. Native civil servants found out that they were able to perform functions which formerly had been reserved for French officials — in Indochina a discovery of as great psychological moment as in the South-East Asian territories under direct Japanese rule. The attempt of Decoux to discipline the younger people and organize them into youth movements and sports associations as instruments to serve the purposes of the French regime, eventually misfired when these organizations, like those set up under

Japanese auspices in the other countries, became strongholds of indigenous nationalism. Some of the intellectuals sided with the French just as others collaborated with the Japanese, but the majority of the population adopted a wait-and-see attitude. During the Decoux administration the political police continued to play a prominent role and in March 1945, the date on which the French regime was brought to an end, there were between 8,000 and 10,000 indigenous political prisoners in Indochina's camps and gaols. The Indochinese, and among them the Vietnamese nation in particular, clearly understood the real merits of 'Indochinese solidarity' and they were no more captivated by such designs than by the 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere' of the Japanese.

THAILAND

Like French Indochina Thailand was under dual control. Her economy was geared to satisfying Japan's needs and a Japanese garrison force was in control of the lines of communication, the ports and the airfields, but the Thai government remained responsible for administering the country and preserving law and order. In the cultural field the Japanese were very active, especially after the conclusion, on 28 October 1942, of a cultural pact, after which they flooded Thailand with pro-Japanese propaganda and made great efforts to spread the use of the Japanese language. Politically speaking they proceeded as cautiously, however, as in French Indochina, so as not to upset Thai sensibilities, or by causing disquiet to the authorities, to disturb the precious relations which had enabled Japan to take over the country's military facilities smoothly and persuade Phibun Songkhram's government into joining her in the war against the Allied powers. As any conflict with Thailand might endanger the position of the Japanese armies in Burma and Malaya, the Japanese saw to it that no such conflict arose. Thus there was hardly any meddling with internal Thai affairs; in fact, the Japanese had fewer reasons to interfere in its politics than they had in Indochina, because in Thailand they were not dealing with an essentially hostile European colonial power that had been forced to accept a Japanese military occupation, but with a basically friendly Asian government which had voluntarily become Japan's ally.

On its own accord the Thai military regime was following a policy just as Japan desired, inducing the population to work for the achievement of Greater East Asia in co-operation with Japan. It is true that this policy was carried out in a more genial manner than the Japanese might have done themselves. It is also true that a great many Thais were not very well disposed towards the Japanese; they feared the consequences of Japan's economic penetration, they resented the occasionally rapacious actions of the Japanese military and, as far as it came to their knowledge, they were tremendously shocked by the terrible human tragedy attending the

construction of the Burma-Siam railway. Some elements of the oligarchy, most prominently Pridi Phanomyong, maintained secret contacts with the Western Allied powers and with China. But, in general, Japan had hardly any reason to be officially dissatisfied with its Thai allies, and occasionally lustre was added to Thai-Japanese relations by a grand display of cordiality. Thus, in April 1942, a special mission, headed by former Prime Minister Phahon, visited Tokyo where it was received in audience by the Emperor, while three months later a Japanese mission paid a visit to Bangkok. On both occasions the two countries pledged to co-operate closely in the struggle for establishing a New Asia.

The Japanese were aware, however, that political opportunism rather than any genuine sympathy with their cause had induced Phibun's government to side with Japan. The irredentist claims of Thai nationalism and its traditionally anti-Chinese sentiments fitted in well with the anti-Western and anti-Chinese orientation of Japan's policy; so also, the authoritarian views which the Thai military regime held on the state and society coincided with the totalitarian ideology of the Japanese ruling circles. But the major factor which made Thailand an ally of Japan had been the consideration that the opportunity to play off the powers against each other no longer existed at the time and that a policy of co-operating with the strongest nation constituted the most sure means of maintaining her independent position. From a Thai point of view this calculation proved correct; although economically and militarily linked to Japan and politically incorporated into the Greater East Asia Sphere, the Thai government enjoyed a substantial freedom of action which was no more restricted than it used to be in the previous decades when she had constantly to take account of Western economic ambitions and French and British political or strategic interests. But seen from a Japanese point of view, this Thai motive for joining Japan was only temporarily valid, namely as long as Japan remained sufficiently powerful. The remark, ascribed to Phibun Songkhram, that 'whoever loses the war is our enemy', clearly testified to the real nature of Thailand's loyalty. With this in view it was necessary for Japan to keep the Thais in her fold by offering them a bait when the war against the Allied powers took an unfavourable turn.

An undertaking to make territorial concessions to Thailand, at the expense of Britain, had been secretly made as far back as December 1941, but after the dazzling conquests of early 1942 and with the Thais safely on her side, Japan had remained silent on the matter. Phibun did not forget this promise, however; he constantly reminded the Japanese of it and early in 1943 he seemed to have demonstrated his discontent over their delaying tactics. Although the communiqué of the talks between Greater East Asia Minister Aoki and the Thai government, in April, did not publicly reveal anything on this issue, the question had evidently been touched upon, because less than a month later Tojo raised the point for discussion in Japanese government and military circles. There was some

opposition on the part of the military administration in Malaya, but on 31 May the Imperial Conference decided to turn over four Malay states — Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan and Trengganu — and two Shan states — Kengtung and Möng Pan — to Thailand. On 15 June Tojo declared in the Diet that 'Thailand was marching valiantly and vigorously forward, surmounting numerous difficulties' on the road towards New Asia; he added that Japan was sympathetic to the Thai territorial ambitions and that his government was prepared to co-operate with the Thai government in securing the lost provinces. Early in July he visited Bangkok and after discussions with Phibun it was publicly announced on the 5th that the six territories were to become part of Thailand. The treaty providing for the formal transfer was concluded on 20 August and in October the Japanese administration was withdrawn and replaced by Thai rule.

The annexation of four Malay and two Shan states was likely to enhance the prestige of Phibun Songkhram in the eyes of the nationalists. With the balance of power in the area in the process of shifting, this fulfilment of Thai territorial aspirations came at such a moment, however, that it failed to strengthen his position. In the course of the previous year many political leaders had already started to doubt the wisdom of the government's pro-Japanese policies, and in mid-1943, when it became evident that Japan was going to lose the war, there was no illusion that Thailand would be permitted to keep her territorial gains after an Allied victory. Realizing this, the Thai oligarchy altered its course, while, afflicted by the economic hardships of the alliance with Japan, the population was changing its attitude as well. Phibun himself had been too much involved in the pro-Japanese orientation of Thai policy over the past years to be ready for a *volte-face*, but the other members of the elite were quite prepared to switch over to those leaders, such as Pridi, who had opposed Phibun's course from the start. It was their intention to adjust Thai policies to the new international situation and, by this, to preserve, as much as possible, the country's independence and to safeguard their own predominance in the Thai political structure after the impending Japanese defeat.

5 *Japan's Economic Domination*

GENERAL ASPECTS

As some of South-East Asia's material resources were as powerful an incentive for Japan's penetration into the region as they had been for Western colonialism in the previous decades, Japanese domination was as strongly characterized by economic factors as colonial rule had been. The 'Co-prosperity Sphere' was not only a political but also, and very definitely, an economic project, aiming at the creation of an autarchic regional bloc based on the technical and manufacturing power of Japan and her industrialized vassal-states, and on the agricultural productive capacity, the market facilities and the raw materials of the 'Southern Territories'. The conquest of South-East Asia in early 1942 greatly simplified Japan's efforts to achieve this objective, because it effectively reduced the competitive power of the Western rivals.

Basically Japanese rule did not differ from colonial domination in the economic field any more than it did in the political sphere. As a producer of primary commodities and a market for industrial products South-East Asia continued to be dependent on outside economic forces, although for the entire region only one paramount power constituted the link with the outside world which, due to the war situation, had shrunk to the Japanese-controlled territories of Greater East Asia. In exploiting South-East Asia's resources Japan employed fundamentally the same methods as the Western nations, and throughout the period of her hegemony the interests of the various countries and their inhabitants were as patently subordinated to those of Japan as they had been to those of the West in the colonial era.

Indochina and Thailand were the only South-East Asian countries where a local government was in charge and with them Japan settled economic relations through negotiations. In May 1941 the French administration had already been persuaded into signing the Conventions of Tokyo which made Indochina economically dependent on Japan. Thailand followed suit soon after she had thrown in her political fortunes with the Japanese in December 1941. In order to arrange for the import of consumer and capital goods which previously used to be supplied by Great Britain and the United States, the country had to rely on Japan, while, on the other hand, she needed Japan's assistance in securing markets for her rubber, tin and rice. In this situation the Thai delegation which travelled to Tokyo early in 1942 was, no more than the French a year earlier, in the position to bargain successfully, and the outcome of the negotiations was essentially similar: Thailand's economy was linked to that of Japan. The Japanese government consented to an increase in Thai exports to Japan, and promised to supply Thailand with manufactured goods without raising the prices, but the economic agreement of 22 April also provided for parity between the yen and the baht which, in fact, led to a considerable devaluation of Thai currency.

Their special political status did not prevent the two countries from joining the rest of South-East Asia in experiencing the unfortunate effects of their economies' inclusion in the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. Neither did the formal agreements constitute any adequate guarantee against Japanese economic pressure or against actions designed to further Japan's interests at the expense of the Thais or the French. Under the Tokyo Conventions the Japanese managed to obtain a strong foothold in Indochina and in the years which followed they successfully exploited the opportunities of strengthening their economic control. Thus Japan demanded exorbitant prices for her own goods but forced the French to accept low payments for the Indochinese products she bought. At the same time the Japanese set out to cripple French business by failing to supply the full quotas of articles as specified in the agreements, a failure due not only to the gradual collapse of overseas transport but, in this case, also to deliberate manoeuvring. In Thailand, an Asian ally, the Japanese acted in a less antagonistic way but here, too, they contrived to strengthen their hold on the country's economy by, among other things, arranging for Japanese partnership in a great many industrial and commercial state enterprises. Until the mounting losses of Japanese shipping put an end to almost all trade, Indochina and Thailand exported more products — particularly rice, rubber and minerals — to Japan than they received from her, but their favourable balance of payment did not bring them any financial benefit since their yen credits, piling up in Japanese banks, were virtually frozen. Initially the Conventions of Tokyo did allow for a settlement of balances in excess of 5 million yen, either in gold or in a free currency, but under the new financial agreement which Japan forced upon

the Decoux administration in January 1943 payments for Indochinese goods were to be made in special inconvertible yen. With the baht linked to the yen Thailand's monetary position was hardly better. A heavy burden on Indochina's economy, finally, was the arrangement that the French colonial government had to pay the costs of the occupation army: for this purpose the Banque d'Indochine advanced piasters to the Japanese troops in return for which Indochina received more yen on her credit balance.

As French business continued to play a role in Indochina and the Thai government remained ultimately responsible for the economic process, Japan's influence was still, in a sense, limited. In the colonies which had been militarily overrun and directly placed under Japanese administration, however, the Japanese felt free to carry out whatever policy they wished: they followed a process of unrestrained economic penetration. The property of nationals of Allied powers was seized, and while money and other valuables were seized by a special bureau, Western-owned mines, plantations, factories and commercial firms were taken over by the military administration and either operated by the armed forces or turned over to Japanese companies. This action was evidently one aspect of Japan's war against the Allied nations, but it was as clearly part of her economic offensive in South-East Asia. As such the conquest opened up unprecedented opportunities for Japanese business, particularly for concerns like Mitsui and Mitsubishi, or banking firms as the Bank of Taiwan or the Yokohama Specie, to secure the dominant position in South-East Asian overseas trade, mining, manufacturing industry and finance which they had been coveting for such a long time.

In spite of the fact that Japanese control hardly differed from Western domination in its basic principles, it represented a distinct break with the colonial past in practice. The period of Japanese rule was mainly characterized by an almost complete running down of South-East Asia's economy and by a disastrous deterioration of living conditions. As Japan's economic plans were not essentially more wicked than the various systems of colonial exploitation had been, this deplorable development was not due to the Co-prosperity Sphere project as such; rather was it the result of the circumstances under which the programme was carried into effect. The Co-prosperity Sphere was embarked upon in the wake of the military campaigns of early 1942 which had caused substantial destruction. It was only in the two territories which had not been fought over, in Indochina and Thailand, that the Japanese were able to lay their hands on an undamaged economic, technical and scientific apparatus. Everywhere else they had to start repairing lines of communication and re-building ports, oil installations, mines and manufacturing industries which had either been crippled by their own air force or destroyed by the demolition teams of the retreating Allies. To this initial handicap a second was added when the mass-internment of Europeans created a technical and managerial

gap which the Japanese, lacking sufficient supervisory personnel, were unable properly to fill. In general, reconstruction made slow progress, due to several circumstances arising out of the war situation, but also as a result of the Japanese policy of carrying out only those repairs which had top priority in the context of their war efforts. Installations and enterprises which did not serve their interests were either neglected and allowed to fall into decay, or dismantled and stripped of their essential parts.

This conduct was one of the many adverse consequences of Japanese policy towards the conquered territories. Theoretically the Co-prosperity Sphere was based on the principle of 'Universal Brotherhood', but in practice the entire project was an instrument to serve the interests of Japan and to subordinate the region to her needs; the general programme of the management and exploitation of South-East Asia's resources, dated 12 December 1941, clearly proved this to be Japan's primary objective. In this respect the relations between Japan and the territories under her hegemony were essentially similar in nature to those between the Western nations and their colonial dependencies had been, but because of the war, Japanese requirements were far more excessive. Furthermore, due to the war too, the occupation armies played a predominant and rather autonomous role in assessing the contributions South-East Asia had to make to Japan's war efforts. In the instructions for administering the 'Southern Regions', drawn up by the Liaison Conference on 20 November 1941, it had been emphatically stated that the armed forces had to use local supplies of food and raw materials and that their needs should be given priority over the interests of the indigenous population. It was an incitement to live off the land as much as possible and to rely on Japan only in the most urgent cases, and this was exactly what the Japanese armies did in occupied South-East Asia.

JAPANESE EXACTIONS

After the conquest commerce and industry were placed under military control by introducing a system of permits and by granting licences to Japanese companies which were to operate Western enterprises under the supervision of the army. The armed forces themselves took over the means of communication — railways and river transport — and they set out systematically to commandeer such goods as they needed for their own support or which were considered vital for Japan's defence. Among the latter were strategic materials such as minerals, oil, rubber and timber, as well as the industrial installations and technical equipment connected with their production. Occasionally these actions degenerated into undisguised plunder when the Japanese seized items, such as treasures or books, which had no direct bearing on the war. Furthermore they mono-

polized the production of some prime commodities, such as salt, tobacco, soap, matches and cotton, while they also embarked upon a policy of requisitioning food. As soon as it became evident that a shortage of rice was developing, the authorities introduced a system of forced deliveries at fixed prices in order to secure sufficient supplies for the armed forces in the first place, but also for distribution in the urban districts. Cattle were requisitioned for transport purposes and for beef and leather, while the sesame crop was taken to make use of the oil as lubricant for aero-engines. These requisitions were one of the more odious aspects of Japanese rule: they opened up opportunities for corruption and extortionist practices, either by the Japanese themselves or by the civil servants, charged with administering the scheme, and the police functionaries who assisted in collecting the quotas that had to be delivered. Secondly, because of the exorbitant demands of the Japanese, the system intensified the deficiency of the basic needs of the population. Thus, the diversion of sesame oil to lubrication purposes caused a shortage of cooking oil; the cattle requisitions badly affected the cultivation of rice and the rice requisitions themselves severely aggravated the general food situation.

The Japanese practice of living off the land was also demonstrated by their monetary policy. They paid for all their transactions, but they did so in special bank notes. The economic programme for the Co-prosperity Sphere of 12 December 1941 provided for issuing military paper money, expressed in the local currencies and designed eventually to merge with them, and its acceptance as legal tender was to be enforced. These notes were issued at par with the currencies locally in use, but devoid of bullion-support they were, in effect, worthless. Their circulation caused a devaluation of the various South-East Asian currencies which gradually developed into an inflation when the Japanese increased the output of the printing presses. In Java 450 million guilders were in circulation at the beginning of the occupation; some 1500 million were issued during the years of Japanese rule. To the total Philippine money supply of around 300 million pesos, the Japanese added an amount variously estimated between 6 and 11 milliard. For Japan these war notes constituted an unfailing instrument for acquiring the region's materials as well as the labour of its inhabitants at hardly any cost at all.

The Japanese armed forces retained their control over economic affairs in the conquered territories, as well as in those countries which were granted independence, throughout the entire period of the war. Due to the new relationship which formally evolved between Japan on the one hand and Burma and the Philippines on the other after mid-1943, some changes were brought about in the existing regime. Thus the Independence Preparatory Committee in Burma demanded a modification of the Japanese priority claim on all British properties in oil, timber, minerals and other natural resources, and the Japanese consented to reverting these to Burmese ownership; however items needed by the army were to

be subject to Japanese leases for the duration of the war. But these and similar concessions to the local governments did not alter in any essential way the set-up under which the Japanese military establishment was, in the last resort, responsible for running Burmese and Philippine economic affairs.

THE BREAKDOWN OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA'S ECONOMY

The extravagant nature of Japan's requirements, and the rapacious practices of her armed forces and business companies were not the only factors wrecking the region's economy. They tended to aggravate the consequences of the economic dislocation which, as a general phenomenon, was caused by South-East Asia's involvement in Japan's war. In the colonial era traditionally geared to supplying commercial crops and raw materials in exchange for food and industrial products, and thus depending both on easy access to the international markets and on uninterrupted imports of necessary commodities, South-East Asia's economy was, in practice, removed from its natural course the moment the region became in effect part of a besieged fortress dominated by a power which was at war with almost the entire world. As the industrialized nucleus of the Co-prosperity Sphere Japan was, theoretically, the obvious nation to perform the dual functions of supplying South-East Asia with consumer goods and providing a market for its products. In practice, however, she was incapable of doing so; her economic basis was too small for such a huge undertaking, and certainly so now that she was waging a total war. With her industry converted to war production, Japan had very little to spare in the range of textiles, chemicals, machinery or such other manufactured articles or capital goods as South-East Asia needed, and Japanese imports into the region did not in any way redress the adverse effects of the termination of trade with the Western nations. Consequently a critical shortage of these commodities occurred in all South-East Asian countries, badly affecting public finance, because of the disappearance of customs revenues, the living conditions of those who had grown accustomed to imported goods, particularly in the urban areas, and, finally, South-East Asia's productive capacity which suffered from the lack of new equipment and spare parts.

Neither was Japan successful in absorbing South-East Asia's staple exports. She was greatly interested in rice and in those primary materials and agrarian products which she badly needed for keeping her industry going and conducting the war: oil, rubber, bauxite, raw cotton, iron ore and timber. Initially she did, indeed, buy or take considerable quantities and had them transported to Japan, but as time went on these exports were severely hampered by the actions of Allied aircraft and submarines against Japanese shipping. At the beginning of the war Japan had the

world's third largest merchant marine with a carrying capacity of 6 million tons; in two years her losses amounted to nearly 3 million tons. Due to new additions from captured or requisitioned ships or from new production she still had nearly 5 million tons at her disposal by the end of 1943, but in 1944 her net loss amounted to over 2 million tons. Even before these tremendous losses made their effects felt there had been a shortage of tonnage, interfering with overseas commerce, but in the later stages of the war a virtual collapse of transportation ensued which further diminished the imports of manufactured goods and caused South-East Asia to lose its external markets.

However the decline of the region's mining industry and plantation agriculture was only partly due to this breakdown of overseas transport. In many cases the industries suffered heavily from the destruction during the Japanese conquest and the departure of European personnel. In addition to this, the general mismanagement of mines and factories, technical ignorance and the fact that new machinery and spare parts were in short supply, or — in agriculture — an inadequate knowledge of plant diseases and proper cultivation methods contributed to reducing South-East Asia's production capacity. Also the Japanese were unable or unwilling to take every item the region was offering. Industries which produced more than Japan could absorb, like Malayan rubber, Indonesian tin or Indochinese coal, or which competed with Japanese products, such as Philippine or Java sugar, were only supported or maintained in so far as they satisfied local needs. For the rest the factories were converted for other purposes or demolished, and the machinery removed, particularly the iron and copper parts which were used as scrap. This was not just straight plunder but was also an element of the Japanese policy economically to adjust the region to her own aims, and in a wider sense, the Co-prosperity Sphere's requirements, by encouraging the production only of commodities in which Japan was interested. Under the impact of these factors South-East Asia's production was thoroughly ruined. Out of the 837 tin mines operating in Malaya in 1940 either with dredges or gravel pumps less than 100 were worked during the Japanese occupation, and production fell nearly 90 per cent. Tin mining in Billiton came to an almost complete standstill. The acreage under tea in the Indies was reduced by 52 per cent, that under coffee by 28 per cent, and production dropped disastrously. In 1942 already the output of the Tonkinese coal mines was halved compared with the 1937 figure. Philippine sugar, which suffered an immediate collapse due to Japan's lack of interest, was destined to be replaced by cotton, and the cultivation and refining of sugar continued only on an extent sufficient to meet local needs or to produce liquid fuel and alcohol for Japanese military purposes. More than half the number of Java's sugar factories was converted for the production of cement, and in 1945 the yield of sugar was one-fifteenth that of 1942.

As the structure of South-East Asia's economy was fundamentally undermined and, as a result, both the export production and the traditional cultivation of subsistence crops showed an abrupt and in some cases disastrous decline, the Japanese attempts to sponsor the production of alternative goods in the context of the Co-prosperity Sphere project were hardly likely to meet with any success. They aimed at a reorientation of the region's productive capacity towards 'Greater East Asia'; with Japan's technical and financial assistance a self-supporting economic bloc had to be built up. The *Nanpo Kaihatsu Ginko*, or Southern Territories Development Bank, was established as a general circulation bank but also as an institution to finance development projects and to generate economic activity. Research was carried out in order to find ways of intensifying the exploitation of the region's resources and to implement the plans to end South-East Asia's dependence on Western markets and incorporate it economically in the Co-prosperity Sphere. In accordance with their preferences the Japanese discouraged the production of such items for which they, or 'Greater East Asia', had no real use, while on the other hand they concentrated on products in which they were interested. Thus, the mining of Indonesian bauxite, a vital element of aluminium, was carried on throughout the entire war, with the total output exported to Japan. By far the most sweeping attempts to adapt South-East Asia's capacities to the change of economic environment were those related to the Japanese policy of introducing new crops or using existing products for other purposes than they customarily were. In this latter category fell the decision to convert sesame oil and castor-oil into lubricants, as well as the efforts to extract motor-fuel out of rubber. The plans which had been drawn up in December 1941 strongly emphasized the cultivation of cotton, hemp and jute, and the breeding of sheep. Cotton, particularly, was much in demand in Japan since the United States and British India no longer supplied her textile industry. Japanese planners hoped to set up a large commercial cotton industry in the Philippines, and it was with this in mind that they progressively turned over the sugar plantations for the production of the vitally needed fibres for Japan's mills. The project was given top priority: sixteen cotton districts were designated with nine major Japanese companies involved to develop them. A Philippine Cotton Association was established, in August 1942, to co-ordinate the plans and regulate production under the supervision of the army. The scheme was not greatly successful, however, in spite of strenuous efforts. The available capital resources, manpower and machinery were insufficient, and cultivation was badly affected by the lack of proper seed preparation and pest control; the Filipinos themselves were hardly enthusiastic about the project and the actions of the resistance movement severely hampered progress. The general state of economic dislocation and the lack of time needed for its implementation further contributed to wrecking the cotton-growing scheme. The attempts to encourage the cotton industry elsewhere in

South-East Asia, Java for example, or to develop a viable jute industry, were equally unsuccessful.

Apart from isolating the region as a whole, Japan's inability to provide adequate transport separated the various countries, and in insular South-East Asia the various islands, from each other. Each territory was forced to stand on its own feet and each had to rely on its own resources. Since a policy of passive acquiescence in this state of economic decentralization was not likely to bring about any real relief, occasional attempts were made at adjusting the local economies to the changed circumstances so as to achieve some degree of self-sufficiency and prevent, as much as possible, further deterioration. These efforts were plainly in contrast to the princi ples of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity project which provided for the establishment of a viable interlocking economic sphere, but they could not be avoided; they were, in effect, no more than a formal substantiation of a situation which existed already. From the start it had been one of the flaws of the Co-prosperity Sphere that there was no economic co-ordination; for example the production of maize was encouraged in Indochina, while in Java the yield was halved. It was a defect which was caused partly by the general war circumstances and the difficulties of transport, but partly also by the autonomous position of the military establishments which were in charge locally and whose activities often effectively counteracted whatever programmes of economic development Japan's experts and the government in Tokyo might have devised.

The efforts to attain local self-sufficiency failed, moreover, to achieve this objective. In the first place the economic base was too small for a reorientation aiming at territorial autarchy, while secondly, the adverse factors which paralysed South-East Asia's economy in general also prevented these local attempts from bringing about any improvement. The stagnation of production created economic and social ills which could not be adequately remedied in the existing circumstances, while the termination of foreign imports and the exacting demands of the Japanese army caused serious shortages which also thwarted any attempt at redress. Although the absence of Western competitive power tended to favour a programme of industrialization on a small scale, and industries were, indeed, locally encouraged, in Indonesia's eastern islands for example or, in 1944-5, in Burma, this unprecedented opportunity to broaden the base of the economy and to strengthen it by diversification was effectively reduced by the same lack of materials and spares which crippled the existing manufacturing enterprises. The efforts to make the various territories self-supporting did not, in practice, amount to anything beyond intensifying food production. In spite of the fact that such campaigns were designed to meet the most urgent needs, the emphasis on subsistence farming constituted a backward step and the programme failed to produce a real solution for South-East Asia's economic difficulties under Japanese rule.

DETERIORATING LIVING CONDITIONS

Although there was a scarcity of almost all commodities and a particularly acute one of clothing, which in some areas induced people to manufacture *ersatz* clothes from tree-bark, it was the deficiency of food which created the most pressing problem. The disruption of agricultural activities caused by the military campaigns of 1942 and the recruitment of romusha coolies from among the rural population were responsible for this, and so were, to an even higher degree, the forced deliveries of rice to the Japanese army and the collapse of transport facilities. After the bad harvests of 1940 and 1941 the Philippines entered the Japanese era under far less favourable portents in this respect than Java, where it had been Dutch policy to store large quantities of rice. There were local variations in the seriousness of the problem, but in the territories which traditionally depended on food supplies from abroad, such as Malaya, the Philippines, Java and Tonkin, or from outside, such as the densely populated urban areas, the situation was potentially critical from the start so that rationing had to be introduced. Furthermore the crisis was aggravated, and inevitably so, by hoarding activities, food speculation and the emergence of a thriving black market. For this odious development the Chinese, the customary scapegoats because of their dominant position in retail trade, were often blamed, but they were not the only culprits. Numerous businessmen, indigenous as well as Chinese, were involved in the racket of black-marketing food and other vital supplies, and in the Philippines many landowners made millions by selling rice to the Japanese at inflated prices. With an understandable lack of confidence in Japanese money the peasants themselves, too, refused to send their crops to the official market; rather they stocked them away and sold them on the black market. But of all those engaged in these profitable practices the peasants belonged to the social group which was the most easily coerced into giving up such illegal activities — under the requisition schemes they had to deliver their supplies to the authorities at fixed prices.

The shortage of food and other essentials led to rising prices which, in combination with the inflationary effects stimulated by the generous circulation of Japanese paper money, resulted in financial chaos. Attempts, undertaken by the authorities, to stabilize prices and check the inflation proved ineffectual; and in many cases controlled prices were ignored while black market prices spiralled up in the face of the ever increasing deficiency of vital goods. In the period of Japanese rule the price of rice in Java increased from eight cents to twelve guilders per litre; in general the guilder dropped to one-sixtieth of its pre-war value. In June 1943 food prices in Singapore had risen by 300 per cent since December 1941. Between the start of the war and January 1945 the cost of living in the Philippines

multiplied 650 times. In Lower Burma the shortage of cooking oil caused the price of this essential item to rise to thirteen times above its original level.

This disastrous development badly affected living conditions in South-East Asia, at all levels of society. There was a decline in public revenues, as a result of the virtual disappearance of customs duties, the cessation of income tax from Western corporations, the inadequate taxation of Japanese firms which were exempted from paying taxes whenever they were involved in army procurement, and the lower yield of taxes, in general, which were paid according to the nominal value of the currency. The authorities attempted to keep public finance in the balance by cutting down expenses. They did so by reorganizing the bureaucratic apparatus and dismissing many civil servants, or by reducing the salaries of those who stayed on. As the inflation continued to ravage the economy salaries and wages had eventually to be raised at a later stage, but this was not in any way sufficient. In the urban areas the decline of production caused numerous labourers to lose their jobs, while those who were allowed to stay had their wages substantially cut. A similar trend developed in the countryside. The stagnation of commercial agriculture led to unemployment on a grand scale and to serious distress, which was the most painful in such areas where export production had been fully integrated with village life. The collapse of the sugar industry in Java, for example, and the restriction of the cultivation of export crops resulted in a tremendous loss of income for the rural population. In Lower Burma there was an enormous surplus of rice after the breakdown of overseas transport, leading to a decline of production: about one-fifth of the total acreage under rice reverted to semi-jungle. Although in some areas the peasants were occasionally able to pay off their accumulated debts with worthless banknotes, the general trend of pauperization caused the rural population to live at a minimum level of subsistence. One of the nefarious by-products of the deterioration of economic conditions and of the shortage of food in particular was the serious decline in public health, which in combination with the collapse of the colonial medical services and the disregard of proper sanitation measures accounted for a greater frequency of epidemics.

Because of their dwindling incomes and the limited opportunities to be economically active in the customary way, people had to find alternative means to satisfy their basic needs. A great number of those who were superfluous in the rural districts went to the towns, but they only swelled the mass of urban unemployed and added to the misery in the big cities. In Malaya, on the other hand, many Chinese moved from the towns to the fringes of the jungle where they attempted to make a living by growing vegetables and other foodcrops. Unchecked by any supervision from above, civil servants helped out their totally inadequate incomes by extortionist practices and resorting to corruption, for which a host of bureaucratic regulations and newly introduced permits gave them ample opportunity. Many had no alternative but to join the Japanese-sponsored

labour battalions and auxiliary units; many others took to brigandage and crime. Some people were relatively well off — the qualified workers in the vital industries, the higher public functionaries, and the speculators and profiteers — but they were only a tiny minority.

The attempts of the authorities to improve conditions and to stabilize prices were doomed to fail in the face of the emergency situation produced by the war. Making racketeering and black-marketing in food crimes punishable by death, as the Philippine government of Laurel did on 3 March 1944, was as ineffective as any other drastic regulation against speculation and hoarding elsewhere in South-East Asia. Neither were the authorities successful in redressing the food situation. Rationing and other efforts to provide sufficient supplies of rice and other essentials or to guarantee a fair distribution proved to be inadequate, however impressive the bureaucratic apparatus set up for the purpose. The 'National Rice and Corn Administration' in the Philippines, established already in May 1942, was as impotent as the new organization which replaced it in January 1944. In all countries food production campaigns were encouraged to achieve self-sufficiency, and in Malaya agricultural colonization was locally promoted. But the yield was insufficient to counteract the consequences of the downfall of South-East Asia's economic order. The food crisis was aggravated, moreover, by several special circumstances. Due to the lack of co-ordination in implementing the programmes of territorial self-sufficiency, there were locally different prices, even in adjoining districts, and this added to the general incentive for hoarding and smuggling food. In many areas the cultivation of foodcrops was seriously hampered by the activities of guerrilla fighters. The deteriorating situation did not persuade the Japanese to mitigate their policy of forced deliveries: on the contrary, the requisitioning of food for the occupation armies was intensified after they became more dependent on local production. Allied bombings interrupted communications overland, and in combination with the efforts to achieve local autarchy, this factor made it almost impossible to send food and other essentials from districts with a surplus to areas where a shortage existed and people were starving. There was a serious deficiency in rice in Upper Burma, while Lower Burma had large surpluses; on the other hand there was a scarcity of cooking oil in the south while it was abundant in the north.

Finally natural calamities occurred. Floods in the Philippines in 1943 and a drought in Java in the same year completely ruined the crops and brought people to the verge of starvation. In Burma the rinderpest further reduced the already substantially diminished cattle population. In its consequences the worst event in this category was the failure of the crops in Tonkin in November 1944, which led to the greatest single hunger catastrophe which ever overtook South-East Asia. In terms of food Tonkin and Northern Annam were traditional problem areas, dependent on imports of rice from Cochin China. These, however, stopped almost com-

pletely as a result of the Allied air-attacks against overland routes and coastal shipping. Under such circumstances a failure of the crops could not but have disastrous consequences. In December 1944 people were already starving, and in early 1945 a cruel famine ravaged Tonkin which claimed between 600,000 and 2 million Vietnamese lives, the varying estimates due to the different calculations by the French authorities and the Vietnamese themselves. The Tonkin famine was a calamity of exceptional magnitude, because it was the outcome of a development in which various highly injurious factors combined to produce the ultimate horrors of 1944–5: the traditional food crisis, the economic breakdown, the Japanese exactions, the collapse of transport, the inability of the government to make any real amendments, the rapacious practices of speculators and the corruption of officials, the chaotic conditions in the rural areas arising out of the increasing activities of the Vietnamese resistance movement and, finally, the crop failure of late 1944. But several of these same forces were at work in most other South-East Asian territories, and although they did not lead to such a disaster as in Tonkin, they caused terrible hardships which in many cases surpassed the privations to which the majority of the region's peoples had grown accustomed under Western domination.

By producing the disruption of South-East Asia's economic structure as the inevitable concomitant of the global war Japan was fighting, and by inflicting excessive, in some respects unprecedented, misery on the population, the Japanese occupation represented the culminating point of a long period of social and economic distress under foreign rule. It was also instrumental in effecting profound changes in the pattern of social behaviour—a trend which attended the gradual breakdown of the traditional social order ever since the 1870s, but which was now tremendously intensified under the impact of the emergency situation of the war. The general dissatisfaction created by the appalling living conditions and the revolutionary mentality brought about by the undermining of society ushered in a new phase in South-East Asia's development.

Part IV

The Nationalist Revolutions

The Nationalist Revolutions

Part IV

1 The Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Movements

SOUTH-EAST ASIAN DISCONTENT AND RESTIVENESS

For the nations of South-East Asia the Japanese occupation was the dividing line between passive submission to foreign rule and active participation in shaping their own destiny. It is true that the struggle to liberate the region from alien domination had already started around 1900, and that it continued for a considerable time after the downfall of Japan. It is also true that in the three decades after 1942 its most spectacular result amounted to little more than the disappearance of political old-style colonialism. It did not bring to an end South-East Asia's economic sub ordination to the outside world, nor did it lead to genuine independence in the sense of complete freedom from foreign interference or tutelage. However although the Japanese interlude served only to hasten the process of emancipation, and the outcome of the liberation movement was still incomplete in many respects around 1970, the years between 1942 and 1945 were a landmark in South-East Asia's history in that they caused a change of tempo as well as of methods and, in fact, produced the real beginning of the wars of independence.

Several factors were responsible for accelerating the development. It was in the Japanese period that the peoples of South-East Asia experienced an accumulation of almost all adverse characteristics of foreign domination, and the ordeal urged them to fight more intensely for their liberation than before. The almost total collapse of the economic system and, in its wake, the deteriorating living conditions and the unprecedented misery in the urban areas as well as in the countryside created a fertile soil for a rapidly growing dissatisfaction among all sections of the population. In addition

to this there was the disappointment over Japan's policies. Immediately after the conquest many people hoped that the Japanese would usher in a new era, but although a great many novelties were introduced, it was soon realized that their hegemony did not differ fundamentally from Western rule. The discontent among the nationalist-orientated politicians and intellectuals over Japan's failure to live up to her promise of 'liberating Asia' was further strengthened when it became apparent that in their contacts with the 'natives' the Japanese behaved as arrogantly as did the Europeans. The high-handed and overbearing attitude of the military authorities thoroughly frustrated the political leaders, while bureaucratic circles were highly annoyed at the constant interference with their affairs by lower-grade Japanese officials.

A special grievance was the harshness of the régime. The numerous executions, in public, by decapitation or bayoneting; the cruelties committed against adversaries, or suspects; the application by the Kenpeitai, of tortures like nail-pulling, burning, suspension, the water-treatment or the electric shock, and, finally, the atrocious manner in which disorders were put down, greatly impaired the image of the Japanese as fellow Orientals who had come to the 'Southern Regions' in the name of 'Universal Brotherhood'. Yet such actions, although totally unjustifiable, could still be considered the inevitable by-products of a war which Japan was fighting for her existence and in which she could not afford to tolerate any serious obstruction. The colonial rulers, in fact, used to behave in a similar manner whenever their domination had been directly threatened; that the Japanese period produced far more casualties was due to the emergency situation of the war and to the greater intensity of South-East Asian opposition.

Two aspects of Japanese conduct public opinion was not prepared, however, to excuse on the grounds of the critical circumstances. One was the unnecessary inhumanity of the coolie-programme, which aroused violent indignation. The other, more general, objection to Japanese behaviour was their tactlessness and their disregard of South-East Asian customs and standards of decency. The Burmese were shocked to a high degree when the occupation armies used sacred precincts as latrines or for slaughtering purposes; the Malays were upset by the frequent display of contempt for their traditional way of life. In most countries the indoctrination campaigns were resented, particularly those which aimed at introducing such Japanese norms, like Shintoism, which were incompatible with South-East Asian beliefs. In all territories there was utter disgust at the misbehaviour of Japanese soldiers towards women. But the greatest outrage was the widely practised usage of beating people or slapping them in their face, which was considered an unforgivable insult. In the sphere of personal contacts or social relations the South-East Asians had been given scanty reason to feel properly treated by their colonial masters, but this Japanese habit surpassed anything they had grown

accustomed to in the past. It was regarded as particularly humiliating, and as an indication of Japanese contempt; and more than anything else it contributed to alienating the South-East Asian nations from Japan.

It was not only the growing discontent, generated by Japanese rule, which was responsible for the process of emancipation gaining momentum and quickening its pace. There was also the fact that Japan provided the nationalist movement with the means to embark more forcefully upon the struggle for independence. It was definitely not the intention of the Japanese to make this contribution towards the region's liberation, but as in the case of the colonial rulers before them, their actions could not but create conditions which were bound to heighten popular dislike of their domination and strengthen the feelings of national consciousness among South-East Asia's peoples. The rapid breakdown of Western rule made a tremendous impression, not only because it put an end to the white man's superiority but also because Japan, lacking sufficient experienced and competent officials for such a task, was forced to use indigenous civil servants for carrying on the local administrations. Although the Japanese retained ultimate control of affairs, and the people of South-East Asia, in terms of exercising actual power and carrying real responsibility, did not get what they had hoped for, it was for the first time since the establishment of foreign domination over their countries that Malays and Indonesians were promoted to senior posts. It was an experience of great psychological moment and it greatly enhanced their self-confidence. In Indochina circumstances were different since the French rather than the Japanese were responsible for bringing about the change, but the effects on the indigenous peoples, individual as well as collective, were much the same as elsewhere in the region. In Burma, where a certain amount of autonomy had already been enjoyed before the war, it was not this factor but the granting of independence in August 1943 which stimulated the nation's self-respect. In practice this independence was empty, but it was for the first time since 1885 that Burma possessed her own government, and apart from giving the Burmese an idea of what genuine independence might be like, this situation strengthened their conviction that foreign domination was not to be tolerated any longer. It was only in the Philippines, where national consciousness did not need any stimulus, that the Japanese policy of filipinizing the administrative services and the outward granting of independence did not make any impression. Since the country was already ruled by the Filipinos themselves, hardly any essential change was effected in the first place; neither was independence under Japanese auspices any improvement over the situation under the pre-war Commonwealth constitution. In addition to the wretched economic and social conditions this realization rather than any other psychological factor contributed to the intensification of the struggle for national freedom.

The Japanese occupation also influenced the fighting methods of the liberation movement. As part of the establishment, either at relatively

high posts in the administration or as leaders of the officially sponsored organizations, the nationalists had more opportunities to advance their cause than they had had previously as the opposition politicians of the pre-war years: it was only in French Indochina that they were in the same position as before. Encouraged to do so by the Japanese they carried on a virulent anti-Allied and anti-colonial agitation as a means of inspiring the masses with their nationalist ideals, but in all territories except the Philippines the leading collaborating politicians also directed their activities and propaganda, though cautiously, against the Japanese themselves. The youth programme, in particular, offered a unique opportunity for training young nationalists, and far from becoming institutions furthering the interests of Japan and the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, the youth organizations became the breeding ground of indigenous nationalism, providing the political leaders with an enthusiastic and fanatical vanguard at the moment they needed such assistance against either the Japanese or, after Japan's defeat, the Western powers.

The most significant event of the Japanese period took place when some sections of the liberation movement resorted to using armed force, not occasionally as in the colonial years, but on a regular basis until the national objectives were attained. The growing sense of South-East Asian self-confidence and popular discontent were the major factors responsible for creating a rebellious mood among the masses, but several special circumstances contributed to translating this general disposition into revolutionary activity: hatred for the Japanese, the social and economic breakdown and the fact that arms had become more easily obtainable. The unfavourable turn of Japan's war against the Allies, Japan's inability to subdue by military means the various rebellious groups and the collapse of adequate government control finally enabled the resistance movements to persist, and ultimately, to wage a full-scale war.

ARMED RESISTANCE

The use of armed force as the extreme form of opposing foreign rule tended to create a gap between those political leaders who advocated such a course and those who preferred to pursue their goals by legal means. In the liberation movement there had traditionally been a difference of opinion on tactical matters, which since early 1942 was concentrated on the problem whether or not to collaborate with the Japanese. As both groups wanted to achieve essentially the same nationalist objectives their disagreement did not, as such, result in any real schism, outward appearances notwithstanding. In most countries the collaborating politicians secretly entertained more or less close relations with the leaders who were engaged in underground activities, and the former sometimes used their influence with the Japanese authorities to keep the latter out of the hands

of the executioner. It was different, however, when the radicals, in adopting a policy of opposing the Japanese, were not only motivated by speculations on tactics, related to either the actual struggle for freedom or the image of the nationalist movement in the eyes of the outside world, but also by considerations of a social revolutionary nature. As long as such leaders limited their illegal activities to carrying on propaganda for their particular ideas, to organizing discussion groups or to committing sabotage on a small scale, this dissension did not necessarily lead to mutual hostility within the liberation movement. But when the radicals resorted to fighting Japan with force of arms the collaborating nationalists, in general, most strongly disapproved of such action and bitterly opposed it, in the Philippines even to the extent of assisting the Japanese in combating the guerrilla organizations. They did so out of fear that the more spectacular way in which the radical-orientated wing of the liberation movement attempted to achieve national freedom might jeopardize their prestige as nationalist leaders and challenge their position as the future ruling elite. They were also afraid of the social revolutionary ideals of the anti-Japanese resistance groups which were dominated in all countries by leftist political leaders and in most territories by communists.

The policy of South-East Asia's communists *vis-à-vis* Japan has often been ascribed to their adherence to the general line of communism: since Soviet Russia was involved in the Second World War the Allied powers had to be supported. But this interpretation, based on the Western belief that everywhere in the world communists were acting upon the orders of Moscow, fails to clarify among other things why the Burmese communists collaborated with the Japanese-sponsored Ba Maw administration until three years after the Soviet Union had become an Allied power. It tends to overlook the fact that, in outlining their course, the region's communist leaders, whatever their attachment to the Soviet Union, were primarily motivated by essentially the same ideals and speculations as the non-communist nationalists. Apart from cherishing different views about the future structure of state and society, they were in the first place interested in liberating their countries from foreign domination, whether Western or Japanese. They, too, regarded the Japanese period as a welcome opportunity to strengthen their efforts towards achieving that objective, and deciding on the tactics to be employed they took local conditions into consideration. To a greater extent than the non-communist left-orientated nationalists they urged the establishment of large popular organizations, covering all groups standing on the platform of national liberation, but this was due to the conviction that such a movement was essential as an instrument successfully to fight alien control rather than to the fact that the Soviet Union was advocating popular fronts for combating the fascist powers.

In co-operation with the majority of the non-communist Thakins the Burmese communists adopted a course of taking part in the Burma

Executive Administration and, later, the Burmese government, while at the same time, and similarly in conjunction with the other radical nationalists, they made secret preparations for an open rebellion. In Indonesia, Malaya, the Philippines and Vietnam on the other hand the communists went underground immediately after the Japanese invasion, or rather, stayed underground such as they had mostly been under colonial rule. They were, in general, better equipped for this type of activity than the non-communist nationalists: they were better organized and disciplined, they had clear-cut ideas and because of constant government oppression they were accustomed to working in secrecy. Due to the deteriorating conditions of the Japanese period, moreover, their social revolutionary ideals did not fail to impress the poorer sections of the population, particularly the rural masses upon whom they concentrated their efforts. This policy of associating itself with the basic needs and demands of the majority of the population contributed to giving South-East Asian communism the mass base which, except in Vietnam, it did not have in the colonial era. More than any deliberate manoeuvring on their part or any instance of communist terrorism against such non- or anti-communist nationalists who were considered potential adversaries, it was this factor which enabled the communist organizations to spearhead the anti-Japanese resistance. In the territories where armed resistance was resorted to, either in the beginnings of the Japanese occupation or, as in Burma, towards the close of the period, it was only in Burma that the command of the liberation movement was in non-communist hands. In Vietnam communists were predominant in the resistance organization; in Malaya they were exclusively responsible for the anti-Japanese struggle. In the Philippines various guerrilla groups were operating, but the largest was very strongly influenced by the communist party. Several countries witnessed hardly any armed resistance whatsoever in the years of Japan's hegemony. In Cambodia, Laos and Northern Borneo, nationalism, whether the communist or non-communist variant, had not yet developed into a sufficiently powerful force. In Indonesia the most popular leaders of the nationalist movement had opted for collaboration with Japan as a means of achieving their goals, and this situation made it difficult for the communists as well as for the non-communists who favoured opposing Japan to obtain the mass base necessary for successfully adopting such tactics. When in Thailand an anti-Japanese course was decided upon by some politicians, it was political opposition rather than resistance by force of arms to which they resorted.

THE VIET MINH

Of the anti-Japanese resistance movements in South-East Asia it was the one in Vietnam which was confronted with the greatest difficulties in that

it was not only facing the Japanese, but also, primarily, the French colonial regime which was still responsible for maintaining law and order and was well experienced in ruthlessly dealing with nationalist organizations. But this complication was offset by the fact that Vietnamese resistance could rely on the region's most capable revolutionary leader, Nguyen Ai Quoc, and its greatest organizing talent, Vo Nguyen Giap, both communists. After the repression of the nationalist and communist rebellions of 1940 the Vietnamese were not in a position to do anything except either wait for a better opportunity or join the Japanese. The majority waited, while a small group of conservative politicians chose to co-operate with Japan. There were also nationalists, however, who counted on Chinese rather than Japanese help in their struggle for independence; among the latter were the adherents of the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, as well as the members of the Indochinese Communist Party.

In Cochin China the communist movement had been almost totally deprived of its leadership since the barbarous French repression of the revolt in 1940, but in Tonkin where, with greater insight into the real situation, the party had refused to be rushed into an open rebellion, its commanding body had remained intact. As to its course of action it kept close to the policy Nguyen Ai Quoc had recommended and from which the Cochin-Chinese branch had deviated. The presence of Japanese forces on Vietnamese soil compelled the communists to be even more cautious; any open rebellion against the French-Japanese combination was likely to lead to an as terrible disaster as the revolt in Cochin China had produced. Thus the party restricted its activities to restoring the disrupted relations between the various groups in the country, to re-building the Cochin-Chinese section and to carrying on propaganda among the masses in order to prepare them for armed resistance at a more propitious moment.

In January 1941 Nguyen Ai Quoc returned to Vietnam and settled with a few adherents in the wild mountainous area of Cao Bang province. He suggested the establishment of close co-operation between the Indo-chinese Communist Party and the other anti-Japanese nationalist groups in order to co-ordinate better the various actions aiming at achieving independence. This recommendation was completely in accordance with the directives of the Communist International that communist parties had to take the lead in the national liberation movement against imperialism, and that as many 'bourgeois' nationalist organizations and politicians as possible had to be involved in the struggle. But Nguyen Ai Quoc, who was too independent a communist to be exclusively guided by the Comin-tern's instructions, had other motives as well. His tactics were conditioned in the first place by Vietnamese circumstances and by his ideas regarding the course of action that would guarantee optimal success. The co-operation of all nationalist forces, except those who collaborated with Japan, was considered vital in this respect. Furthermore Nguyen Ai Quoc

was eager to obtain the support of the Chinese, although from an ideological point of view Chiang K'ai-shek's China was not the most obvious ally of any communist organization. Yet, in exchange for Vietnamese assistance rendered to her, China was in a position to give valuable help to the anti-Japanese political movement, if only in the way of offering its leaders shelter in her territory. But to achieve fruitful co-operation with the Chinese it was essential to consider the anti-communist sentiments of the Kwo Min Tang government, and for this reason Nguyen Ai Quoc did not put great stress on his communist convictions. In Vietnam itself, moreover, such a policy might serve to lessen the fear of the Indochinese Communist Party which the anti-communist nationalists and the intellectual *élite* were entertaining.

Nguyen Ai Quoc's endeavours to bring all sections of the anti-Japanese movement together resulted in a conference of the communist leaders with other nationalist politicians. The meeting was held from 10 to 19 May 1941 in Ching-hsi, just across the Vietnamese border in Southern China. Here it was agreed to set up a 'League for Vietnam's Independence', *Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh*, *Viet Minh* for short. A significant role was played by communists like Nguyen Ai Quoc, Truong Chinh, Vo Nguyen Giap, Pham Van Dong and Hoang Van Thu, who were the most active among those present. In fact, the Central Committee and the local committees of the Indochinese Communist Party were the only existing bodies which the new organization could immediately rely on: the non-communist groups which joined the Viet Minh were quite small. Nevertheless the programme of the Viet Minh was not communist. In their eagerness to persuade all classes of Vietnamese society to take part in the struggle for independence, the communists did not allow their ideology to jeopardize the principle of co-operation with other nationalists. They did not, of course, abandon their own long-term objectives, but they subordinated these to the nationalist goal which, for the moment, was considered to be of far greater urgency. This was tactical strategy, bound to be regarded, at a later date, as a sinister move to deceive the non-communists and eventually dominate the political scene, but it was not essentially different from the policy of any party, whether communist or not, which in order to co-operate with others, confines itself to stressing the common goals, without losing sight of its own specific aims.

It was the major aim of the Viet Minh to restore independence to Vietnam. This was to be accomplished by fighting the French colonial authorities and the Japanese occupation forces — in this sequence. In order to receive international support for its struggle the Vietnamese resistance movement expressed its solidarity with the Allied powers, particularly China and the United States. With regard to the future of Vietnam the Viet Minh programme recommended reunification of the three regions (Annam, Tonkin, Cochin China) and to establish a democratic and republican form of government. It also advocated universal

suffrage, equal rights for Vietnamese and ethnic minorities as well as for men and women, democratic freedom, social security, better educational facilities, and finally, the abolition of the old bureaucracy and its replacement by a new administrative structure based on people's committees in which the mass of the population was to be adequately represented. By emphasizing these demands the Viet Minh went further than the other nationalist parties which, in general, did not evince a great interest in the basic problems of society that might arise after independence. But this was not social radicalism in a communist sense: nationalization was only mentioned in reference to possessions of the Japanese, 'fascists' and 'traitors', while the recognition, in principle, of the right to own landed property was diametrically opposed to the line the I.C.P. had been advocating during the previous years.

In a proclamation to the Vietnamese people, on 8 September, Nguyen Ai Quoc announced that a national front had been established to 'fight French and Japanese fascism until the complete independence of Vietnam had been achieved'. A month later, on 25 October, a first manifesto was issued to disclose the aims of the new organization. In the meantime the Viet Minh had already embarked upon clandestine activities, and in spite of the vigilance of the French police it was greatly successful in this, particularly in Upper Tonkin. In the mountain and jungle territories of Cao Bang province, inhabited by ethnic minorities who were not inspired by feelings of loyalty towards the foreign government, the first guerrilla base was established. In this Vo Nguyen Giap played a significant role; he built a network of cells, and taking advantage of the prevalent discontentment among the Tho and Man he formed fighting groups which later became the nucleus of the guerrilla forces. In China the Viet Minh attempted, by means of active propaganda, to win over the Vietnamese refugees in Kwangsi and Yunnan to its cause.

Meanwhile official circles in China were busily engaged in encouraging whatever anti-Japanese and anti-colonial sentiments Vietnam's political leaders were demonstrating. First, the Chinese authorities were traditionally interested in Tonkin and opposed to France, and this the more so since they regarded the French as accomplices of Japan in her aggression against China. They were afraid that Japanese agents would capture Vietnamese nationalism and push it into an anti-Chinese direction. Finally it was realized that a Vietnamese anti-Japanese organization might be capable of providing the authorities in Southern China with information on Japanese troop movements in Tonkin. But the communist character of the Viet Minh leadership displeased the ultra-conservative Kwo Min Tang government which during its stay in the war-capital Chungking had developed into an utterly reactionary regime.

Early in 1942 the Chinese authorities already adopted a threatening posture towards the Viet Minh, and when, in July, Nguyen Ai Quoc crossed the border in an attempt to contact both the Kwo Min Tang

politicians and Mao Tse-tung's communist movement, he was arrested and incarcerated. At the same time the governor of Kwangsi, General Chang Fa-k'uei, approached the conservative Vietnamese emigrants in the hope of setting up a new alliance of nationalist political leaders. From a Chinese point of view the militant nationalists of the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, who had lived in exile in China since 1930, were the best qualified politicians. Their chairman, Vu Hong Khanh, was a known anti-communist, and, in general, the party was a Vietnamese replica of the Chinese Kwo Min Tang. These factors made the V.N.Q.D.D. the appropriate opponent of the Viet Minh and a suitable pawn of China. As anti-communist as the V.N.Q.D.D. were the leaders of the Phuc Quoc, but because of their pro-Japanese inclinations they were considered less welcome participants in what, after all, should become an anti-Japanese organization. Finally, there were a few individual nationalists, like Nguyen Hai Than, who had fled to China as far back as 1912 and who had become a general in the Chinese army; he was hardly capable of speaking the Vietnamese language but this was no obstacle to his becoming an adviser of the Chinese authorities on Vietnam.

In the summer of 1942 Chang Fa-k'uei ordered the Vietnamese refugees in Southern China to be transferred to a camp near Liu-chou where they were given military training and political instruction. In order to encourage greater co-operation and create a tractable instrument for Chinese interference in Vietnamese affairs, the leading politicians were invited to a conference of political parties. At this meeting, held from 4 to 10 October 1942, a new coalition was set up under Chinese auspices, the 'League of Vietnamese Revolutionary Organizations', *Viet Nam Cach Menh Dong Minh Hoi*, abbreviated *Dong Minh* or D.M.H. The participants were the V.N.Q.D.D., the Phuc Quoc which had been purged of pro-Japanese elements, the Viet Minh and several smaller groups. Under the nominal leadership of Nguyen Hai Than and with the V.N.Q.D.D. as its driving force, this national front was instructed to commit sabotage and obtain intelligence in Tonkin.

During these months the Viet Minh sought to allay the suspicions of the Kwo Min Tang authorities and at the Liu-chou Conference the Viet Minh co-operated with them, but it was not its intention to be neutralized by the other nationalist groups. It intensified its activities and soon it became evident that the Viet Minh was not to be eclipsed by the Dong Minh. Due to constant mutual quarrels the latter organization did not constitute a really united front, and the statuie of its leaders was insufficient to make a big impression on the Vietnamese population. This lack of coherence, the obstruction it encountered on the part of Viet Minh adherents in Tonkin and the absence of any activity prevented the Dong Minh from providing the Chinese with the information they wanted. Consequently the latter were not impressed either. At this psychologically opportune moment Nguyen Ai Quoc, who during his captivity was kept

informed of this state of affairs, proffered his services to Chang Fa-k'uei, promising that, if released from prison, he would build up an espionage network in Tonkin. The Chinese general agreed to the proposal, and lest the government in Chungking should disapprove of any deal with a reputed communist he told him to change his name: from that moment onwards Nguyen Ai Quoc was known as Ho Chi Minh. He and his adherents obtained arms and money from the Chinese and they were allowed to use the facilities of the military training school at Liu-chou as well as to recruit followers among the Vietnamese emigrant community.

With the network of communist cells in Tonkin at his disposal Ho Chi Minh was promptly able to give the Chinese the information they desired. At the same time the resistance movement extended its field of activity. In addition to the original fighting group, led by the Tho-leader Chu Van Tan, Vo Nguyen Giap organized new units, and in the course of 1943 guerrilla bases were established in the provinces of Bac Kan and Thai Nguyen. Although they were poorly armed, they received a thorough military training based on the experience of the Chinese communist forces in the war against Japan. But apart from making preparations for an armed struggle the Viet Minh was particularly keen on influencing the population, since the ultimate success of the liberation movement depended on the attitude of the masses. Occasionally intimidation was resorted to, and several Vietnamese who collaborated with either the French or the Japanese were assassinated, but a more important method of winning the population to its cause was a policy aiming at encouraging sentiments of national unity and solidarity and giving the people the idea that the Viet Minh was the only organization able to guarantee a better future. For this reason the Viet Minh made use of the general discontent among the rural masses over the rice requisitions. Peasants were urged to resist, and although the Japanese were ultimately responsible for the requisitions as such, the Viet Minh propagandists did not fail to stress the fact that the French regime was carrying out the scheme. Thus the Vietnamese were prevailed upon to regard French colonialism as unacceptable, not only because it oppressed the people, but also because it had opted for Japan in the global war between democracy, represented by the Allies, and fascism. That the Viet Minh supported the Allied powers in this war was one of its most significant trump-cards.

The success of the liberation movement alarmed the French authorities to a high degree and towards the close of 1943 they embarked upon a course to counter the challenge. First, the colonial regime contacted the agents, in Kun-ming, of the Free French Committee in order to persuade them jointly to avert the danger which Vietnamese nationalism posed to French rule over Indochina; in the Second World War the adherents of Pétain and the followers of De Gaulle might have landed in two different camps, but *vis-à-vis* the Vietnamese they presented a common front. In view of the Chinese protection of the Viet Minh the French had to act in

an extremely subtle way, but nevertheless the Gaullist representatives attempted to frighten the Chinese government by informing her of their suspicion that the man whom she supported so lavishly was no other than the renowned communist Nguyen Ai Quoc. The Kwo Min Tang authorities did not react, however, in such a way as the French hoped, since Ho Chi Minh and his organization proved to be irreplaceable as informants on Japanese troop movements.

At about the same time the French intensified their military activities, by patrolling the roads more energetically, setting up police posts in areas infiltrated by the resistance movement and sending army units into the villages so as to prevent the population from supplying the guerrilla fighters. The Viet Minh was not yet sufficiently powerful to defend itself successfully against this display of French armed violence; consequently it avoided the battle and withdrew to its original stronghold in the inaccessible and rugged mountain provinces of North-East Tonkin. The liberation movement made a deep impression, however, on the population, and although in the areas where the French regime was restored freedom fighters were occasionally denounced to the police and other instances of individual collaboration with the French occurred, the general mood was one of increasing hostility to French colonialism.

On the whole the French attempts to check the Viet Minh worked the wrong way. The fact that the Gaullists proved to be in league with the Decoux regime against the Vietnamese convinced the latter that there was no essential distinction between the Free and the Vichy French. When, moreover, in a statement on 8 December 1943, De Gaulle stressed that France would return to Indochina, the Free French Committee openly joined the enemies of Vietnamese nationalism. The reply came on 4 June 1944. In a proclamation of the Viet Minh it was explicitly stated that the Indochinese peoples would liberate themselves from the Japanese military fascists, but that they would not exchange their liberation for French Gaullist control. As a result of his disappointment with the attitude of De Gaulle, Ho Chi Minh turned to the United States: American policy was anti-colonial in nature and with regard to Indochina it was strongly biased against France. Contacts were established with American agents and, as an ally in the war with Japan the Viet Minh was, unofficially, provided with American arms.

A more important negative result of the French actions against the Viet Minh was related to China's attitude. The Chinese feared that any reinforcement of French authority would diminish their chances to influence developments in Tonkin once the war was over, and now that it was evident that Japan was going to lose the war, they were more than ever interested in creating an effective tool for that purpose. Hence Chang Fa-k'uei attempted to breathe new life into the moribund Dong Minh in order to forge a really powerful, Chinese-controlled, coalition of Vietnamese nationalist organizations. He also set out to bring the Viet Minh

to heel which, although formally a part of the D.M.H., had in fact gone its own way. As an instrument to gather information and to carry on espionage in Tonkin the Viet Minh was highly important to China, but its independent behaviour irritated the Kwo Min Tang authorities who were also disturbed by the French hints at Ho Chi Minh's communism. On 25 March 1944 Chang Fa-k'uei convened a new conference of Vietnamese political leaders at Liu-chou, where he finally put them under strong pressure in order to achieve more efficient co-operation. At this meeting the Viet Minh came under heavy fire of the other nationalists who feared its impetus, but since the Chinese wanted both wings of the nationalist movement to join forces they had no choice but to comply. The anti-Viet Minh nationalists, having only their anti-communist orientation to their credit, existed merely by the grace of Kwo Min Tang protection, while the Viet Minh could not afford to lose Chinese arms and financial assistance. Thus an agreement was arrived at, and on the 28th a provisional republican government was formed in which Nguyen Hai Than, Vu Hong Khanh, Ho Chi Minh and three others participated. Its programme aimed at liquidating Japanese military control as well as French colonialism.

Yet this second Chinese attempt to create a united front of Vietnamese nationalist parties and to neutralize the influence of the Viet Minh by incorporating it in a wider organization failed as dismally as the first effort. In spite of the agreement to co-operate closely, the coalition was marred by mutual suspicions and constant quarrels, and the V.N.Q.D.D. all but officially withdrew from it. Neither the V.N.Q.D.D., nor the other anti-Viet Minh orientated groups were successful, moreover, in producing any noteworthy activity for the cause of Vietnam's liberation. As a result the Viet Minh continued to be the sole resistance organization on Vietnamese soil; it was the only one actively engaged in carrying on propaganda among the masses, and the only one maintaining guerrilla fighters in the field. The Viet Minh was able to increase its prestige with the population by operating under the banner of the provisional republican government; in reality this government-in-exile was a still-born child, but the Vietnamese public neither knowing this nor noticing any activity except that of the Viet Minh, came to identify it with the Viet Minh.

The resistance movement extended its influence rapidly. In July 1944 Vo Nguyen Giap proposed to start a general rebellion, but according to Ho Chi Minh the time was not yet ripe: for the moment he considered it more opportune to exhaust the French in a guerrilla war. Viet Minh fighters infiltrated into large areas in Tonkin, recruited new adherents, attacked French patrols and isolated posts and carried on intense propaganda among the indigenous soldiers of the colonial army, inducing them to desert. Towards the end of 1944 the guerrilla entered a new phase, caused by the collapse of the Chinese front in Hunan and Kwangsi. In the summer the Japanese armies launched a great offensive around Ch'ang-sha in a

southerly direction, and in September they pierced through the Chinese defences and opened up the routes to Kuei-lin and Liu-chou. This rapid Japanese advance threatened the sanctuaries of the Vietnamese exiles in China and hundreds of them fled to the south, and in October Ho Chi Minh returned to Tonkin. Protected by the fighting units of Chu Van Tan he established his headquarters in Thai Nguyen province. It was here that the decision was made to intensify the struggle for Vietnam's liberation. There was a marked increase in the number of guerrilla attacks which, technically well-planned, were carried out with great cool-headedness by groups consisting of fifty to a hundred men. In November the French retaliated with a series of military actions in order to stop any further crumbling of their authority in Upper Tonkin, but they were unable to repeat the performance of the previous year. Supported by the population which was thoroughly disgusted with French and Japanese domination, the guerrilla forces of the Viet Minh overran the countryside of Thai Nguyen, Bac Kan, Tuyen Quang, Bac Giang, Cao Bang, Ha Giang and Lang Son, and early in 1945 they established a 'liberated zone' out of the territories which they controlled. Outside Tonkin the Viet Minh was active in the Annamese provinces of Nghe An and Quang Ngai, and even in Cochin China guerrilla actions, of an isolated nature, became more frequent.

The Japanese Indochina Garrison Army was hardly involved in the struggle, although the military authorities witnessed the developments with increasing anxiety. Since under Japanese supervision the French regime was primarily responsible for law and order, the French suffered most from the Vietnamese guerrilla attacks. This was not because the Viet Minh was more anti-French than anti-Japanese, or because it seemed less risky to assault the French; the latter were, in fact, better prepared and equipped to fight the underground movement and in terms of mercilessly dealing with political adversaries they were not easily outdone by the Japanese. But the Viet Minh had to adapt its fighting strategy to the unique political set-up in Indochina, with its dual structure of foreign authority. When, however, Japan liquidated French colonial rule in March 1945 the Viet Minh immediately changed its tactics by directly attacking the Japanese enemy which, until that moment, it had sought to weaken indirectly by causing harm to its French accomplice.

THE MALAYAN PEOPLE'S ANTI-JAPANESE ARMY

In Malaya, with its multi-racial population, the total absence of any common political goal and, consequently, the almost complete non-existence of any inter-racial co-operation, the Japanese occupation did not bring the ethnic communities any closer than they had been under British

rule. Since its efforts to win the confidence of the population were concentrated primarily on the Malays and, to a lesser extent, the Indians, the military administration did not, on the whole, encounter great difficulty in inducing both racial groups to collaborate with or, at least, to acquiesce passively in Japanese control. Several aspects of Japanese policy, for example the harsh treatment of Tamil coolies, caused great discontent among the Indians, and the political leaders highly resented the fact that they were used only to furnish evidence of Japan's pro-Indian attitude. But such grievances were not sufficiently strong to create an atmosphere of open hostility *vis-à-vis* Japan; in addition it was also realized that numerically the Indians were too small a minority to embark successfully upon any anti-Japanese adventure. While many Indians collaborated with the Japanese, most of them did not take sides, and only a few joined the underground resistance.

The Malay community accounted for about half of Malaya's population, but due to the Japanese policy of ingratiating themselves primarily with the Malays, it had few reasons to be anti-Japanese. In spite of the fact that the Malays, too, regretted Japanese behaviour in some respects, the traditional elite and the mass of the population did not, in general, consider Japan a worse master than Great Britain had been in the past. In the set-up of Malayan society their position, particularly in relation to the non-Malay communities, seemed as adequately safeguarded by Japanese rule as it had been under British colonial domination. As a result the overwhelming majority of Malay politicians and civil servants was not inclined to be drawn into any illegal activity, and even less to participate in the anti-Japanese resistance movement. Only a few Malays used their collaboration with the authorities as a cover for some vague underground activity. Among them were some members of the traditional elite, such as the Sultan of Pahang; they were less motivated by nationalist ideals than by the desire for the British to return as protectors of Malay interests. There were also the more or less radical leaders, anti-feudal in orientation, who were not haunted by the fear that self-rule for Malaya would irreparably damage Malay interests or cause the Malays to be overwhelmed by the Chinese and Indians, but who were inspired by the concept of nationalism, be it Malay rather than Malayan nationalism. The most prominent among the latter was Ibrahim Yaacob, the commander of the Peta auxiliary forces, who maintained secret contacts with the communist guerrilla movement and drew up plans to oppose the Japanese more forcefully. But they were a tiny minority and they had hardly any influence among the Malay masses. Still fewer in number were those Malays who took an active part in the Chinese and communist-led anti-Japanese resistance.

The Chinese had every reason to be profoundly anti-Japanese. Their country of origin had been brutally attacked and during the Japanese conquest of Malaya they had been the victims of a wave of indiscriminate killing which culminated in the Singapore atrocities of February 1942.

This, and the constant exposure to extortion, intimidation and oppressive measures caused the Chinese to harbour a violent hatred for the Japanese. There were a few who co-operated with the Japanese authorities, but their number was very small compared with that of Malay collaborators. It was among the Chinese that underground associations developed in the towns, while there also emerged an armed resistance movement in the countryside. Since the rural districts were mainly inhabited by Malays, it was not in the populated areas but in the jungle that they established their guerrilla bases.

Anti-Japanese resistance in Malaya was not only almost exclusively Chinese, it was also almost exclusively in communist hands. The Kwo Min Tang organized a few armed groups, but they were rather small and ineffective. Facing the disruption of their community and the constant dangers to which the Chinese, individually as well as collectively, were exposed as a result of Japanese persecutions, the traditional *élite* lacked the necessary qualities to meet the challenge. The only organization capable of providing the hard-pressed Chinese with efficient leadership as well as with the means of adequately coping with the problems of an emergency of unprecedented magnitude, was the Malayan Communist Party. In the previous years the M.C.P. had already been successful in luring the younger generation away from the Kwo Min Tang, but during the Japanese occupation it proved that it commanded sufficient authority to show the Chinese the way to fight their oppressors actively and give direction to large-scale resistance operations.

The nucleus of the guerrilla forces was formed by communists who immediately after the collapse of British control took to the hills and jungles, where they were joined by young Chinese men and women fleeing from Japanese terrorism in the urban areas. Soon a political association was formed which became known as the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Union (M.P.A.J.U.) and which covered the underground organizations in the towns and the armed military groups in the jungle, the so-called Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (M.P.A.J.A.). The word 'Malayan' intended to stress the multi-racial character of the resistance movement, such as the leaders would have wished it to be, but although a few Malays and a number of Indians participated in it, it was in practice almost entirely Chinese, controlled, furthermore, by the Chinese-dominated M.C.P. The armed forces were divided into territorial commands, subdivided into a number of smaller groups based on camps scattered in the jungle. The civilian wing of the resistance movement, in the towns and villages, had to establish contacts with the Chinese population in order to induce them to support the guerrilla fighters by sending supplies and recruits and gathering information; furthermore it was charged with carrying on anti-Japanese propaganda, raising funds for the party and committing acts of sabotage.

In its initial stage the resistance movement suffered a heavy loss when on

1 September 1942 the Japanese raided a meeting of the Central Committee of the M.C.P. with commanders of the M.P.A.J.A. in the Batu Caves near Kuala Lumpur. In the ensuing fight most of the top communist leaders were killed or captured, except secretary-general Lai Teck, who had called the conference but failed to appear. It is a mystery whether this incident, which was responsible for the removal of a great many older party officials was due to just bad luck, or to a secret understanding between Lai Teck and the Kenpeitai: several years later he was accused of having been a traitor and a double agent. Certain is that from this moment onwards Lai Teck was the undisputed leader of the Malayan Communist Party and that the cautious guerrilla strategy, such as he seemed to have advocated, was indeed adopted.

In the light of the military and political conditions the cautious policy of the resistance organization was so logical that, if Lai Teck should have engineered the elimination of a great number of Central Committee members, this issue is hardly likely to have been a source of friction between him and them. The troops in Malaya constituted the strongest army Japan had at her disposal in South-East Asia, and overtly challenging its power in pitched battles would have been suicidal. Furthermore, the resistance fighters could not, as the Vietnamese or the Filipinos, rely on the majority of the population — a vital necessity for success in any guerrilla war. Since the Indians did not show much interest, and the Malays, in general, were hostile towards a movement which was Chinese and communist-led, it was only from among the Chinese that the guerrillas could obtain the help which enabled them to persevere. Their policy of carefully modified resistance has sometimes been ascribed to the communists' desire to reinforce their position and reserve their strength for a future struggle with the British. There is no doubt that the M.C.P. was aware that it would be confronted with an attempt at restoring British domination once Japan was defeated, and that its actions to extend its authority among the Chinese population and to organize a large and effective underground movement were partly motivated by such considerations. Everywhere in South-East Asia it was, in fact, the policy of the nationalist leaders, whether communist or not, whether collaborating with the Japanese or resisting them, to utilize the opportunities of the Japanese regime for strengthening their own position *vis-à-vis* the Western colonial powers. But speculations of this nature were certainly not the major factor accounting for the cautious tactics of the Malayan communists, who were primarily guided by the realization that any policy of rushing into a full-scale engagement with the Japanese could not but end in a terrible disaster.

Consequently they concentrated their efforts upon building up an effective resistance movement, with a properly organized supply system which guaranteed the provisioning of the guerrillas with food and other necessities and a well-developed courier system for maintaining the essential contacts between the bases in the jungle and the underground cells in the

towns. They set out, moreover, to win the confidence of the Chinese community. The military activities of the M.P.A.J.A. were restricted to committing sabotage against lines of communication, carrying out small attacks, and eliminating individual Japanese and collaborators. Among the latter were many Malay policemen and village heads, but also a number of Chinese who were regarded as traitors. There was a strong element of intimidation in the actions against Chinese who failed to be sufficiently co-operative or who were suspected of being agents for the Japanese, but these terrorist aspects of its conduct were not the only factor responsible for the extensive power the guerrilla movement was able to wield over the Chinese population.

Many people who joined the ranks of the M.P.A.J.A. had been driven into the hills and jungle by Japanese persecutions; and detached from the traditional sources of communal protection they were given a new sense of security as members of the anti-Japanese resistance organization. Others, trying to escape from the economic misery in the towns, settled along the fringes of the jungle to find a living by growing food on small patches of land. These 'squatters' were easily influenced by the guerrillas, who induced them into co-operation. But apart from those who were most directly involved, the Chinese community in general felt much attracted towards the M.C.P., and this not in the first place because of its commu nism. As the leader of resistance against the Japanese, the party acquired a tremendous prestige among the younger generation, based on the proud realization that the guerrilla movement was mainly a Chinese undertaking and that in the war against Japan it was a partner of the Allies, a coincidence which the communists did not fail to emphasize strongly. But the older Chinese were also greatly impressed, because in its propaganda and activities the M.C.P. gave them the idea that it was the sole organization which properly understood Chinese grievances and demands. The liquidation of Chinese collaborators and the occasional extortionist practices of over-eager communist money-collectors did not, on the whole, impair the image of the party as the only line of defence the Chinese had at their disposal against Japanese oppression. During the occupation, the Chinese population at all levels formed a large reservoir of potential supporters, providing the guerrillas with recruits, food, clothes, money, medical supplies, shelter and information. In a similar way the aborigines, meeting in the resistance fighters the first people who really cared about them, gave them valuable assistance, not only by supplying them with food but also by teaching them the basic principles of life in the jungle, as well as some convenient fighting tricks.

Although the activities of the M.C.P. amounted, in practice, to championing the cause of the Chinese, the political programme of the party, issued in February 1943, was not communalist in nature. Apart from advocating such items as democratic freedoms, educational facilities in all vernaculars, the improvement of living conditions, the development of

industry, commerce and agriculture and the abolition of high taxation, it suggested as its major proposal the establishment of an independent Malayan democratic republic with a government in which all ethnic communities were to be adequately represented. Neither was it an obvious communist manifesto, in spite of the phrasing of the clause on the confiscation of 'fascist' property, or the recommendation to make the M.P.A.J.A. the core of a national army after the war. In evaluating the merits of this programme it is irrelevant to point out that any compliance with the demand for an administrative system in which the Chinese were not to be deprived of full political rights would inevitably lead to Chinese domination and, because of the powerful position of the M.C.P., most probably to communist rule as well. In view of the economic and political conditions prevalent in Malaya such a development was likely, but because of this possibility the plan for establishing a political structure providing for equal rights for all ethnic groups did not necessarily constitute a sinister communist move to bring the country under Chinese and communist control; in the same years the British Colonial Office was, after all, devising a new constitution along similar lines. It is highly improbable that the communists would not have been aware of the ultimate welcome consequences of what they were demanding, but a party which was overwhelmingly Chinese could hardly be expected not to press for a greater share of the Chinese community in the administration. Whatever the long-term intentions or the immediate tactical considerations behind the programme of the M.C.P., it was significant that it broke with the traditional China-orientated sentiments of the Malayan Chinese, focussed their political consciousness upon Malaya, called for racial unity and stressed the need of a multi-racial governmental set-up. As such this programme was the first document issued by any major political organization in Malaya's history which gave expression to genuine Malayan nationalism.

In so far as this emphasis on multi-racialism had been an attempt to induce the other communities into co-operating with the Chinese, and thus forge some kind of national front against Japan, the policy of the M.C.P. was an utter failure since any reference to such ideals in the Chinese sphere could not but strike terror into the Malays. Traditionally worried about their position, the Malays were strongly disturbed by the resistance movement as such, in the first place because it was a Chinese organization and an effective one at that. An additional cause for alarm among the Malay ruling classes was the communist leadership of the guerrilla forces. Furthermore anti-Chinese sentiments were stirred up by the fact that Malay civil servants were occasionally liquidated as collaborators. Judging collaboration with Japan as not fundamentally different from their former co-operation with the British, the Malays in general considered such incidents ordinary murder and refused to see them in the same light as the Chinese did, namely as exploits to eliminate the accomplices of the enemy. Lacking the necessary organization as well as the capability to administer

and control an independent state on their own, they strongly resented the Chinese insistence on independence for Malaya, and particularly their demand of a multi-racial governmental structure. The failure of the majority of the Malays to regard the Japanese as enemies was instrumental in fostering the view, among the Chinese, that the Malays as a whole were collaborationist, and although incorrect, this opinion tended to drive the two major communities further apart. Malayan nationalism did not yet exist to any great extent and neither the emergency situation created by the Japanese occupation, nor the propaganda on its behalf by the guerrilla movement or the Malayan Communist Party were capable of bringing such ideals to life.

Although the government in London was willing to include the principle of equal political rights for all Malayans into the country's post-war constitution, the demand of a free Malaya was not welcomed by the British when they made contacts with the guerrilla organization, and as a result the setting up of an independent republic was left in abeyance in the agreement between the Allied High Command and the M.P.A.J.A. This agreement was the outcome of the activities of the Ceylon-based British military organization, known as Force 136, created to establish relations with the underground movements in Thailand, Burma and Malaya, and to train reconnaisance parties for that purpose. From May 1943 onwards a few liaison teams landed in the country, either by parachute or by submarine, and made contacts with the resistance organizations. The British were not interested in any one particular guerrilla force and, apart from establishing relations with the M.P.A.J.A., they also located a Kwo Min Tang-led group near the Thai border and succeeded in raising a small Malay armed organization in Northern Perak. But the communist resistance movement was by far the most effective, the best disciplined and the strongest — some 4 to 5,000 as against the estimated 500 under the banner of the K.M.T. In view of the requirements of the war against the Japanese it was logical that Force 136 concentrated its efforts primarily on the M.P.A.J.A. In spite of some mutual distrust, relations were on the whole excellent and the British officers, who greatly admired the qualities of the Chinese jungle fighters, not only prevented serious clashes between the K.M.T. guerrillas and the communists, but also, after careful negotiations, drew up an agreement, in January 1944, in which the M.P.A.J.A. pledged itself to accept instructions from the Allied supreme commander. It was the major aim of this accord to co-ordinate the military activities in the war against Japan, and for this purpose the British undertook to supply arms, ammunition and money which was to be used for acts of sabotage and small attacks, but mainly for a grand-scale assault on the Japanese at a date later to be fixed. Apart from the clause in which the M.P.A.J.A. promised to help in maintaining law and order after a Japanese withdrawal, questions of post-war policy were not mentioned.

The guerrillas had every reason to be satisfied with this deal which, in exchange for their willingness to be placed under the orders of the Allied command and to temporarily 'freeze' their demand of an independent republic, supplied them with arms and money, but also recognized them as a partner in the war against Japan. This official confirmation of what the resistance movement had always been claiming tremendously enhanced its prestige in the eyes of the Chinese masses. As far as the political implications were concerned the British had no guarantee that the M.P.A.J.A. would adhere to the terms of the agreement, but without an agreement they would not have had any security either as to what the guerrilla organization might be undertaking after a Japanese defeat. Militarily, however, the agreement was of great value for the British, because to their effectives an extremely well-organized guerrilla force was added which, increasing in number to around 7,000 by early 1945, and for the time being engaged in the small, though brutal, skirmishes of a jungle war, held itself in readiness for launching an offensive against the Japanese army at the same moment as the British were to carry out a military invasion.

THE HUKBALAHAPS

In the Philippines the anti-Japanese underground movement was structurally not a unit as it was in Vietnam or Malaya. Instead there were numerous local organizations which operated independently and with little co-ordination, although they all expressed loyalty to the Commonwealth government and the United States and most of them followed the short-wave orders of MacArthur's headquarters. Partly the geographical conditions accounted for this situation, but not exclusively so: a few groups, in the Visayas for example, extended their activities over more than one island, while in Luzon on the other hand, several armed units were in the field. The fragmentation, unique in South-East Asia, of the Philippine guerrilla movement was also caused by the fact that this was the only country under Japanese control where the pre-war military element played a substantial role in the resistance. Various groups originated with detachments of the former defence forces which had refused to comply with the general surrender of May 1942, and quite a few of them were led by American officers. Apart from their customary feelings of rivalry, if not disdain, towards civilian organizations, it was the strictly non-political nature of these traditional military circles and, in particular, their almost indestructable optimism as to the final outcome of the war which caused them more or less to disregard the need to organize a guerrilla movement on a nation-wide or, in Luzon, island-wide basis. Of the anti-Japanese armed forces in the Philippines only the so-called Huks were led by politicians who, with their experience as members of pre-war left-orientated opposition parties, had a better insight into the totality of problems confronting them, than

those military and civilian underground leaders for whom the killing of Japanese constituted the sole aim of Philippine resistance.

Yet, in spite of its lack of coherence, resistance in the Philippines was more redoubtable than anywhere else in the region, and the anti-Japanese guerrilla the most ferocious of South-East Asia. Primarily responsible for this was the interplay of Filipino nationalist fervour on the one hand and Japanese ruthlessness on the other. The general mood of the population was so vehemently anti-Japanese that it provoked the military authorities to establish a regime of unparalleled harshness and unrestrained brutality, to which the Filipinos, in their turn, could not but retaliate with increasing implacability and vindictiveness. Secondly, none of the guerrilla organizations harboured any anti-American sentiments in addition to their anti-Japanese feelings, and although the Huks had some doubts as to the intentions of the United States, they tended to be reassured by the realization that the Filipino ruling elite was too much compromised by its collaboration with Japan to become a suitable instrument in any post-war attempt to prolong American control. Consequently in the Philippines the issue was not confused, as it was in other occupied South-East Asian territories, by the expectation of the resistance movement that it might have to fight the former colonial power after the withdrawal of the Japanese. Since, moreover, the masses were staunchly pro-American and strongly convinced that Japan would be defeated, the guerrilla fighters were so sure of having the full confidence of the population that they did not, in general, feel the urge to proceed cautiously, as did the Viet Minh and the M.P.A.J.A., who devoted a substantial part of their energy to influencing the people. This factor, too, accounted for the impetuosity and the fierceness of the Philippine resistance movement.

In Luzon the underground armed struggle started immediately after the withdrawal of MacArthur's forces to Bataan, in the other islands immediately after Wainwright's surrender; in fact it was, in many cases, the direct continuation of the fighting during the Japanese conquest. As in other South-East Asian territories there were many inducements to join the resistance movement: fear of Japanese terrorism, unemployment in the towns, the economic dislocation and social misery in the rural areas, and genuine patriotism. There were also the prospects of plunder and banditry, and due to the absence of a single command it was not altogether easy to keep under control those who participated on less respectable grounds: of all the anti-Japanese guerrilla wars in South-East Asia the one in the Philippines produced the greatest excesses. This was not only the result, however, of the lack of disciplinary and supervisory powers in the resistance movement as a whole, but also, and primarily, of the vicious circle of escalating mutual savagery in which the Japanese and the Filipinos were caught. No quarter was usually given, and those who were immediately killed in any engagement were the most fortunate, since Filipino captives were handed over to the sadists of the Kenpeitai and Japanese prisoners of

the guerrilla forces used to be tortured to death. The fact, finally, that the great majority of the ruling classes and the political elite collaborated with Japan also contributed to giving the Philippine guerrilla a more violent nature; because of the country's unique pre-war political development such politicians were more easily considered traitors or enemies of the people than in other South-East Asian colonies where their policies were likely to be excused as a tactical move in the anti-colonial, nationalist struggle. The Philippine guerrilla fighters had less consideration for collaborating political leaders than elsewhere in the region: when still Commissioner of Justice Laurel was critically wounded in an attempt on his life in June 1943, and a month later the publisher of the greatest Manila newspaper was shot dead. The smaller collaborators, the spies, informers and secret agents were as summarily dealt with by the resistance movement in the Philippines as they were by the Viet Minh or the M.P.A.J.A.

It was the major aim of the guerrilla organizations permanently to harass the Japanese and weaken their power, in order to prepare the ground for an American military invasion. At the same time they supplied the American headquarters in Australia with information: early in 1943 contacts were established by radio and submarine, enabling the underground movement to send in reports on the strength of the Japanese forces and the location of their defence works. MacArthur, on his part, despatched agents, arms, ammunition and medicine to the guerrilla outfits and gave orders as to the sabotage to be committed and other actions to be undertaken. During the years of the Japanese occupation some 300,000 resistance fighters were active one way or another, of whom around 100,000 were organized by American officers. Most of them operated in Luzon.

By far the best organized and most effective of the guerrilla forces was the *Hukbalahap*, which emerged in the provinces of Central Luzon. In the period of confusion immediately after the Japanese conquest the peasants took over the lands of those landlords who had fled to Manila, and started to build up a unified movement. After some weeks of preparatory activities a conference which lasted for a week from 29 March 1942 onwards, was held somewhere in Pampanga province. At this meeting it was decided to establish a 'People's Anti-Japanese Army' or *Hukbo ñg Bayan Laban sa Hapon*, with Luis Taruc and Casto Alejandrino, close associates of the socialist politician Pedro Abad Santos, as most prominent leaders. The aims of the new organization were to create a large and strong resistance force, to attack the Japanese, to discredit the Filipino collaborators and to develop the economic resources for the benefit of the people.

The Hukbalahap was the only organization in the Philippines which fitted the general pattern of South-East Asia's guerrilla movements: it did not confine itself to the anti-Japanese struggle as such. Led by left-orientated intellectuals it also gave expression to the strong social revolutionary sentiments which had developed during the 1930s among the exploited rural masses of Central Luzon. The emergency situation of the war years

and the Huk organization offered the radical peasant leaders the opportunity as well as the instrument to fight social injustice and tackle the economic problems, much in the same way as the Japanese occupation and the guerrillas contributed to strengthening the position of the Vietnamese revolutionaries and the Malayan communists. But while, due to the continuing presence of French repressive control in Vietnam and because of the far greater strength of the Japanese armed forces and the racial differences in Malaya, the latter were unable, during the first few years of Japanese rule at any rate, to proceed beyond making propaganda for their cause, influencing the population, building up an effective organization, committing acts of sabotage, killing Japanese and liquidating collaborators, the Huks were successful, from the beginning, in carrying out their social and political programme.

The collapse of the existing system of local government in Central Luzon, caused by the evacuation of many officials *cum* wealthy landowners during the Japanese invasion, gave the radical leaders the chance to assume control over the administrative apparatus in large areas of Pampanga, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, and Laguna and in some parts of Tayabas and Pangasinan. The Japanese field command did not have enough troops at its disposal to suppress the movement which was enthusiastically followed by the great mass of the rural population and which in the first months of the Japanese occupation already numbered around 20,000, of whom some 4,000 were adequately armed. As under these circumstances the landlords thought it more prudent not to return to their posts and estates, the Huks were free to carry out the social reforms they envisaged. Based on the peasants, the tenants and the labourers who constituted its driving force, the Hukbalahap unchained an agrarian revolution in Central Luzon which aimed at breaking the economic power of the great landlords and at destroying as much as possible the pre-war social and political structure.

As a rule the Huks neither confiscated the holdings of medium-sized landowners, nor deprived the economic middle groups of their privileges. It was their intention to win these classes over to their cause, this being in accordance with their efforts to establish a united front of all social and political forces against Japan. Such a policy was conditioned by the necessity to build up a powerful resistance movement, rather than by any adherence to the then general line of communist tactics. Neither were the revolutionary developments as such the result of communist activity. Because of their past exploitation of the peasants, their greed and their corruption, the great landlords had incurred the hatred of the masses, and this acrimonious feeling became even more profound when the majority of the ruling elite turned out to be collaborating with the Japanese. The communists and other leftist intellectuals were not the instigators of what was essentially a spontaneous eruption of social discontent and nationalist indignation, but once the rural insurrection in Central Luzon had started,

they were, of course, the best qualified people to take the lead and provide the movement with an ideological basis and a proper organization. The exact position of the communists among the Huk leaders was not easily definable, since there did not exist such an evident connexion between the communist party and the commanding body of the guerrilla movement as between the M.C.P. and the M.P.A.J.A. in Malaya, or between the Indochinese Communist Party and the Viet Minh.

Yet, whatever the outward appearances, the Philippine Communist Party, throughout the war years led by Vicente Lava as secretary-general, played a significant part in shaping the structural set-up, the political and social programme and the military tactics of the Huks. Because of their past as leaders of an illegal party under the Commonwealth regime, the communists had accumulated more experience in underground activities than the other left-wing politicians. Furthermore they were, in general, better disciplined and far more capable organizers. The great enthusiasm which the Hukbalahap movement aroused among the rural masses was, of course, the main condition for success, but for the rest its effectiveness as a fighting force was derived from precisely those characteristics which were the natural features of any communist, or communist-led, group: organizational skill, clear-cut ideas and a rigid discipline.

The Huks recruited their followers from among the impoverished masses, while they obtained their arms by ambushing and killing Japanese patrols and raiding Japanese arsenals. They extended their hold over Central Luzon which virtually became Huk territory, with Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija their main bastions. With their numbers steadily increasing to some 30,000, they were able to operate in large groups, fight the Japanese in hit-and-run battles and undertake the most daring attacks, even in the near vicinity or within the city-limits of Manila.

The widespread armed resistance, whether Huk or not, made the Japanese resort to the most barbarous reprisals. Prisoners or suspects were tortured before they were done to death, and for every Japanese slaughtered in an ambush at least ten Filipinos were usually picked up at random to be massacred in public. But although spreading fear among the population, such savagery and indiscriminate terrorism stirred up an even greater hatred of the Japanese regime, and far from intimidating the masses or causing a breach between the people and the guerrilla forces this cruelty only contributed to strengthening the fighting spirit of the underground movement. Neither were the Japanese capable of persuading the resistance organizations to lay down their arms by ruse or by a show of kindness. Early in 1943 they released Guillermo Capadocia, a top communist leader whom they had arrested on entering Manila, and ordered him to induce the Huks into surrendering. Once in guerrilla territory, however, he informed the authorities that he had been 'kidnapped', whereupon the Japanese immediately killed Crisanto Evangelista, the other major communist whom they held as hostage. They planned to execute Pedro

Abad Santos as well, but he was saved by the intervention on his behalf of high-ranking collaborating politicians.

Shortly after the installation of the new Philippine government in October 1943, Laurel proposed an amnesty for all who were engaged in guerrilla activities, but this move was equally unsuccessful. Surrendered guerrillas would have to renounce their allegiance to the United States and the Commonwealth government and this the resistance organizations were not prepared to do, since any recognition of the Japanese-sponsored regime was considered incompatible with Philippine national dignity. The Huks, moreover, had an additional reason not to comply: to them the collaborators represented the major enemies of the socio-economic reforms they were carrying out.

In the territories they dominated the Huks had taken over the land of the wealthy landowners and distributed it among the peasants and tenants; they deprived the landlord class of its economic prerogatives as well as of the means of political control. Furthermore they set up agricultural co-operative societies and schools. In the areas which were not under their direct control they killed a great many members of the traditional elite who were, accurately or not, accused of being collaborators. They also frequently raided the estates of large landowners to obtain supplies for themselves and the population and, in particular, to prevent rice from being traded to the Japanese. As a result of their policies, which met the basic needs of the rural masses, they gained widespread popularity, in spite of the occasional brutalities to which they resorted — but their victims were usually those people who, in the eyes of the downtrodden population, fully deserved their fate anyway. The dominant classes were greatly frightened by the social revolutionary movement in the countryside, and the Laurel government did not hesitate to send in its police force, the Philippine Constabulary, alongside with the Japanese troops to fight the Huks. But the traditional elite was not the only group which was disturbed: among the non-Huk guerrilla organizations, particularly those sponsored by the American armed forces, there was also a strong dislike of the Huks, and in many cases bloody clashes occurred between the two wings of the underground movement.

The Japanese were not so much interested in the social implications of the Hukbalahap, but more in the fact that it gave rise to a guerrilla movement which constituted the most dangerous challenge to their domination facing them in any South-East Asian country. It caused tremendous losses to the Japanese forces and substantially weakened their control over the country: in fact the Huks prevented Japan from effectively dominating large areas of Central Luzon, and one of their most notable achievements was that they succeeded in almost completely foiling all Japanese attempts, undertaken every year, to seize the rice crop. The Huk territory became, moreover, one of the safest hiding places for American airmen who had

been forced down, as well as for Filipinos who had managed to escape from the Kenpeitai.

Unfamiliar with the basic requirements of successfully combating a guerrilla force the Japanese failed entirely to suppress the resistance movement. They attempted to trap and wipe out guerrilla units in local actions by sending large numbers of troops into a particular area, but the guerrillas vanished among the population and re-appeared in strength after the Japanese had left. Neither threats and reprisals, nor bribery and rewards could usually persuade the people to betray the resistance fighters to the Kenpeitai. Towards the close of 1944 the Hukbalahap was, in fact, the undisputed master of the greater part of Central Luzon, including the towns, while the activities of the other guerrilla groups considerably undermined Japanese power in the other provinces of the main island, as well as on the other islands. It was the major achievement of Philippine resistance, both Huk and non-Huk, that it created a military situation which greatly facilitated the liberation of the country by the American forces, when they launched their offensive to reconquer the Philippines.

2. *The Crumbling of Japanese Power*

THE BATTLE OF IMPHAL-KOHIMA

EARLY in 1944 the Allied offensive against the Japanese-controlled territories reached the outer limits of South-East Asia. In a series of actions in the Bismarck archipelago and on the Admiralty islands American forces succeeded, in the face of stubborn resistance, in encircling and neutralizing the Japanese bases at Rabaul and Kavieng, in February and March. They immediately started building up a base in this area which they used as a stepping-stone for their further advance in a western direction. While Australian troops were marching along the northern coast of New Guinea, American forces effected landings near Hollandia, which they captured on 22 April. A month later, on 27 May, they landed on Biak in the Geelvink Bay: the island was taken towards the end of June after a three weeks' sanguinary battle. Further to the west, American troops conquered Sansapor in the Vogelkop peninsula.

Although well inside South-East Asia proper, Netherlands New Guinea was still the periphery, but in combination with the growing intensity of the Allied air offensive, the American conquest of the Marshall islands in February — on the road to the Philippines — and, for Japan, the unfortunate results of the fighting in the Burma-India frontier area, the Allied penetration into this territory was a clear indication that the Southern Regions had come under direct attack. To counter more effectively this threat to their domination over the most vital part of their empire, the Japanese had already carried out a military reorganization in March 1944. Under Terauchi's Southern Area Command the Seventh Area Army was established which, based on Singapore and commanded by General Kenji Doihara, covered all Japanese forces in Malaya, Sumatra, Java and

Northern Borneo. At about the same time the Southern Area Command was extended to include the Philippines, to which Terauchi moved his headquarters in June.

In early 1944 the Japanese launched their last major offensive in South-East Asia in an effort to forestall an Allied invasion. In August 1943 the Allies created a special South East Asia Command (S.E.A.C.), which formally came in existence in November, with Lord Louis Mountbatten as the supreme commander. Simultaneously several plans for an attack on the Andamans, Arakan and, in combination with Chinese forces, Northern Burma were conceived and the military preparations were well under way. Before the Allied invasion could materialize, however, the Japanese, alarmed at the prospect of a grand-scale offensive, struck first. In February 1944 they attacked British positions in Arakan, but in the battle of the Ngakyedauk Pass they were held and forced to call off their action. These operations had been intended to divert the attention of the Allies from the main Japanese drive, into Manipur, which started later, however, than had been envisaged in the original plan. This major attack came off on 12 March in the Chin Hills near Fort White and along the Chindwin front between Sittaung and Tamanthi: it was directed towards Imphal, the capital of the Indian state of Manipur. The Japanese troops, 85,000 strong, crossed the Indian frontier, forced the British forward troops in the area to withdraw and to fall back on the Imphal-Kohima line early in April.

For a few weeks a critical situation developed for the Allies. The British and Indian forces in the Manipur area were in danger of being cut off from their bases in Bengal, while the Dimapur railway junction in Assam was threatened. It was along this route that most supplies went to General Stilwell's troops who had started to move slowly towards the Hukawng valley. The Japanese were unable, however, to reach these two objectives. From 18 April onwards they besieged Imphal but the British garrison, reinforced and supplied by air, repelled their attacks. The Japanese efforts to storm Kohima and push through to Dimapur failed equally in a series of bloody engagements. The battle lasted for nearly three months, but by the end of June British and Indian troops cleared the road between Kohima and Imphal, and as the frightful losses had considerably sapped the Japanese fighting spirit and neither reinforcements nor supplies had been forthcoming since the beginning of the campaign, the Japanese had to call off their offensive early in July.

Meanwhile the Allies had begun their attack on the Japanese positions. While a mixed Chinese-American force commanded by the American General Joseph Stilwell moved along the newly constructed Ledo road from Assam to the Hukawng valley and from there penetrated deeper into Northern Burma, the 'Chindits' effected an airborne landing at Indaw on the Myitkyina-Mandalay railway on 13 March. It was their task to harass Japanese communications between the two towns and paralyse Japanese resistance. On the whole the Allied advance developed rather slowly. This

was partly due to the reluctance of Chiang K'ai-shek to send his forces from Yünnan into Burma as was agreed when the plans for the campaign were drawn up. It was only on 14 April and after strong American pressure that the Chinese armies crossed the Salween, but they did not seem very eager to take part in the fighting and they were constantly lagging behind, enabling the Japanese to rush in reinforcements. In a swift move towards the Irrawaddy a special unit of Stilwell's forces, in fact an American equivalent of the 'Chindits', occupied the airfield of Myitkyina on 17 May, but the main body of his troops had to fight a long and laborious campaign before the town itself could be captured. It was only on 16 June that Kamaing was taken, while ten days later Mogaung, situated on the railway, was conquered by a brigade of the 'Chindit' special force. The main objective of the offensive was finally reached when, after a siege of two and a half months, the weak Japanese garrison of Myitkyina withdrew and the Allied troops entered the town on 3 August 1944.

NATIONALIST DISAPPOINTMENT AT BURMA'S INDEPENDENCE

The failure of Japan's full-scale offensive on the Assam front and the subsequent Allied advance made a deep impression on the Burmese. Within a few months after the proclamation of independence, in August 1943, it had become clear that Burma was pseudo-independent only. Ba Maw, as head of state, and the ministers of his cabinet went to work with great energy, and many commissions and boards were appointed for a wide variety of purposes, but the government had neither any real authority in the decision-making sphere, nor the power to carry out the rulings she had been permitted to make. Politically as well as economically the Japanese continued almost completely to dominate the scene, and the activities of the military commanders hardly contributed to creating the impression that they were taking Burma's independent status seriously. Although the Burma Area Army Command had refrained from openly opposing Tojo's policy of granting independence, it had been quite unsympathetic towards this new development, and General Isamura, in charge of Burmese-Japanese relations, made it his task ostentatiously to keep the Burmese leaders in a subordinate position. Army officers constantly interfered with Burmese internal affairs, and as a result there was much friction between them and Ba Maw, who often complained and protested, or put up some opposition, and occasionally, particularly in matters of protocol, even succeeded in having his views accepted. On 17 February 1944 an attempt was made, probably by agents of Isamura, to assassinate Ba Maw. This event immediately produced a reassuring declaration of, solidarity with the Burmese leader on the part of the government in Tokyo but for the rest nothing changed.

Ba Maw was still important for the Japanese as an instrument for rallying the Burmese population behind their cause and to effect the much-needed mobilization of manpower. In spite of his efforts in this respect Ba Maw was no more successful, however, as head of state of a formally independent Burma than he had been as the chief executive under the Japanese military administration in the preceding eighteen months. In his new function he had a few more opportunities, mainly in the ceremonial sphere, to intensify his attempts at ingratiating himself with the people. In order to raise the prestige of the regime in the eyes of the traditional-orientated and religious-minded sections of the population he surrounded himself with the symbols of the old kingdom, introduced customs formerly practiced at the royal court, used traditional Burmese terms for denoting several state functions and events, and set out to forge a strong link between the affairs of state and Buddhist faith. He was handicapped, however, by the fact that the mood of the population was perceptibly changing.

The economic deterioration, the pressure of the military requirements, the attempts at regimentation, the tactlessness and harshness of the Japanese authorities and, finally, the awareness that independence, Japanese-style, did not produce the genuine liberation from foreign rule as the Burmese had initially expected Japan to offer, were responsible for a mounting popular hostility. Although he did his best to correct the most glaring abuses, and attempted to shield from the Kenpeitai many of his compatriots who had incurred the wrath of the Japanese, Ba Maw could not fail to be associated in the public mind with the ruthlessness and coercive practices of Japanese domination. His authoritarian behaviour was resented by many politicians as well as by the younger generation, particularly those who compared his attitude in this respect with the efforts of the generally far more subservient Filipino collaborating elite to preserve, outwardly at least, some democratic principles and institutions. So also his religious pretensions and his interest in Buddhism were not likely to be considered as sincere, coming as they did from a thoroughly Westernized man: his frequent mixing with monks and participation in Buddhist ceremonies were only regarded as tactical manoeuvres. Furthermore, the government could hardly boast of any substantial improvement of the economic and social conditions, which might have won her the gratitude of a wide range of people. It was the non-official East Asia Youth League rather than the officially sponsored Circle Army which was credited, and rightly so, with the most impressive achievements in the field of education, health and other social services.

Not only the political leaders critical of Ba Maw were disappointed with the failure of the Japanese to comply with Burma's nationalist demands, but also Ba Maw himself and the non-radical members of his government were clearly dissatisfied, and with redoubled energy they brought this to the notice of the military authorities. In June 1944 Ba Maw published the

second edition of his 'New Order Plan' in which he insisted that the Japanese should refrain from interfering with Burma's internal affairs and that their officials should stop treating Burmese government servants as inferior. About the same time a special commission, which returned from a visit to Japan, Manchukuo, the Philippines and Thailand, suggested in its report issued in August, that Japan take steps to put to an immediate end to the economic grievances which Burma suffered at the hands of the Japanese army. These and similar efforts to persuade the Japanese into making Burmese independence a reality by leaving everything to the Burmese authorities were not merely, and not even primarily, intended to add to Ba Maw's prestige. Of course, Ba Maw realized that he and his cabinet would obtain more popular support if they were able to convince the people that they had real power and that they were not just Japanese tools, acting in conformity with the demands of the Japanese army. But to a greater extent his insistence was the logical and inevitable consequence of his nationalist ideals which, since early 1942, he sought to achieve with the help of and in co-operation with Japan. He was certain that any unwillingness on the part of the Japanese to comply with Burma's desire of genuine independence would defeat Japan's attempts to secure the sincere collaboration and support of the people. In the revised version of his 'New Order Plan' he gave the fair warning that the Burmese were not likely to fight for the cause of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, as long as they had not been given a tangible stake in a Japanese victory.

At this period, when the military situation was rapidly deteriorating and in Burma itself the first signs of an emerging resistance movement were showing, the Japanese were quite embarrassed by Ba Maw's remonstrations and veiled threats. Yet they were hardly in a position to cease supporting him, since the politicians who were his critics, the Thakins, were to be trusted even less. Consequently the Japanese made some conciliatory gestures. In August 1944 Kawabe was recalled, to be followed, the next month, by Isamura. The new commander-in-chief of the Burma Area Army, General Heitaro Kimura, showed a greater understanding of Burmese wishes and more consideration for Burmese sensibilities, and after a few discussions with Ba Maw and other cabinet ministers he took some steps to put an end to the increasing tension between the Japanese military establishment and the Burmese officials. He was not successful, however, since his orders were not properly carried out, and it was too late, anyway, to remedy the situation and restore Burmese confidence in Japan's intentions. In spite of his disappointment Ba Maw continued to stand by his decision to work for his country's liberation within the framework of the alliance with Japan, partly because of his fervently anti-British sentiments and his interpretation of the historical forces which were

shaping South-East Asia's and Burma's destiny, partly out of the consideration that he was too much involved already with the Japanese cause to be able to change sides.

The Thakin nationalists were less particular in this respect, but their collaboration with Japan was in fact of a different character. Adopting the policy of co-operation with the Japanese, early in 1942, they had been prompted by the same opportunist motive as Ba Maw: to conclude an alliance with the enemies of their enemies in the pursuit of Burma's national freedom. Furthermore they realized that, because of the absence of any substantial anti-Japanese feelings among the Burmese population, they would not succeed in finding a popular base for launching a resistance movement of any size. After the Japanese conquest only a few doctrinaire communists, like Thakin Soe and Thein Pe, went underground, the former to roam in the Delta and to preach resistance and organize village cadres, the latter to issue pamphlets until he managed to escape to India where he contacted the British military authorities. The most prominent leaders of the Thakin group, both communist and non-communist, decided to take part in the Japanese-sponsored organizations rather than oppose the new overlords. They accepted public functions, and while two of them were included in the Burma Executive Administration, four—Thakin Mya, Nu, Than Tun and Aung San—served as ministers in Ba Maw's government after August 1943. Yet to them the alliance with Japan was not as essential for the success of the struggle for independence as it seemed to be to Ba Maw; on the whole they put more emphasis on Burma's liberation to be achieved in co-operation with Japan than on a Japanese victory as a *sine qua non* for securing that liberation. Consequently they displayed, in general, a far greater aloofness towards Japan's policies than Ba Maw; and they did their best not to compromise themselves overmuch with Japanese propaganda for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Neither did they want to be associated too closely with Ba Maw's policy of supporting Japan's war efforts. Finally, they did not rule out resistance against the Japanese as a means of advancing Burma's nationalist cause. This constituted the basic difference between Ba Maw's collaboration and that of the Thakins. Some of their leaders embarked upon activities of propaganda, organization and training which, undertaken under the cover of mobilizing popular support for Japan, were primarily meant to strengthen the nationalist forces in anticipation of a possible anti-Japanese struggle. In spite of the criticism occasionally levelled at their collaboration with the Japanese authorities, the Thakins continued to command the allegiance of the younger generation, and because of this as well as their ceaseless efforts to that end they were quite successful in extending their influence among large sections of the population.

THE THAKINS' VOLTE-FACE: THE ANTI-FASCIST PEOPLE'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

Initially the Thakins operated in a careful manner, but two factors contributed to their becoming bolder towards the end of 1943. Japan's reverses in the war against the Allied powers made it clear that neither Japanese control over Burma nor the Ba Maw administration were to last very much longer and that the moment for a *volte-face* was rapidly approaching. Secondly, and due to two years of Japanese harshness and economic mismanagement, the general mood of the people was now fervently opposed to Japan, and this provided the Thakins with the potential popular support, vital for launching a resistance organization, which had been lacking in the earlier months of the Japanese occupation. The major stronghold of the radical nationalists became the Burma Defence Army, renamed the Burma National Army on 16 September 1943. Although constituting the armed forces of a formally independent state, the B.N.A. was very much restricted by Japanese control, and its members, exposed to Japanese supervision and arrogance, had every reason to resent the situation. The young, disgruntled officers, among them quite a few who had served with the Burma Independence Army in 1942, took to reading revolutionary literature and, with the knowledge and assistance of Aung San, the minister of defence, and Ne Win, the commander of the army, they started to make secret preparations for an action against the Japanese. They put pressure on Aung San to take the lead in a resistance movement, but the latter preferred to proceed more slowly and cautiously, and for the time being the anti-Japanese conspiracy in the armed forces was limited to attending lectures by Thakin politicians, outlining plans and publishing nationalist leaflets for circulation in the villages. Such underground activities and the emphasis on Burmese nationalist ideals gave the members of the B.N.A. a really acceptable goal to which to devote their energy, and this greatly improved their morale which, so far, had been quite low.

Aung San's policy of tempering the over-eager enthusiasm of the younger army officers was based on the consideration that a resistance movement could be successful only if several conditions had been met. For one thing it was important to inform the British, and with the help of the communist Thein Pe contacts were made with the authorities in India late in 1943. It was far more imperative, however, to secure the co-operation of as many groups as possible in Burma itself, so as to establish a strong nationalist front that would not only be powerful enough to rid the country of Japanese rule, but also to defend Burma's independence against any British attempt at colonial restoration. Besides Aung San it was the communist leader Thakin Than Tun, the minister of agriculture, and later transport, in the Ba Maw cabinet, who was the most

active in bringing about a structural unity of anti-Japanese orientated forces.

Towards the close of 1943 Aung San and Than Tun approached a small anti-Japanese organization of Delta Karens, led by Saw San Po Thin, and they succeeded, not only in reaching an agreement with this group, which represented a minority of Karen opinion, but also in building up a better general understanding between Karens and Burmans. Early in 1944 the emerging national front widened when Than Tun established firm contacts with and between the various groups, many of them organized by Thakin leaders, which were preparing to assume an anti-Japanese position. Among those were the B.N.A., the labour and peasant association led by the socialists Mya and Ba Swe, the so-called 'Burma Revolutionary Party' which all but officially returned to life, the pure nationalists like Thakin Nu, and the communists who were extremely active in giving courses and making propaganda for their ideology, particularly in army circles. A significant role was played by Ba Gyan's East Asia Youth League, renamed the All Burma Youth League in the course of 1944. With its 600 branches it provided the Thakin radicals with an ideal agency through which they could extend their influence and reinforce their organization in the local sphere; furthermore, the A.B.Y.L. assisted the Burma National Army in recruiting new members. Finally Than Tun and Aung San made contacts with the underground guerrilla group of Thakin Soe in the Delta.

All activity aiming at forging an anti-Japanese nationalist front was undertaken in a surreptitious though gradually more overt way by political leaders who were participating in the Japanese institutions and organizations or operating under the cover of the positions they held in Ba Maw's government. Ba Maw was fully aware of what was going on in what was called the 'Inner Circle' of the political movement, and he resented it as a rash and thoughtless action by an unsophisticated group. In August 1944 a last-minute attempt was made to draw popular attention back to his side by the reorganization of the not very successful Dobama-Sinyetha Asiayone into the *Mahabama* (Greater Burma) Party. One of the Thakins, Nu, lent him a helping hand in this, a clear sign of the camouflaging practices which characterized Burmese nationalist policies in those decisive days. On the other hand Ba Maw failed to betray the Thakins to the Japanese, and when in June 1944 the Kenpeitai ruthlessly cracked down upon the first, and premature, sign of open resistance, he protested strongly to the Japanese authorities, but without avail. He was unable to halt the development towards the formation of a strong anti-Japanese political organization and, unwilling to either join the Thakins or turn them over to the brutal retribution which the Japanese were likely to mete out, he had to reconcile himself to the inevitable and accept that the reins of control, whatever they had been worth, had slipped from his hands.

In an official speech, held on the occasion of the first anniversary of the declaration of independence on 1 August 1944, Aung San stated that Burma's freedom existed only on paper, that a few privileged people such as ministers — including himself — their hangers-on, the commercial exploiters and the newly-rich were reaping its benefits, but that the majority of the people still had a long and hard road to go before reaching their goal. This bold declaration marked the formal beginning of the Burmese anti-Japanese resistance movement. A few days later the Anti-Fascist Organization, shortly after renamed Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (A.F.P.F.L.), came into being as a broad nationalist front. For the moment it consisted only of the Burmese National Army, the Burma Revolutionary Party and the communist groups, but in the closing months of the year the socialist-sponsored peasant and labour associations and the All Burma Youth League became part of it. Aung San was appointed the supreme leader. The objectives of the new organization were listed in a clandestine manifesto which was distributed among the members of the B.N.A.: to make preparations for sabotaging the Japanese war efforts and disrupting Japanese communications, to persuade labourers to desert and to collect intelligence concerning Japanese troop-movements. The time was not yet considered ripe for launching a full-scale attack on the Japanese forces, but Aung San and Thakin Soe had worked out an agreement already in which the latter promised to place his communist guerrilla group in the Delta under the orders of the resistance movement and to co-operate closely with the A.F.P.F.L.: Soe, in fact, joined the organization's supreme council. At about the same time the earlier vague relations with the Allies developed into firm contacts. Initially there was some hesitation on the part of the British who regarded the Thakins as unprincipled opportunists leaving the sinking Japanese ship, but after Thein Pe had reassured the authorities in India that Aung San was sincere in his desire to help drive away the Japanese, and both Lord Mountbatten and General William Slim, the British commander of the Allied forces in Burma, realized that they were genuine patriots and sufficiently realistic to bargain with whatever power offered them the best prospects for obtaining their country's independence, the British, through Force 136. accepted them as potential allies in the war against Japan.

For the moment the liberation of Burma from Japanese control was the primary goal of the radical nationalists and for this reason they made sure that their co-operation within the A.F.P.F.L. was not endangered by any difference of opinion on the more remote problems related to the structure of the state and the government or the fabric of society in the future. The manifesto of August 1944 listed as objectives to be achieved by 'peaceful means' after independence only such items to which no one could possibly take exception: a free constitution, freedom of speech, of the press, of religion and association, equality of all citizens irrespective

of race, religion, minority status or sex, promotion of education, security of employment, improvement of economic conditions and a progressive agricultural reform. Apart from a few minor indications such as the exhortation to set up a 'People's Government', or the use of words like 'fascist' and 'comrades', there was hardly anything in this document which pointed to its leftist authorship. In fact, such controversial issues as the abolition of landlordism or the nationalization of economic facilities were not mentioned, although they were considered essential by large groups within the A.F.P.F.L.: instead, they were left in abeyance so as not to raise the suspicions of the propertied classes or the Allies, and thus jeopardize the struggle for independence.

Of the major anti-Japanese resistance movements in South-East Asia, the A.F.P.F.L. was the only one which was not dominated by communists, but as a result of the radical ideals which, both in the political and the social sphere, were cherished by the majority of the youthful nationalists, the organization strongly gravitated towards a leftist position. Yet, it was the patriotism of the Thakins, their zeal and energy, their integrity and imagination, and, in particular, the forthright personality of Aung San which primarily accounted for the tremendous enthusiasm of the population as well as for the wide support the B.N.A. and the A.F.P.F.L. were obtaining in the closing months of the Japanese occupation. The Japanese military authorities were highly suspicious of the B.N.A., but facing an imminent invasion of Burma by the Allied forces they needed every hand available and they could not afford to disband the auxiliary troops on the grounds of vague and, as yet, unproven assumptions. Better informed of the situation, Ba Maw, on his part, had reason to be anxious about the turn events were going to take and he took a final step to check the growth of radical nationalism when he tried to remove its immediate *raison d'être*. On a visit to Tokyo, in November 1944, he naively insisted that the Japanese should evacuate Burma in order to prevent any further fighting and destruction. But this move to arrest a development in which, as he clearly sensed, the Thakins would take up arms against the Japanese and would become the heroes of Burma's struggle for independence, failed because the Japanese, sensing as clearly that their line of defence in Burma would be shattered, refused to comply with his request. He was referred to the minister of war, Hajemei Sugiyama, who told him that the Burmese would be spared any trouble if they co-operated properly; and to illustrate this, he pointed to the Philippines which was being devastated because of the unwillingness of the Filipino people to collaborate. When Ba Maw returned to Burma after his request had been rejected, it was evident that neither he, nor any other of the older politicians would direct the Burmese nationalist movement in the final stage of the Japanese period, and that the Thakins were going to take over the leadership.

PRIDI'S 'FREE THAI' AND THE DOWNFALL OF PHIBUN SONGKHRAM

From the Japanese strategic-military point of view an event of a far more ominous nature than the Allied advance in Northern Burma and the loss of Myitkyina was the setback which Japan suffered in July 1944 in the Central Pacific. By-passing the Japanese bases in the Carolines, including Truk, the major American attack was directed against the Marianas, and on 15 June strong forces landed on Saipan. As the island was the most important stronghold between Japan and the 'Southern Regions' and, once in Allied hands, would both disrupt the vital communications and provide the American long-range bombers with a new base for their air-offensive against the Japanese mainland, it was essential for Japan that Saipan be held. A naval force was sent out to support the garrison on the island, but it was intercepted by the American navy on 19 June and crippled in a two-day battle. After ferocious fighting Saipan fell on 8 July. The Americans followed up their victory by capturing Tinian, and by effecting landings on Guam, on 20 July, which they cleared of Japanese troops by 10 August.

The loss of Saipan made a deep impression in Tokyo, following, as it did, within a fortnight after the first heavy air-attacks on the Japanese mainland which were carried out by American bombers stationed in Southern China. The military reverses strengthened the position of those civilian politicians who were in favour of a negotiated peace and on 18 July Prime Minister Tojo was forced to resign. His successor was General Kuniaki Koiso, and his cabinet represented a compromise between on the one hand the peace party and, on the other, the army leaders who wanted to continue the war. It was the task of the new government to go on with the fight as best as it could but, at the same time, to find an honourable way to terminate the war; since the army was still dominating the scene the emphasis was, in practice, on the first element of this policy.

Within a week after Tojo's resignation the pro-Japanese government of Thailand suddenly fell from power: the culminating-point of the silent struggle for political predominance between Phibun Songkhram and Pridi Phanomyong. The so-called People's Party, that strangely ambiguous oligarchic, partly military, partly civilian, elite group which had ruled the country ever since the revolution of 1932 and which, in spite of the conflicting opinions and interests of its members, managed to maintain its monolithic character for nearly a decade, had been split beyond repair by Phibun's decision to commit Thailand to the side of Japan. Against the faction which followed the pro-Japanese policies of the government, an oppositional group emerged with Pridi as its major instigator. He had been appointed to the Regency Council which carried out the functions of King Ananda Mahidol, who was educated abroad, and under the cover

of his elevated post he set out to organize an underground movement, seeking contacts with agents of the Allied powers. The building up of such an underground movement was not only motivated by the liberal and democratic principles of Pridi and his adherents, however. There was also the opportunist consideration that Thailand had to create a pro-Western alibi which might come in handy in case the country should eventually find herself on the wrong, i.e. the losing, side of the war. Such was the motive of a man like Adun Detcharas, who had played a significant part in establishing Phibun's dictatorship and who, as chief of police, had several people arrested and imprisoned for distributing anti-governmental and anti-Japanese leaflets, but who, nevertheless, became the second in command of the opposition against Phibun during the Second World War. Outside Thailand a 'Free Thai Movement', *Seri Thai*, was organized in the United States by the Thai ambassador Seni Pramoj, who declared that the government in Bangkok, which he considered a puppet government, did not represent the wishes of the people and who made his legation in Washington a centre of pro-Western Thai activity. He and his group were accepted as an ally by the American government which refused to recognize the Thai declaration of war, offered assistance to the 'Free Thai' and helped train volunteers who were sent to Southern China in order to infiltrate into Thailand.

Thai opposition to Japan and Phibun did not amount to any grand-scale resistance. Pridi's organization limited itself to making contacts with Allied, mostly American, agents, to submitting intelligence reports on Japanese troop movements, and to protecting Allied airmen and other prisoners of war from the Japanese. It was a rather small group, but Japan's military reverses and the increasing hostility of the Thai population towards the Japanese greatly strengthened its position as the months passed. Phibun Songkhram was perfectly aware that Pridi was involved in the underground movement and that he was entertaining secret relations with the Allies, and when it became more evident that Japan was losing the war he had second thoughts about the wisdom of his own policies. Early in 1944 he attempted to establish contacts with Chiang K'ai-shek, but he failed, and his overtures to this effect only aroused Japanese suspicions without raising his popularity among the Thais.

Phibun was brought down when he started to implement an ambitious plan to remove the seat of the government from Bangkok to Phetchabun. Since the latter town was more easily defensible than Bangkok, it has been suggested that he embarked upon this project to be better prepared for repelling any attack in case he should decide to terminate the alliance with Japan and join the Allied powers, but he was not given the opportunity to prove this to have been his intention. In April 1944 the construction works started, and soon the entire scheme met with widespread opposition because of the prevalence of disease in the swampy and unhealthy area which had been selected for the new site. Matters came to a head when

Phibun submitted a proposal to the National Assembly, on 22 July, for the compulsory conscription of labourers. Coming a few days after the downfall of Tojo, which was regarded in Thailand as a sign that the Japanese themselves had given up hopes of winning the war, the Phetchabun project became the lever which enabled the critics of Phibun to get rid of him and have his administration replaced by a pro-Western government. The proposal was defeated in the legislature and Pridi induced Phibun to resign. It was not very difficult to persuade him to go since he, and most politicians who had supported his pro-Japanese policies until then, realized that this was the appropriate moment to retire in order to ensure that Thailand would receive a more sympathetic treatment from the Allied powers after the war.

This change of government represented a clear victory of Pridi and the liberal faction over the military clique. Khuang Aphaiwong became prime minister, but in the process of political reorientation Pridi, who emerged as the sole regent of the kingdom, was the man behind the scene. In the field of international relations the downfall of Phibun and the ascendancy of Pridi did not, however, result in an overt reversal of alliances as had been produced by the Italian *coup d'état* in the previous year. The new government could not afford to risk an open break with the Japanese, who had some 50,000 troops in Thailand, since the Thai army was inadequately equipped for meeting any such contingency. Thus it was the main task of Khuang's administration to placate the Japanese and officially to continue Thailand's co-operation with Japan in order to build up a façade behind which Pridi and Adun were able to carry out their pro-Western policies. The Japanese military authorities were anything but deceived by this and they became increasingly nervous, but they were not in a position to interfere and even less to stage a *coup de force*. Such a move would have completely jeopardized Japan's claim that she was fighting the war for Asia's independence, while it would also have exposed the Japanese garrison in Thailand to attacks by the guerrilla organization which, as they were well aware, had been built up by Pridi but which was not, unless provoked, likely to come into action before an Allied invasion.

One of the first steps of the Khuang government was to proclaim an amnesty and to liberate political prisoners, as an indication that Thailand was entering a more democratic and liberal era. But of far greater short-term significance was that, from September 1944 onwards, Pridi and Adun managed to establish close relations with Allied intelligence agents, particularly with the American Organization of Strategic Service (O.S.S.). With the connivance of the Thai government Allied agents arrived in Bangkok where they could send out wireless reports to their headquarters. Arms and supplies were parachuted into Thailand to reinforce the guerrilla organization, and while Pridi continued to have volunteers recruited for the underground, American and British officers and members of the Free Thai movement of Seni Pramoj took a substan-

tial part in their training. At the same time Pridi saw to it that in provinces where guerrilla camps were situated governors who were loyal to him were appointed. Early in 1945 preparations for open resistance had progressed to such an extent that Pridi began considering the possibility of an armed struggle against the Japanese, but he was dissuaded from such a course when he realized that the Allies were not yet ready to send in the ground-troops necessary to support any operation of the Thai army or the guerrilla forces. Consequently the plan was dropped for the time being, but both Pridi, and, in a more concealed way, the Thai government, continued to make preparations for an anti-Japanese uprising which would coincide with an Allied military invasion.

THE INDONESIAN UNDERGROUND

Compared to the resistance movements in the Philippines, Malaya, Vietnam and, at a later date, Burma, the anti-Japanese underground in Indonesia was insignificant. There were some attempts at resistance by small Dutch-sponsored or Chinese groups, particularly in Borneo and Northern Sumatra, but due to the absence of popular support, they were doomed from the start. Resistance by Indonesians was completely non-existent, since the main conditions for the emergence and development of any powerful organized opposition were lacking. The Indonesian population did not evince such strong feelings of hostility as the Filipinos and the Malayan Chinese demonstrated towards Japan or the Vietnamese *vis-à-vis* Japan's accomplice, the Decoux regime. Secondly, the majority of Indonesia's political and religious leaders, and among them the most prominent and influential, opted for collaboration with Japan, and as they, unlike the Burmese Thakins, failed, in general, to consider the possibility of changing sides, hardly any politician was available to channel the energy of the masses in an anti-Japanese direction at the moment that popular disappointment with Japan's military administration was steadily increasing.

An Indonesian opposition did exist, but it was very small and it constituted hardly anything more than the dissenting, non-collaborating element of a large nationalist movement which in its other components was participating in the political structures set up by the Japanese. Making his decision to oppose Japan, Sutan Sjahrir arranged with Sukarno and Hatta that, in fostering Indonesia's national interests, the underground would be complementing the policy of the collaborating leaders but that its actions would be kept secret. As a result there were frequent contacts between the politicians operating on either side of the fence, with Hatta the most important intermediary, and this was not only true for the organization headed by Sjahrir, but also for other groups which, one way or another,

entertained relations with the Japanese-sponsored political institutions and the administrative establishment.

Vagueness and indistinctness being its most notable characteristics, the Indonesian underground did not cause much harm to the Japanese by any of its actions, however clandestine. There was no recourse to armed force and the one group which most resembled a genuine movement of resistance was quickly incapacitated by Japanese counter-measures. This was the organization led by the left-wing politician Amir Sjarifuddin, which included numerous members of the communist party. During the first few months of the occupation several of them had already been caught and, under torture, forced to give the names of other participants. With the arrest of Sjarifuddin, early in 1943, the activities of this group were further curtailed. On 29 February 1944 five leaders were sentenced to death, of which four were executed: only Sjarifuddin was saved when Sukarno and Hatta intervened on his behalf. What remained of the organization consisted of some cells of the communist party which continued to carry out some small-scale and isolated actions.

The other underground organizations, all more or less leftist in nature, were not more successful in making any tangible contribution to the anti-Japanese cause. The Sjahrir group was by far the largest, with branches all over Java. It was based on the urban educated youth, and although active among the peasants of West Java and organizing rural co-operative associations which were sanctioned by the Japanese, it was primarily engaged in influencing the younger generation. Connected with the Fourth International as well as, at the same time, with the Japanese propaganda service, was a small group led by Adam Malik, Sukarni Kartodiwirjo and Chairul Saleh. In Batavia the Students' Union was actively engaged in voicing anti-Japanese sentiments. In addition to the attempts at indoctrinating the Indonesian youth and setting up debating groups, the underground associations intended in the first place to infiltrate into the Peta auxiliary forces. In this they were quite successful, but they were not exclusively responsible for the fact that the youth groups and the military and para-military organizations eventually emerged as hotbeds of nationalist and anti-Japanese feelings; this was also the result of the anti-imperialist and pro-Indonesian propaganda of the collaborating leaders.

The Japanese were not greatly disturbed by any of the underground activities. They knew what was going on, but they did not resort to any serious repressive action beyond crippling Sjarifuddin's group. Instead the military administration availed itself of the ambiguous, partly legal, partly illegal position of the leaders to force them into a situation in which they could be controlled better. Thus the authorities set up a new youth organization, *Angkatan Muda*, in June 1944, which they kept under strict surveillance and to which they appointed several of the younger nationalists in responsible posts. Although unable to check the further dis-

semination of anti-Japanese sentiments among the younger generation, the Japanese thus restricted the illegal activities of the underground and prevented it from making any effective use of the mounting popular antipathy to the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The most ingenious piece of Japanese scheming took place in the closing months of their rule. Without the consent of the army authorities the chief of naval intelligence in Java, vice-admiral Tadashi Maeda, established an educational institution in Batavia in October 1944, and one in Surabaya shortly after, where young people were given a thorough training in economics, sociology and politics along Marxist lines, ostensibly to prepare them for Indonesia's independence. Heading the school was Wikana, the leader of the illegal communist party; among the lecturers were Ahmed Subardjo, an ex-communist serving the political bureau of the Japanese naval headquarters in Java, the radical leftist politician Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, but also Sjahrir and Hatta, while the legendary communist Tan Malaka, who had broken with Stalinism in the 1920s and returned to Indonesia early in 1944, seems to have been involved. After their graduation most students were either approached by Tan Malaka or recruited into an organization which, run by Subardjo and subsidized by the Japanese, posed as an underground movement. What the Japanese really intended to gain from this intrigue is still open to speculation, but more significant than their possible goals, which were not achieved anyway, was the ease with which they manipulated the underground leaders for their own purposes. More than anything else this event illustrated the intrinsic weakness of the Indonesian anti-Japanese movement.

In the three and a half years of their rule over the huge archipelago the Japanese encountered three armed uprisings, each of them an isolated and minor affair. There were rural disturbances in the Tasikmalaja area in February 1944 and in Indramaju, in September, led by religious teachers, and in no way related to the underground movement. There was also a revolt staged by a Peta detachment at Blitar in February 1945 which may have been connected with the activities of the communist party. Towards the end of 1943, and again in July 1944, the Japanese claimed the discovery of a widespread conspiracy in West Borneo, after which some 1,200 people were summarily executed. The victims included all the ruling princes of the native states in the area, but most of them were Chinese. That the traditionally strong and highly self-conscious Chinese community of West Borneo had been making preparations for some kind of revolt was quite feasible, especially in view of the fact that in British North Borneo similar events were taking place. On 9 October 1943 a small Chinese group led by Albert Kwok Fen Nam and assisted by a small sea-force of Bajaus and Sulu islanders attacked Jesselton and conquered the town. The Japanese returned, however, in full force, chased the rebels into the mountains and forced the last of them to surrender in December. Kwok and most of his

followers were beheaded. A second uprising failed because it was betrayed in April 1944, after which the Japanese carried out massive executions.

THE KOISO DECLARATION

The underground movement being a *quantité négligeable*, the legally tolerated organizations played the major role in Indonesia's political development throughout the entire Japanese period. Of the two elite groups which the military administration employed in its drive to make the most effective use of Java's manpower, only the Islamic religious leaders and teachers were able to increase their influence among the population. This was partly the result of the role they were playing in the new Japanese policy as it was carried out since late 1943. They were less personally involved than the village chiefs and other members of the nobility who, as the traditional officials and the leading functionaries in the 'neighbourhood associations', had to enforce the Japanese orders and make the peasantry comply with Japanese demands. When the peasants, disturbed by the attempts at organizing and regimenting them, grew restive, the aristocratic class was held responsible for the deteriorating conditions. In view of the traditional rivalry between the Muslim teachers and the aristocrats it was not improbable that, in case of agrarian unrest, the former might provide the discontented masses with leadership. The Japanese, thoroughly alarmed at the prospect of a Muslim-led rural rebellion, were shocked when serious disturbances, led by an Islamic teacher, took place at Singaparna, near Tasikmalaja, in February 1944, in which some hundreds of peasants were involved. With their customary ruthlessness the Japanese restored law and order, but the event served as a warning, not so much to relieve the burdens imposed on the population as to make concessions to the Muslim leaders in order to draw them towards the administration and prevent them from embarking on any unwelcome activity. In deciding between the Islamic group and the aristocratic class the Japanese evidently considered the former to be more useful allies and consequently they set out to enlarge their authority and prestige at the cost of the nobility. Immediately after the outbreak at Tasikmalaja they sent Masjumi leaders to the rural districts to explain Japan's policies and allay Muslim suspicions, and in March 1944 regional bodies were formed to take the administration of Muslim affairs out of the hands of the aristocratic officials. This policy constituted a reversal of the custom of the Dutch, initially adopted by the Japanese, of regarding the bureaucratic aristocracy as the mainstay of their authority at the local level. It did not mean that the nobility was deprived of all political power, it only meant that it lost much of its prestige and incurred the hostility of the population, while the Islamic movement gradually gained a predominant influence. Muslim leaders also became more strongly involved in the administration of Islamic affairs in the

central sphere. When the Department of Religious Affairs was reorganized on 1 August 1944 and Husain Djajadiningrat, a member of the aristocratic class, was replaced by Islamic leaders like Hasjim Asjari and Wachid Hasjim, the Masjumi, in effect, became part of the central administration.

In the same month the Japanese embarked on a course which they had tried to avert as long as possible: they made their first concessions to the nationalist politicians. The disappearance of the Putera had considerably dampened the enthusiasm of the Western-trained intellectuals and, as a result, the Djawa Hokokai had great difficulty in asserting itself and in gaining a prominent place. Furthermore, the policy of emphasizing Japan's interests and of consistently keeping nationalist demands at bay, forced the political leaders who were, in principle, willing to co-operate with Japan, to reappraise their attitude. Nominally they had been given some high advisory posts, but with no actual influence or power accompanying them, these functions only served to identify these politicians in the public mind with Japanese coercive measures, with the intensifying process of Nipponization and with the bad economic conditions. Such a situation was bound to alienate the political leaders from the population, but the former were not prepared to let this happen. While outwardly praising the Japanese regime and inciting the masses to work harder to build up the nation and to contribute to its defence in co-operation with Japan, Sukarno often demonstrated his dissatisfaction and criticized the military authorities, though in a subtle way, yet not misunderstood by either his Indonesian audience or the Japanese themselves. When the Djawa Hokokai did not answer the Japanese expectations as to the mobilization of popular support for the 'Holy War', and the commander-in-chief convened the Central Advisory Council from 8 to 11 May 1944 to discuss the matter, Sukarno studiously left out any allusion to the 'final victory' during the swearing-in ceremony. It was clear that, against the intentions of the military administration, the council was developing into a forum of nationalist opinion when it recommended the immediate establishment of a 'pioneer corps' within the Djawa Hokokai, consisting of young men who were conscious of their duty and prepared to sacrifice themselves to that end. Aware of Japan's deteriorating military position Sukarno continued to stress the theme that Java should be defended by the Indonesians. In view of the Allied advance, and particularly after the loss of Saipan, the Japanese could not afford to lose the collaboration of the nationalist politicians, and on 15 August 1944 the setting up of the *Barisan Pelopor*, or Pioneer Corps, under the direction of Indonesian leaders, was officially announced.

For the nationalists it was a great success because this corps provided them with an instrument to influence the masses more effectively and to mobilize the people against the Allied counter-offensive as well as against any possible attempt at colonial restoration should Japan be defeated.

The military administration was perfectly aware of this, and fearful that the pioneer corps might become an uncontrollable nationalist vanguard, the authorities declared themselves against any further concessions. The issue became urgent when the government in Tokyo queried the desirability of setting up a committee to examine the possibility of granting independence. The naval command in the eastern islands, not troubled by any nationalist pressure so far, was firmly against it. The Japanese army commanders in Java, too, had their doubts: an organization like the Barisan Pelopor might have its use, but a promise of independence might result in an upsurge of nationalist fervour which might easily get out of hand. In Tokyo there was a division of opinion: while the navy was opposed to it, the army leaders were convinced that a definite commitment to independence was essential to rally the people on Japan's side against an Allied invasion. On 2 September the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War, a new body established by the Koiso cabinet, reached the decision that the peoples of the Indies, except New Guinea, would be granted independence in the future, that immediate measures to that effect were to be taken in Java and that similar concessions should be made to the other territories as far as would be consistent with the actual conditions. The public promise of eventual independence was given by Koiso in a statement to the Diet on 7 September, and on the 8th Commander-in-Chief Harada broke the news to Sukarno. In two ways it was a significant concession: although the actual date had been left unspecified it was the first official allusion to Indonesian independence ever made by any dominant power. Furthermore, the Koiso Declaration referred to the 'inhabitants of the East Indies' which, in spite of the fact that the several territories were still to be accorded separate treatment, constituted, in principle, a departure from previous Japanese practice.

JAPANESE POLICY IN INDONESIA'S 'OUTER TERRITORIES'

Until that moment the Japanese had made a clear distinction between Java and the rest of the archipelago, with Sumatra on the one hand and Borneo and the Greater East on the other, both under different regimes. Because of his residence in the former Netherlands Indies capital the commander of the 16th Army in Java might tacitly have been regarded as *primus inter pares* by his colleagues in the other territories, as was demonstrated, for instance, by the banning of political parties in West Borneo, on 9 August 1942, on the strength of Imamura's relevant order. On the whole, however, there was no copying of the policies of the administration in Java by either the authorities responsible for Sumatra or the naval command in Macassar. The latter ruled the areas under their jurisdiction as separate entities, adapting their policy to local conditions rather than to

the example of Java where, in fact, the military administration was also responding to challenges emanating from the local situation. To the Japanese Indonesia was a geographical expression. They failed to see a united people or an Indonesian nation, and they were not in any way impressed by the possibility of the emergence of a national unity covering the entire territory of the former Netherlands Indies. During the first year of the occupation until May 1943 the Japanese even linked Sumatra to Singapore and set out to foster pan-Malay sentiments. For the benefit of the Sumatrans it was pointed out that the Dutch regime had turned the island into an appendage of Java while, economically, its interests would have been safeguarded better in a union with Malaya. This appeal to the pride of the Sumatran peoples and their real or slumbering aversion to being attached to Java misfired, however, since the Minangkabau, the Atjehnese or the Bataks, to name only a few, entertained no affections for the Malays either, whether Sumatran or Malayan. The Indonesian nationalists among the Sumatrans, moreover, and the Javanese immigrants in the East Coast residency were opposed to the idea, for fear of being cut off from what constituted the major centre of Indonesian political life and their country of origin, respectively. Finally, the Sumatran Malays were not greatly impressed by the practical effects of the new set-up: there were hardly more contacts with Malaya than there had been under Dutch rule. After the island's administration had been detached from that of Malaya and moved its seat to Fort de Kock, early in 1943, the Japanese stopped emphasizing this point, but they did not draw Sumatra any closer to Java.

Yet, in spite of the administrative divisions, the Japanese authorities followed a fundamentally similar policy both in Sumatra and in the naval-ruled territories as in Java. They embarked upon a drive towards Nipponization, they set out to mobilize and indoctrinate the younger generation, they attempted to obtain popular support through suitable instruments: Islam in the Muslim areas; the Catholic and Protestant churches in those districts where the Christians had a majority; nationalism, finally, wherever this phenomenon was considered important enough to be manipulated.

To keep the administrative machinery going and to have instructions from above carried out effectively, the administrations in Sumatra, Borneo and the Greater East relied in the first place on the co-operation of the hereditary chiefs and the traditional bureaucracy, preventing, as they did in Java, religious and political leaders from making inroads into the aristocracy's sphere of influence. This was most evident in Atjeh where the ulamas had been spearheading the anti-Dutch resistance movement and thus, indirectly, facilitating the Japanese conquest of the area. But the rebellion of February 1942 had also been directed against the traditional chiefs, and as soon as the Japanese were in full control they restored the power of the aristocratic elements, in April, and curtailed the activities of the *Persatuan Ulama-Ulama Seluruh Atjeh*, the militant association of religious leaders which had been responsible for the wave of anti-Dutch and anti-aristocratic violence.

This basic similarity of Japanese policy was not the outcome of any assumption that Indonesia was one country and that it should be dealt with accordingly; it was primarily due to the fact that the military regimes, like those everywhere in South-East Asia, complied with the general principles of the Japanese approach to conquered territories as they had been outlined by the Liaison Conference in November 1941. There were differences, however, between Japanese policies in Java and in the 'Outer Territories', but these were based on different local conditions rather than on any deviation from principle. These variations were primarily related to the nationalist issue and to the extent to which the Japanese allowed Indonesians to participate actively in politics or in the administration, and they were conditioned by two factors. In the first place, Indonesia's eastern islands had been earmarked from the beginnings of Japanese rule as a territory to be annexed by the Empire. But this did not put the naval authorities in charge in a position fundamentally different from that of their army colleagues in Java and Sumatra, over the future destiny of which the Japanese government delayed her decision. It only made it less urgent for them to train Indonesian bureaucrats for the higher administrative functions. Also the political consciousness of the inhabitants and their ability, according to Japanese standards, to fulfil administrative duties, had to be taken into consideration, and this second factor responsible for the differences in the Japanese approach to political issues was the most important of the two. This was demonstrated when in May 1943 the Imperial Conference recommended that Indonesia was to be entirely incorporated into Japanese territory, but nonetheless, political developments in Java and those in the eastern islands continued to show a marked disparity. Since in the territories ruled by the navy Indonesian nationalism was either non-existent or only a weak force, the authorities did not have to appease and employ nationalist political leaders or to neutralize their influence. Japanese rule in Borneo and the Greater East presented a picture of political stagnation which differed greatly from the turbulent developments in Java, but this was due more to the political backwardness of the population and the lack of nationalist leadership rather than to any stronger repressive attitude of the naval commanders. On the contrary, among the Japanese military branches the navy was, in fact, traditionally more liberal than the army, but circumstances forced it to act in an outwardly more conservative fashion. Political activities were restricted and only in a few areas, for example South Borneo, Southern Celebes and the Lesser Sunda Islands, were advisory councils established early in 1944.

The situation was slightly different in Sumatra where in some provinces nationalism and self-consciousness was sufficiently significant to be taken seriously. Yet, with Minangkabau being the only region in which Indonesian nationalism was a strong force, and Atjeh the only one with virulent local nationalist sentiments, the Japanese could afford to be less concerned with these phenomena than they were in Java. They allowed propaganda

to be produced for the Triple A Movement, but prohibited the establishment of any branches, and they followed an essentially similar line with regard to the Putera. Provincial councils had been set up since late 1943, but a Central Advisory Council was not. Neither was anything resembling the Djawa Hokokai or the Peta permitted to be organized in Sumatra on an island-wide basis. The Japanese sponsored local associations, youth movements and — in Atjeh after 8 November 1943 — volunteer auxiliary detachments, but in terms of political advancement Sumatra trailed far behind Java. After the Koiso Declaration, however, this discrepancy gradually faded.

3. *The Final Months of Japanese Hegemony*

THE LAUREL GOVERNMENT

OTHER strategic considerations apart, the capture by the American forces of Saipan in the Marianas had been necessary to protect the right flank of the Allied advance upon the Philippines. It was equally vital to remove any Japanese threat to the left, or southern, flank of the invading armada, and this was achieved when, under cover of a naval bombardment by American and Australian cruisers, landings were effected on Morotai, to the north-west of Halmaheira in the Moluccas on 15 September. The same day troops disembarked on Peliliu in the Palau group. Both Morotai and Peliliu (the latter captured only after a bitter struggle) were formed into advance bases for the American invasion of the Philippines.

Independence under Japanese auspices was as empty in the Philippines as it was in Burma, but while the new status initially created some enthusiasm among the Burmese, it failed completely to produce any such effect among the Filipinos. Laurel did his best to ingratiate himself and his government with the population, but he could not avoid being regarded as a Japanese puppet. His attempts to link the regime in the public mind with the struggle for independence of the late nineteenth century, by the establishment, in May 1944, of a youth movement which was named 'Jose Rizal's Youth Dream' (*Kabataang Pangarap ni Rizal*, or *Kapariz*), or by the institution of the military order of the Triad Pass, misfired since they only evoked disgust at what was considered an indecent manipulation of sacred national symbols. Efforts to win popular support through the Kalibapi failed equally. In May 1944 the organization was granted a new charter, converting it from the non-political 'service association' it had been so far into a political party, and to attract a greater following the

original proviso which made membership of the Kalibapi a condition for employment in government service was abolished. Youth and women's organizations were encouraged to participate in the party's many activities which varied from social work and propaganda for Japan's cause to arranging demonstrations and mass rallies. New branches were established and new members were, indeed, induced into joining, but in general the attitude of the population towards the Kalibapi and the government continued to be one of aversion and hatred, and this disposition increased when in the course of 1944 the economic situation further deteriorated, the rice-rationing schemes failed, prices rose and starvation set in. The Laurel administration, as firmly under Japanese control as the Vargas administration had been in the years before independence was granted, found itself in the difficult position of having to please both its Japanese masters and the Filipino people. In the Philippine circumstances this was clearly impossible, and consequently the government gradually lost whatever prestige and influence it commanded immediately after the inauguration ceremony in October 1943. Laurel established numerous boards and commissions, particularly in the economic sphere, and Roxas was appointed chairman of one of these in April 1944 — but, from sheer necessity, the administration's activities were directed towards preventing the entire political and social fabric of the Philippine state from falling to pieces rather than to building up the nation, such as Ba Maw attempted to achieve in Burma. Corruption was rampant in the public services, the Philippine Constabulary proved to be of doubtful loyalty, and in the countryside the guerrilla forces were intensifying their struggle.

The military defeats which, for several months Japan had already been suffering in the Pacific area, could not fail to produce anxiety among the Filipino collaborators. Like most South-East Asian politicians who were co-operating with the Japanese, they realized that they had been supporting the wrong cause, but unlike the Burmese and Indonesian leaders who found themselves in the same situation, they were unable to claim that they had done so to advance Philippine independence. As their choice to side with the Japanese had been primarily dictated by the desire to preserve their privileged position as the country's ruling elite, they incurred the violent hostility of the masses against whom they intended to protect themselves within the framework of Japanese-imposed legality. Facing the widespread nationalist indignation of the population, the Filipino collaborators felt that they were not only discredited in the eyes of the Americans, in a similar way as the Burmese and Indonesian leaders were in the eyes of the British and the Dutch, but also that they were comparatively worse off, in the sense that public opinion was not likely to shield them from the wrath of the Allied victors as the collaborating politicians in the other countries might expect. Their only comfort left was the hope that the American establishment might find extenuating

circumstances, based on sentiments of class-solidarity, to excuse their conduct and adopt a less unfriendly view on the issue of collaboration. For the moment, however, there was nothing they could do but continue to offer their services to the Japanese.

This they did in a rather reluctant way, and sometimes they had the courage to stand up against the military authorities, as Claro Recto, Laurel's foreign minister, did when in a letter addressed to the Japanese chief of staff of the 14th Army, he complained about Japanese practices and indirectly asserted that Philippine independence was a fake. He pointed out that the population utterly resented the Japanese cruelties, and that all efforts to convince the Filipinos that Japan was sincere were completely nullified by the harshness of Japanese rule. Such remonstrations were of no avail, and the collaborating oligarchy was not in a position to go any further since it had to rely on Japan's protection against the guerrilla movement. Furthermore Laurel and his ministers were well aware that the Japanese, who were anything but impressed by their achievements, might at any time replace them by some fervently pro-Japanese leaders such as Ramos or Ricarte.

Because of the intrinsic weakness of his position Laurel was eventually unable to resist the Japanese insistence on a declaration of war upon the Allied powers. In October 1943 he had dissuaded the Japanese government from making this issue a condition for the granting of independence, but with the American invasion of the Philippines in sight the military authorities resumed their pressure. In August 1944 American carrier-based planes started to make raids on several Philippine islands, and when on 21 September a heavy attack caused severe damage to Japanese installations in Manila and Cavite, the Japanese command insisted that the government consider this event a *casus belli*. Laurel knew that the air-raids were received with great enthusiasm by the Filipino population as the first sign of the approaching liberation and that a declaration of war could not but further separate him and his administration from the people, but he had no choice and on 24 September he formally proclaimed that a state of war existed between the Philippine Republic on the one hand and the United States and Great Britain on the other.

THE RECONQUEST OF THE PHILIPPINES

The American carrier-strikes on Mindanao, the Visayas and Luzon met with less Japanese opposition than had been expected, and on the strength of this observation the Allied commanders changed their plan of assault and advanced the date of the invasion. After the capture of Morotai and Peliliu, Mindanao should have been the first target, but now it was decided to by-pass this island and land on Leyte instead. In Japan itself the intensifying American air activity over the Philippines convinced the military

leaders that the Allied invasion was soon to be expected. In order to raise the morale of their 200,000 strong garrison and organize the defence they sent their most capable combat-general to Manila, and on 6 October 1944 Yamashita, the 'Tiger of Malaya', took over from Kuroda as commander-in-chief of the Japanese forces in the islands. Two weeks later, on 20 October, 150,000 American troops, transported by some 650 naval craft and commanded by General MacArthur, began to disembark on Leyte.

Within a few days the fate of the Japanese in the Philippines was sealed. The Supreme Command in Tokyo, sensing that the landings on Leyte threatened further to isolate Japan's forces in the Southern Regions from the mainland and that the war would certainly be lost should the Americans succeed in entrenching themselves on the island, ordered Yamashita to fight the major battle for the Philippines in this area rather than in Luzon. At the same time the commander-in-chief of the Combined Fleet, Admiral Soemu Toyoda, directed almost all his warships towards the Philippines where, on 23 October, they converged in four squadrons upon the American forces in the waters around Leyte. It was the task of one squadron to lure Admiral William Halsey's fleet away from the invasion forces in order to enable the others to wipe out MacArthur's army. Although the diverting manoeuvre initially seemed to be successful, the Japanese were crippled in a series of four separate engagements, in Surigao Strait, near Samar, off Cape Engano and, finally, on 25 October, in Leyte Gulf. It was a decisive Allied victory in that it almost totally annihilated Japan's maritime power and made the Japanese position in the Philippines untenable. Already on 23 October Sergio Osmena, president of the Philippines since the death of Quezon on 1 August 1944, made Tacloban, on Leyte, the temporary seat of the restored Commonwealth government, and in November 1944 Marshal Terauchi hurriedly moved the headquarters of his Southern Area Command from Manila to Saigon.

Yet the campaign in the Philippines was not a military walk-over. The Japanese defended themselves ferociously, and it was against the beachheads in Leyte that suicide planes were used for the first time. After new reinforcements had arrived, early in November, the Americans succeeded in pushing through, and a month later, after fresh landings on the West coast and the capture of Ormoc, the Japanese garrison was completely isolated. Towards the end of the year Leyte was in American hands.

By the decision of the Supreme Command to concentrate all efforts on Leyte Yamashita had been deprived of a significant portion of his effectives which he might have used for the defence of Luzon, but which were trapped, instead, on Leyte and gradually cut to pieces. This factor as well as the destruction of Japan's naval forces in the battle of Leyte Gulf gave the Americans a considerable preponderance over the Japanese. As they were capable now of striking at any point they wished they compelled Yamashita, who was in the dark about where MacArthur's attack on Luzon would take place, to dispatch his troops all over the virtually indefensible

island. In his efforts to organize the defence of Luzon he received only the most half-hearted support of the totally disillusioned Philippine government.

Doubting the loyalty of the Laurel administration the Japanese command authorized the setting up of a new mass organization which, prompted by a group of junior Japanese officials and officers, and led by unswervingly pro-Japanese Filipinos, pledged itself to co-operate fully with the Japanese armed forces. On 10 November 1944 this 'League of Patriotic Filipinos', *Makabayan Pilipinos* or *Makapili*, was formally established under the leadership of Beningno Ramos, Artemio Ricarte and Pio Duran. It was not only a last manoeuvre to induce Filipinos into fighting Japan's battles — and some 5,000 did so — but also a move to degrade the ruling oligarchy: the Makapili was to be independent of Laurel's government and subject only to the authority of Yamashita. Laurel protested, claiming that he would not permit any Filipino organization to operate unless it was subject to the power and control of the Philippine Republic, but he was unable to do anything about it. Towards the end of December he, his ministers and the high-ranking officials of his government were prevailed upon by Yamashita to move to Baguio, where they spent the last few months of the Japanese occupation as virtual prisoners of the commander-in-chief.

While the Japanese, with the inadequate means at their disposal, were hurriedly improvising the defence of Luzon, the Filipino resistance movement, and among the several organizations particularly the Hukbalahap, were effectively preparing the ground for the American invasion. The guerrilla fighters constantly disrupted Japanese lines of communication, they attacked Japanese posts and harassed their troops. They also killed quite a few Makapilis, or persuaded them into deserting or changing sides. Meanwhile the Americans, having won complete supremacy in the air, methodically destroyed the Japanese defence works and other military objectives on the island, mostly on the strength of intelligence reports received from the resistance organizations. After the conquest of Leyte MacArthur's forces did not immediately proceed towards Luzon, but in a preparatory move, landed on the south-western coast of Mindoro, on 15 December. The island was easily captured and it provided the Americans with a base from which they could disrupt Japanese shipping in the South China Sea.

The invasion of Luzon took place on 9 January 1945 in Lingayen Gulf. Since American carrier-strikes in the Manila Bay had deluded the Japanese into believing that the major attack would be made in this area, the landings near Lingayen took them completely by surprise. Cut off from their bases, exhausted from continuous engagements with the guerrilla movement, short of aircraft and almost totally demoralized, the Japanese troops made hardly any attempt to oppose the invading forces. While the Americans rapidly penetrated into Central Luzon, surrounded Baguio on the 15th and marched towards Manila, the main bulk of the Japanese army

withdrew into the mountains. Some 18,000 Japanese marines entrenched themselves in Manila and made preparations for a last-ditch battle. Meanwhile the Huks conquered Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Tarlac, including the provincial capitals, where they appointed governors.

It was McArthur's main objective to capture Manila, on political grounds as well as for military-strategic reasons: it was the capital and it offered excellent port facilities. But while the Japanese were unable to concentrate sufficient forces to prevent the Americans from making new landings on Luzon and advancing towards Manila, they put on a most desperate fight in the city itself. Without encountering much resistance the Americans carried out amphibious operations in Batangas and Zambales to the south and north of Manila Bay, and on 30 January they conquered Olongapo on Subic Bay. McArthur's main force was, at the same time, moving south along the highway to Manila, again without meeting any strong opposition. An advance column entered the capital on 3 February and in a rapid strike it liberated the Allied prisoners and detainees at Santo Tomas. The next day, however, the real battle for Manila began and it degenerated into a holocaust in which Japanese frustration over the Filipino lack of collaboration demonstrated itself in a three weeks' orgy of unrestrained and unparalleled bestialities which formed the macabre culminating-point of Japan's presence in South-East Asia. Isolated, encircled by the Americans and the Huks, the Japanese retreated into the area south of the Pasig River, burning down houses, pillaging, raping and massacring at random. One of the hospitals was sacked and its doctors and patients done to death; in Santiago Fort some 700 detainees were burned alive; and numerous other massacres were carried out. In total between 5,000 and 8,000 civilians were brutally murdered before the American forces were able to end the slaughter. Manila itself was reduced to a smoking heap of ruins when, on 23 February 1945, the town was completely cleared of Japanese.

After Manila was captured the battle for the Philippines was virtually over: for the rest the campaign consisted of the piecemeal destruction of the Japanese garrisons in the various islands as well as of the isolated troops in the mountain areas of Luzon, while the major Allied attack was now directed towards the Bonin islands and the Ryukyus.

THE LIQUIDATION OF FRENCH RULE IN INDOCHINA

In these months when their domination over South-East Asia was gradually crumbling, the Japanese liquidated the one colonial regime that had managed to survive for about three years after Pearl Harbor: French Indochina. This step against the French authorities was the result of Japan's military defeats which had brought Indochina within the reach of

the Allied forces. The territory's defence became an urgent problem and in addition to this there was the suspicion among the Japanese that, in case of an invasion, they might be confronted with a possible unwillingness on the part of the French to observe the common defence agreement of July 1941, or the possibility of their joining the side of the Allied powers. The Japanese were under no illusion that the tractable attitude of the colonial regime in the past had been dictated by any other consideration but loyalty to Vichy: the appreciation of its own impotence, the desire to preserve French sovereignty over Indochina and weather the crisis with as little damage as possible.

As a factor conditioning Indochina's position *vis-à-vis* Japan the loyalty of the French colonial authorities to Vichy disappeared, however, when in July and August 1944 Allied troops liberated France from the Germans and the Pétain administration was replaced by a provisional government under General De Gaulle. As Governor-General Decoux had long been aware that this might happen, he had already persuaded Vichy to issue a decree, on 18 February 1943, which would give him extraordinary powers in case the contacts between the colony and metropolitan France should be interrupted. This decree had been kept secret for about a year and a half, but it was officially proclaimed on 20 August 1944. At the same time the promise was made to the Japanese that the developments in Europe would not produce any change in Indochina's attitude. For the moment Japan accepted the rather anomalous situation that the colony was formally dependent on the French Gaullist government which, although itself not at war with Japan, belonged to the Allied powers, but that it was administered under a decree of the previous anti-Allied government while it was also bound to collaborate with Japan against the Allies by virtue of agreements between Tokyo and that government.

Meanwhile Decoux approached the new authorities in Paris, pointing out that the French administration and French sovereignty were still recognized by Japan and that it was, therefore, unnecessary to refer to a 'reconquest' of Indochina. In particular he insisted that a hostile attitude should not be adopted, since this might induce the Japanese to take over the administration of the colony. Yet the French government had several reasons for making a greater contribution to the Allied victory than merely placating the Japanese in anticipation of their defeat. France was fearful of the United States which was known to be very anti-French in its attitude towards Indochina; and there was the wish, moreover, to rehabilitate herself in the eyes of China. Official circles in Paris greatly disliked Decoux because of his political record as a follower of Vichy. The permission to retain his post was all Decoux was able to obtain, and this only because it might reassure the Japanese that the change of regime in France did not affect the situation in Indochina. At the same time, however, he was put under the supervision of General Mordant, the former commander of the colonial army, who in July had been given the order to organize a French

underground and who, on 10 September, was appointed the general representative in Indochina of the provisional government.

While Decoux' policy of exercising caution in his dealings with Japan was only adopted by the authorities in Paris in the interest of enabling him to continue to build up a façade of collaboration with the Japanese, this line was no longer accepted by the French colonial community. Now that it was evident that De Gaulle was going to determine the future of France, the French in Indochina adapted themselves to this realization, and in a most ostentatious way, since they strongly felt the need to wipe out the stains of their former adherence to the Vichy regime. First of all, the memories of Pétain and his 'National Revolution' were gradually removed: Gaullist prisoners were released and discriminatory measures against Jews and freemasons withdrawn. A resistance organization was also built up among the colonial bureaucracy and, in particular, within the armed forces, and for the first time since 1940 the French in Indochina started to make preparations for an armed struggle against Japan.

It was, of course, the intention that this should happen in as discreet a way as possible, but in their zeal to prove convincingly their loyalty to a government which, for years, they had decried as anti-nationalist and whose followers they had persecuted as traitors, many Frenchmen neglected the most essential precautionary measures. By doing so they irritated those among their fellow countrymen who had been in the undergound since the beginning of the Japanese period and who had risked their lives by passing on intelligence to the Allies. Their actions also horrified Decoux for whom it became far more difficult not to lose the already dwindling confidence of the Japanese. He informed the authorities in Paris about the reckless way in which the anti-Japanese campaign was conducted, but the French government was more interested in clearing France's reputation in Asia than in shielding the formerly Vichyist colonial bureaucracy from a threat which, in view of the impending Japanese collapse, she failed to take seriously.

The Japanese were fully aware of what was brewing among the French, and already confronted with the intensifying guerrilla actions of the Viet Minh they feared a French undergound movement which might endanger their lines of communication. They were also afraid of a possible *volte-face* of the colonial administration which, whether or not coinciding with an Allied invasion, might line up the French army against their forces. Since the American landings on the Philippines and the British advance in Burma, Indochina had become the key territory in the Japanese defence of the 'Southern Regions'. Decoux did his utmost to allay Japanese suspicions, but although outwardly attaching credit to his professions of loyalty, the Japanese expected him to throw off the mask any time and they took steps to forestall him. In January 1945 they started to reinforce their Indochinese garrison and to encamp troops in places where they had not appeared before. Their distrust increased when, on 12 January, a heavy

American bombing raid against targets in the coastal areas from Saigon to Cam Ranh Bay inflicted severe losses upon the Japanese air and naval installations without opposition from the French anti-aircraft batteries which were obliged to come into action under the common defence agreement. On 1 February the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War decided that Japan should abrogate the treaties of 1940 and 1941 and take the responsibility for Indochina into her own hands. That month Japanese troop movements were carried out which did not escape French attention, but in general the Japanese were more successful than the French in concealing their true intentions. When Japan struck, on 9 March 1945, it came as a complete surprise to Decoux as well as to the overwhelming majority of the French military and civilian authorities.

That day ambassador Shunichi Matsumoto approached Decoux, who was on an inspection tour in Southern Indochina, and delivered him an ultimatum in which the government in Tokyo demanded that the French administration and the armed forces be placed under Japanese military authority, that they be reorganized and that they co-operate loyally with the Japanese army. The governor-general protested, stating that nothing was left of French sovereignty over Indochina, but he was told that there were to be no negotiations: within two hours he had to comply with the request. Decoux attempted to contact the officials in Hanoi, the Indochinese capital, but meanwhile the ultimatum lapsed, after which he was taken prisoner. That same hour Japanese troops occupied all vital points in the colony: administrative buildings, factories, banks, police offices and broadcasting stations; they took over the barracks, disarmed the French troops and arrested the military and civilian authorities.

Within half a day, in one blow, the colonial regime was swept aside, and the French administration liquidated. Only in the frontier fortresses of Lang Son and Dong Dang there was some resistance: the two French garrisons defended themselves bravely but on 11 and 12 March the towns were stormed by the Japanese after which the defenders were beheaded or bayoneted. A small unit of the colonial army managed to escape: the day before the coup it had left Hanoi, its attempts to withstand the Japanese failed because of the hostile attitude of the Vietnamese population, and hard-pressed by the Japanese it had no choice but to cross the frontier into China.

JAPANESE-TYPE INDEPENDENCE IN VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND LAOS

After assuming full control over Indochina the Japanese were primarily interested in preserving law and order and safeguarding the continuity of the administrative process and the public services. Of the colonial troops who had been taken prisoner the indigenous soldiers were re-

cruited into an auxiliary corps of the Japanese army and kept in reserve for drafting into the national armies of Vietnam and Cambodia which were to be established at a later date. The native police were rearmed. Administrative posts, hitherto held by French officials, were taken over by Japanese or indigenous functionaries; in general the Japanese assumed only a few top positions, the remaining functions being given to local personnel who thus secured a far more advanced position than they had ever had before. Under Japanese supervision the existing native bureaucratic structure was maintained. To emphasize the disappearance of colonial rule and win the confidence of the nationalist politicians, the Japanese formally recognized the right of the Indochinese nations to be independent. On 11 March Emperor Bao Dai proclaimed the independence of Vietnam, adding that his country would closely collaborate with Japan, and two days later King Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia made a similar statement. In Laos the Japanese encountered some opposition of the aristocratic circles around the strongly pro-French crown prince Savang Vatthana, but on 5 April their troops entered Luang Prabang after which the recalcitrant prince was sent to Saigon, and King Sisavang Vong was forced to denounce the Protectorate Treaty on the 8th and to proclaim his kingdom's independence.

In general, however, the Japanese attempts to ingratiate themselves with the nationalist leaders and the peoples of Indochina did not meet with great success. In the Vietnamese territories their policy was a complete failure, while the success they apparently scored in Cambodia and Laos was not the result of the pro-Japanese feelings of the indigenous politicians. In these two countries the monarchs still enjoyed a certain amount of popular prestige, and independence granted by the Japanese to the traditional establishment was easily accepted, particularly since the intellectual elite which controlled the administration and occupied significant positions in court circles had no reason to oppose it. In spite of the ostentatious violence with which the Japanese had eliminated French colonialism the political leaders in Cambodia and Laos knew that the situation initiated by the events of 9 March would not last and that a completely new development had to be reckoned with in the near future. They realized that, after Japan's defeat, neither France nor the Allied powers for that matter were likely to recognize any Japanese-sponsored independence. Due to the French loss of prestige since 1940, their political self-consciousness and their desire for national freedom had been considerably increased, but there was a difference of opinion as to the attitude to be adopted *vis-à-vis* France. In Cambodia a group of radical nationalists was in favour of converting the quasi-independence under Japanese auspices into real independence immediately after the war and of defending it against any French attempt at restoring colonial rule. Their leader was Son Ngoc Thanh who returned from exile after the Japanese *coup de force* and who became foreign minister in May 1945. Others, and among them

the court circles, opted for a more cautious line, partly on the consideration that Cambodia could not manage without French technical and economic assistance, partly out of concern for the position of the monarchy. By a decree of 22 March royal absolutism had been practically restored, but it was feared that the influence and the prestige of the monarchy would suffer, if it were not the king and his advisers but the nationalist politicians who were primarily successful in effecting the country's independence. In Luang Prabang it was Prince Phetsarath, the viceroy and prime minister, who after the proclamation of independence and the removal of the crown prince became the key figure in the kingdom's political development. Self-assured and far less obsequiously pro-French than the members of the ruling dynasty, he gradually came under the influence of the nationalist-orientated elite which was strongly represented among the bureaucracy in Vientiane.

In the Vietnamese territories the monarchy and some political leaders attempted likewise to make as fruitful a use as possible of their new constitutional status. Emperor Bao Dai and his Prime Minister Tran Trong Kim, who had returned from exile to be appointed to this post on 17 April, decided to collaborate with the Japanese, but anticipating Japan's defeat they wanted in the first place to consolidate their own position and to establish a regime which, after the war, might be able to present itself to the Allies and particularly to France as a really independent national Vietnamese government. Immediate steps were taken to achieve this goal. The name 'Vietnam' was officially adopted, the French language was suppressed in education and in the administrative services, Vietnamese officials assumed positions up to this time reserved for Europeans, and on 8 May it was announced that a new constitution would be prepared and that it would be based on the principle of the unity of the three territories, Tonkin, Annam and Cochin China. To win the support of the population the government on 23 May introduced a fiscal reform which abolished the burdensome capitation tax for the non-propertied classes. Political parties were officially admitted, and an amnesty was extended to political prisoners, except communists. The youth movement which had been organized by Decoux was placed under a special Youth Department and pushed in a fervently nationalist direction.

Yet, in contrast to the politicians in Laos and Cambodia, the ministers of Bao Dai were unable to present themselves as acceptable representatives of Vietnamese nationalism. Japan was partly responsible for this: in Vietnam she interfered more excessively with internal affairs than in the other Indochinese countries, while furthermore, she refused to allow Cochin China to come under the authority of the new administration. In Annam and Tonkin the Japanese transferred several public and administrative services to the Vietnamese government, and they also allowed the Emperor to appoint a viceroy in Tonkin, but Cochin China, vital as a rice-producing territory, continued to be under direct rule. It was placed

under a Japanese governor, and all efforts of Tran Trong Kim to persuade the Japanese authorities to transfer administrative authority over the region to his government were unsuccessful.

This circumstance made the Japanese-sponsored independence far less attractive to the Vietnamese nationalists than it was to the political leaders in Laos and Cambodia. Consequently Bao Dai was unable to mobilize any support from nationalist circles. After the resignation of the pro-French minister Pham Quynh in March and the refusal of the Catholic conservative though popular nationalist politician Ngo Dinh Diem to co-operate, Tran Trong Kim had proved almost the only noted nationalist whom the Emperor found willing to head the new administration. The regime obtained some support of the two politico-religious sects and of a few pro-Japanese organizations. Her failure to bring Cochin China within her realm further discredited the government, while the ministers were paralysed in their activities by the realization that they were compromising themselves by collaborating with Japan without serving any national purpose. Finally Tran Trong Kim's administration faced an increasingly deteriorating economic situation.

The most important factor, however, which contributed to the general lack of enthusiasm for the new regime was the unpopularity of the elite groups from among which it recruited its office-bearers and adherents — the same factor which, previous to March 1945, accounted for the failure of the Japanese efforts to win the confidence of the Vietnamese masses. The Vietnamese were politically more conscious and advanced than the peoples of Cambodia and Laos, and since the monarchy as an institution and the personality of the Emperor commanded far less respect than in the other states, and the traditional bureaucracy was even widely hated, they did not automatically follow the course dictated by the ruling classes. They were offered an alternative, moreover, by the Viet Minh.

The change of March 1945 greatly favoured the resistance movement. The disappearance of French posts in the countryside and the fact that the Japanese army confined itself to occupying the towns and occasionally sending out patrols to protect its communications, enabled the Viet Minh to operate more freely than before. The desertion of quite a few Vietnamese soldiers of the colonial army to the guerrillas considerably strengthened its power as a fighting force. The gradual disintegration of the traditional structure made it possible for the Viet Minh to infiltrate progressively into the administrative bodies and to undermine the Bao Dai regime: even Phan Ke Toai, the imperial viceroy in Tonkin, came under its spell. The organization was also successful in strengthening its authority as a national movement against the conservative nationalist political parties. But its greatest asset was the enormous support which, as a resistance organization, the Viet Minh was able to draw from among the rural masses: with their help the guerrillas consolidated their position and extended their

influence. In May 1945 already they controlled large areas in Upper and Central Tonkin, with the exception of the towns, while they also made a big impression on the peasant population in the provinces of the Red River Delta where famine and Japanese rice requisitions combined to provoke a rebellious mood. When the end of the Japanese occupation came in sight it was evident that the Viet Minh rather than the Bao Dai administration stood the best chance of taking Vietnam's future into its hands.

The *coup de force* of March 1945 in Indochina produced a profound shock in Thailand. The civilian leaders who, in co-operation with some naval officers, controlled the country, were quite certain that they were not in the good books of Japan since they ousted the military and pro- Japanese elements from the government in July 1944, and they feared that they might receive the same treatment as the French colonial regime. The Japanese seem to have planned such a move, and although they were apparently reluctant to carry it out the Thai leaders were nervous nevertheless. They seriously began to consider the possibility of attacking first in order to prevent being caught unprepared as the French had been. A break with Japan would also relieve Thailand of her obligation to comply with the heavy requirements of the Japanese armed forces which were pushing the country towards an economic and financial collapse. Finally, if she changed sides, Thailand might be recognized as an allied nation of the Western powers. Pridi sounded out the opinion of the Allied military commanders on the matter, but since the British did not envisage an invasion of Thailand until November 1945 Lord Mountbatten was not prepared to encourage him. He did not want the underground movement to expose itself prior to that event, as this might jeopardize the guerrilla organization's potentially valuable support during the planned military operations later. For Pridi it was disappointing, because he had no choice but to wait; but as it turned out, it meant that the Thai resistance movement did not have to come into action at all.

THE BURMESE REBELLION; THE DEFEAT OF THE JAPANESE IN BURMA AND THE PHILIPPINES

The permission to attack the Japanese forces which South-East Asia Command withheld from Pridi and his followers was granted to the Thakins, but in Burma the Allied invasion was already in full swing. After the capture of Myitkyina in August 1944 there was a pause in the British offensive during which the Japanese made hasty defence preparations, deciding to concentrate their efforts on protecting the Yenangyaung oilfields and the rice areas of Southern Burma and to abandon the attempts at preventing the Allies from restoring the overland route to China. The Allied attack was resumed on 16 October when the troops under the com-

mand of General Stilwell, who was recalled soon afterwards because of his arguments with Chiang K'ai-shek, began to move towards Indaw and Bhamo. A few weeks later the Kwo Min Tang armies in Yunnan started their advance along the Burma Road. Due to the slow progress of the Chinese offensive the Japanese were able gradually to withdraw their troops from the area: on 15 December they evacuated Bhamo and in January 1945 Wan-ting. The Burmese end of the Burma Road, Lashio, was occupied by the Allies on 7 March.

The route to China was reopened, but this was no longer the major objective of the Allied offensive which was directed against the Japanese positions between the Chindwin and the Irrawaddy, and beyond. In a preparatory move British and Indian forces pushed into Arakan towards the end of 1944, and in January 1945 they carried out amphibious operations in the coastal region, capturing Akyab on the 3rd and Ramree island early in February. This attack was aimed at establishing bases for a seaborne assault on Rangoon, planned for May, as well as forward airfields in support of the main offensive. The operation, master-minded by General Slim, was intended to prevent the Japanese armies from falling back to Southern Burma and to force them to fight the decisive battle in the central part of the country. Striking across the Chindwin the British advanced in a rapid move towards Mandalay, took Shwebo and Sagaing in February and reached the Irrawaddy which they crossed at several points to the north and west of the old royal capital. At that moment the garrison of the Burma National Army in Mandalay was unable to restrain itself; it rose in rebellion and withdrew to the Shan states where it harassed the Japanese forces retreating from Northern Burma.

The Allied march towards Mandalay deceived the Japanese military commanders into believing that this town was the immediate target of the offensive. It was in fact a cover for another move which posed a far greater danger to the Japanese positions in the area. One unit of the British and Indian forces, leaving Kalemyo late in January, advanced in a southerly direction along a winding and difficult route until it appeared suddenly at Pakokku, where it crossed the Irrawaddy and, in a quick strike, captured Meiktila early in March. With Meiktila in Allied hands the Japanese armies in Arakan as well as in Central Burma were threatened with being cut off from their lines of retreat. Through the passes at An and Taungup the Japanese forces hurriedly moved out of Arakan, while the main bulk of the army attempted to spring the trap by making desperate efforts to reconquer Meiktila. The battle raged for nearly three weeks but towards the end of March the Japanese realized that they had lost the fight, and on 28 March they started retreating to the south, along the Sittang valley, or to the Shan states where they were able to keep an escape route open since the Chinese armies, in spite of British insistence, refused to interfere. Meanwhile, on 21 March, the Allied troops entered Mandalay.

The British offensive had so far been a great success, but the situation was not without danger because it had to be followed up quickly by another victory. It was imperative to take Rangoon as a supply base for the Allied troops; any failure to achieve this objective before the beginning of the monsoon rains might force the British to give up what they had won. As time was running out South-East Asia Command decided to make use of the Burma National Army. Clandestine negotiations with Aung San and other potentially anti-Japanese Burmese leaders had been going on for some months already, and although British circles entertained serious doubts, on political grounds, as to the desirability of such a deal, Lord Mountbatten, on military grounds, gave his assent and made an agreement under which the Burmese troops, as allies of the British, would participate in the campaign to drive out the Japanese by attacking them in the rear.

The Japanese had been highly suspicious of the B.N.A. since the rebellion of one of its units in Mandalay, but they accepted Aung San's offer to send the main bulk of the army towards the advancing Allies in order to defend the country. On 17 March the Burmese troops left Rangoon, saluted by the Japanese authorities and Ba Maw. The same day Aung San disappeared, followed the next day by Than Tun. After a while, when the B.N.A. detachments did not show up where they should have, the Japanese sensed that they had been deceived, but it was too late. Instead of marching towards its positions to fight the Allied forces, the B.N.A. had melted away, split up into small groups in the Sittang valley or dispersed in the Delta area, joining up with Thakin Soe's communist guerrillas in readiness to strike against the Japanese.

On 28 March 1945 the Burmese rebellion started and it made the Japanese position in South Burma untenable. Assaulted behind their lines of defence the infuriated Japanese retaliated by carrying out brutal reprisals, but they were unable to redress the situation. The Burmese guerrillas tied down numerous Japanese troops which otherwise would have been used against the British and Indian forces, and they caused a total breakdown of the Japanese lines of communication in the Delta region. In some districts they fought bitter engagements with the Japanese, particularly in the Pyinmana-Toungoo area. By completely upsetting the Japanese defence and thus effecting its disintegration the rebellion of the B.N.A. accelerated the British advance in South Burma and made a substantial contribution to the dazzling success of Mountbatten's plan to secure Rangoon before the rains started.

On 11 April the main bulk of the British and Indian forces heading for Pegu along the Sittang valley, left Yamethin, and on the 22nd it conquered Toungoo, reaching its destination on the 29th. At Pegu the Japanese made an attempt to hold out, but on 1 May they were forced to withdraw. Along the Irrawaddy the Allies moved as rapidly, overrunning Yenangyaung on 22 April and arriving at Prome on 2 May. The same day the long-planned

sea-borne operation in the mouths of the Irrawaddy was carried out and on 3 May Rangoon was occupied. The shattered remnants of the Burma Area Army retreated to Moulmein, behind the Salween. With them went Ba Maw who had refused to desert the Japanese; later on he proceeded to Tokyo.

A few days after Ba Maw had been compelled to leave Rangoon, Laurel and the members of his Philippine government had to move out of Baguio, which was captured by the Americans after some stiff fighting on 29 April. Laurel went to Tokyo, while the other members of his party chose to stay behind. By this time the campaign for the reconquest of the Philippines had already come to the stage of stamping out the resistance of the outlying and isolated Japanese garrisons. While the battle for Manila was still raging, the Americans took Mariveles, in the Bataan Peninsula, on 15 February, and the island fortress of Corregidor on the 16th. On 1 March McArthur's troops landed on Palawan, on the 11th near Zamboanga on Mindanao, and in the last weeks of March and the first of April on Panay, Cebu, Negros and Bohol in the Visayas. The central part of Mindanao was invaded when landings were made near Cotabato on 19 April and Davao on 4 May. In most cases the Americans confined themselves to capturing the strategically vital points and securing some lines of communication, leaving it to the guerrilla units to do the mopping-up. The Hukbalahaps in Luzon and the other Filipino armed organizations in the rest of the archipelago made an extremely significant contribution to clearing their country of the Japanese who often put up fanatical resistance. Early in July McArthur solemnly proclaimed that the Philippines were liberated from the enemy, but in the mountainous areas of Luzon, in Mindanao and in several islands of the Visayas Japanese groups were still holding out, in much the same way as scattered units were maintaining themselves in some parts of Burma.

THE PREPARATIONS FOR INDONESIAN INDEPENDENCE

While the Allied forces were closing in on the Japanese empire, fighting their way into the Philippines and Burma, destroying Japan's navy and annihilating the 14th Army and the Burma Area Army, Indonesia entered the penultimate phase of her development towards independence under Japanese surveillance. Clearly connected with Japan's military reverses, the declaration of the Japanese government of 7 September 1944 demonstrated an outwardly more accommodating posture *vis-à-vis* Indonesian nationalist desires as a means to induce the masses and their leaders into making use of all their energy and resources. In the words of General Kisuyu Ayabe, chief of staff of the 7th Area Army, Indonesia's national consciousness had to be utilized, 'to strengthen the defence and the co-

operation with the military government and to make Japan and Java one and inseparable'. The Japanese did not fail to stress the fact that their war against the Allied powers was identical to Indonesia's attempts at preventing a restoration of colonial rule. This was also the view of Sukarno who was under no illusion as to what a Western victory might mean to the cause of Indonesian independence.

With Sukarno, and the Masjumi which also accepted the Koiso Declaration, on their side, the Japanese authorities tended to drag their feet when it came to implementing their promise. They permitted the flying of the Indonesian flag and the singing of the national anthem, and they also appointed some Indonesians, mostly aristocrats, to top administrative functions, in November 1944, but they immediately humiliated the members of the nobility by forcing them to follow training courses. They also delayed the setting up of an independence preparatory committee as had been provided for in the Japanese government's declaration. In both September and November the Central Advisory Council for Java was especially convened, but only to discuss the steps to be taken to strengthen the co-operation with Japan in the defence of the country.

The Koiso promise had made a deep impression, however, on the younger generation, organized either in the Barisan Pelopor or in the Peta, and according to them independence was a prerequisite for winning the war. In order not to lose touch with this current of Indonesian opinion, the nationalist politicians cautiously started prodding the authorities to make further moves towards the realization of independence. Not yet willing to concede anything, the military administration set out to split the nationalist movement by authorizing, on 4 December, the establishment of Muslim shock brigades, the *Hizbullah*, under Masjumi leadership. These were intended to serve as military reserve troops in addition to the Peta and as a religious vanguard organization for spreading Islamic doctrine, but the Japanese sponsored them primarily as an instrument for creating dissension between the secular nationalists and the Muslims. In this, however, the authorities made the mistake of underrating the nationalist sentiments of the Islamic leaders, who were as convinced as the secular politicians of the necessity of forming a united front. The rift the Japanese had hoped to produce did not occur, and both elite groups continued to demand that the development towards independence be quickened.

There were several reasons why the nationalists, Sukarno among them, intensified their pressure on the Japanese administration. Since September 1944 the military situation had become extremely critical for Japan. The Indonesian leaders clearly realized that it was due only to American strategic and political preferences that the Philippines had been attacked first, but they were also fully aware that an Allied invasion of Indonesia would soon follow. In such an event an independent Indonesia might arouse greater enthusiasm among the population to participate in the defence of the country than would ever be achieved as long as the country

was under Japanese domination. It was definitely not the intention of the political elite to turn against Japan or undertake any action behind the backs of the Japanese, but they felt frustrated and they sensed, moreover, that they were running the risk of incurring popular discontent because of their attitude which was more and more likely to be regarded as slavishly pro-Japanese. Finally, they had to take account of the impatience and restlessness of the younger generation, not only in the Barisan Pelopor and the Peta, but also in the civil service in which from November 1944 onwards many senior officials had been replaced by determined and ambitious young people.

The immediate reason for the nationalist politicians to stress their point more forcefully presented itself in February 1945 when a detachment of the Peta staged a rebellion at Blitar. The outburst was the result of the dissatisfaction, general among Peta soldiers, with the arrogant behaviour of Japanese officers, but in this area they were also infuriated by the food requisitions, the sufferings of romusha labourers working on fortifications and the recruitment of young women for Japanese army brothels. A situation like this existed, in fact, almost everywhere in Java, and it is not quite clear why of all the Peta batallions only the one in Blitar revolted, but on 13 February the decision was taken and on the 14th the Japanese were attacked. By subtle negotiations the Japanese talked the rebels into surrendering within a few days. They executed six of the ringleaders and sentenced some forty to long terms of imprisonment — a rather moderate retribution compared with the usual Japanese reprisals after such events. But the Blitar affair was clearly considered to be a sign on the wall, and its repercussions were widespread. Fearful of similar explosions if nothing were done to remedy the economic situation the Central Advisory Council, dominated by the nationalist elite, secular and Muslim alike, on 21 February requested the Japanese administration to release consumer goods immediately and to improve the working conditions of the labourers. To break the political deadlock it was suggested that the Djawa Hokokai and the Masjumi be permitted to merge in the interest of a rapid integration of all efforts to achieve Indonesian independence. A 'New Life Movement' was recommended to carry on propaganda for independence among all sections of the population.

The Japanese, still waiting for discord between the secular and the Islamic wings of the nationalist movement, were not inclined to comply with this request. But the Blitar rebellion had opened their eyes, and realizing that they could not possibly keep the nationalists waiting any longer with mere promises, they changed their course. On 1 March commander-in-chief Harada announced the setting up of a preliminary committee to investigate the problems related to independence. Such a decision had to be approved of by the 7th Area Army Command in Singapore, which was not greatly in favour of such a move, in spite of the recommendations made by the military administration in Java, which

pointed out that the confidence of the people could not be won until the promise of independence was fulfilled. The hedging attitude of the commander-in-chief of the 7th Area Army, General Seishiro Itagaki, caused some delay, but at a discussion between the heads of the General Affairs Departments of the military governments under his command, it was decided, towards the end of April, to step up the development towards independence. Permission was also given to launch the committee of investigation. Established on 29 April and consisting of about sixty members —Indonesian, Japanese, Chinese and Eurasian — under the chairmanship of Radjiman Wediodiningrat and assisted by a Japanese vice-president, this committee held its first plenary meeting from 28 May to 1 June.

Since February the Japanese had completely lost the Philippines and nearly all of Burma; the Allied forces had cut deep into the inner defences of the Japanese Empire, capturing Iwojima in the Bonin group on 19 March and landing on Okinawa in the Ryukyu archipelago on 1 April. After the surrender of Germany, on 8 May, the Allies were able, moreover, to deploy all their power against Japan. With the Allied landings on Tarakan on 1 May the invasion of Indonesia finally started in all seriousness. Japanese troops offered stubborn resistance and it was not until 23 June that the island was completely cleared, but the attack struck directly at Japan's Achilles-heel. Australian forces landed in Brunei Bay, early in June, and proceeded towards the oil towns of British Borneo: Seria was taken on the 21st and Miri on the 25th. It was in British North Borneo that the Japanese, anticipating an invasion, carried out the forced march of some 1,300 Australian prisoners of war from Sandakan into the interior — another death-march — but Sandakan was not attacked. Instead a large Allied force appeared off Balikpapan on 26 June and started an intensive bombing of the Japanese positions before troops went ashore on 1 July at the last of the Bornean oil centres which was still in Japanese hands. The Allied offensive not only seriously jeopardized Japan's oil situation, but it also threatened to cut off the Japanese troops in Indonesia's main islands from the rest of the Japanese-held territory. Facing this predicament but still eager to avoid an unconditional surrender the Supreme Command made an effort to organize a prolonged resistance in those areas in which the Japanese troops were in the process of being isolated. However, such a last-ditch stand could only be embarked upon provided the population gave the fullest possible support, and in anticipation of the relevant decisions yet to be made officially, the new commander-in-chief in Java, General Yosiuchi Nagano, was given the order, on 1 July, to set up a committee for the preparation of independence.

Now that there was no longer any doubt that Japan's defeat was rapidly approaching, Indonesian pressure on the Japanese authorities was steadily building up. With the militant groups coming more and more into prominence, a second problem presented itself to the nationalists, the one related to future political leadership. Afraid that the development would lead to

a period of revolutionary tension in which the impatient younger generation might wrest the direction of the movement towards independence out of the hands of the old-time politicians, the latter stepped up their efforts to persuade the Japanese regime into transferring control over the administrative bodies to Indonesians. At a meeting of the Central Advisory Council on 18 June they also advocated the amalgamation of all existing organizations into one large unitary mass movement, including the younger generation and the Peta, under a single directorate. This suggestion may well have been a move of the secular nationalists to deprive the Masjumi of its status as an independent organization, but it was also a device of the older politicians, secular as well as Muslim, to bring the radicals under their control and appease them, at the same time, by offering them a significant place in the movement. The authorities as much as the nationalist politicians feared an outbreak of fiery nationalism, and not willing to lose control over the situation, they refused to part with their supervisory powers over the youth organizations. The latter were included in the so-called 'New Life Movement', which was launched on 2 July under the leadership of Sukarno, Hatta, Wahid Hasjim, and also Wiranata Kusuma, a representative of the aristocratic class, but they remained under Japanese control.

For the moment this manoeuvre succeeded in stemming the tide of revolutionary fervour, but it was realized that genuine concessions to the nationalist politicians had to be made in order to strengthen their position *vis-à-vis* the militant groups. The statement in which Japan finally committed itself officially to Indonesian independence was made on 17 July, when the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War decided that the independence of the Indies had to be recognized as quickly as possible and that a committee to that effect should be established, this time not only for Java, but for the entire archipelago. The 7th Area Army Command in Singapore was still hesitant, and in a conference of the chiefs of staff, on 30–31 July, it was agreed that Indonesia should be given independence early in 1946. But Tokyo was in a hurry, and on 5 August Marshal Terauchi, the commander-in-chief of Southern Area Armies, was instructed to step up the necessary preparations so that the date of the proclamation of independence could be moved forward to September 1945. On the 7th Terauchi passed on this order to the Military Administration in Java and the same day an Independence Preparatory Committee of twenty-one members, chaired by Sukarno, was formally created to arrange for the transfer of authority by the Japanese armed forces.

In Tokyo's decision of 17 July as well as in the next Japanese moves Indonesia was treated as one country, unlike the Koiso Declaration which referred to the 'East Indies' but left it to the discretion of the several territorial administrations to implement the promise. The disparity, so far, between developments in the various islands had been one of tempo rather than of principle, conditioned in the first place by the degree of political

awareness in each region. But since September 1944 the Japanese had changed the emphasis of their policy; in addition to subordinating nationalist sentiments to the Greater East Asia concept they set out to provoke those sentiments in order to enlarge the number of potential adherents to their cause. Within days after the Koiso Declaration the commander in Sumatra, Moritake Tanabe, indicated that the local administration would closely follow the Javanese example, and on 3 January it was announced that a Central Advisory Council was to be set up. However, it was a long while before it actually met for the first time, on 27 June at Fort de Kock, but in the meantime closer contacts had been established between the two islands, and many Indonesian officials attached to the administration in Java had been transferred to Sumatra. On 25 July the Japanese announced the establishment of a special investigating committee for Sumatra, under Mohamed Sjafei, but the separation of the island from Java was annulled when on 7 August three Sumatran representatives were appointed to the new all-Indonesian Independence Preparatory Committee.

Although fundamentally not much different, there seemed to be a greater change when the territories under the rule of the navy were drawn into the general development towards independence. On the basis of outward appearances the impression had been created that the naval authorities were more reactionary than the army administrations in Java and Sumatra, and this impression was strengthened when the navy showed strong opposition to any formal commitment to independence, and thus caused the Koiso Declaration to be of an equivocal character. But the objections of the navy were based in the first place on strategic considerations, and were not any more the outcome of a particularly conservative posture than the previous absence of any political experimenting in the territories under its jurisdiction had been. After the disastrous battles in Philippine waters in October 1944 the Japanese fleet was no longer in a position to keep the lines of communications with Indonesia open, and as a result the navy lost its strategic interest in Indonesia. The naval authorities no longer had any reason to oppose a policy of political concessions, and they proceeded to establish more advisory councils and to appoint more Indonesians to administrative posts. Five representatives of the navy-ruled territories were nominated to the Independence Preparatory Committee early in August.

While all the former Netherlands Indies was to be covered by the proclamation of independence as the Japanese envisaged, the nationalists themselves cherished more far-reaching territorial ambitions. This became evident in the committee of investigation which had been charged with discussing the problems of government, economics and defence, ethnic minorities, religion and education, and with drawing up a draft constitution for an independent Indonesia. Composed of secular nationalists, Muslim politicians, members of the traditional aristocracy and representatives of the

various racial communities, the committee had all the potential for serious disagreement, but all groups were primarily motivated by the wish to preserve unity, and in less than two months they completed their task. On 1 June Sukarno outlined his philosophy on the five basic principles, or *pantja sila*, of the future Indonesian state: nationalism, internationalism (or humanitarianism), representative government, social justice and belief in God, and these were included in the so-called Djakarta Charter, the preamble of the constitution which the committee accepted at its plenary session from 10 to 17 July. The principle of the belief in God, to be seen in the context of religious freedom, was related to the cardinal issue of whether Indonesia should be an Islamic or a secular state, and this problem was solved by the compromise that it should be a secular republic, under a Muslim president and with Islamic law applying to avowed Muslims only. The point on representative government referred to *mufakat*, mutual consent, rather than to a Western-type parliamentary democracy; the draft constitution provided for a People's Congress, representing all sections of public opinion, an all-powerful president to whom the ministers were to be responsible and a unitary political organization.

As to the territory of the new state the majority of the investigating committee voted for the incorporation of Malaya, the British territories in Borneo and Portuguese Timor into Indonesia, on historical, anthropological and linguistic grounds. The 'Greater Indonesia' idea was, indeed, cherished in Malaya, be it exclusively among the numerically small group of radical Malay intellectuals.

THE 'GREATER INDONESIA' CONCEPT

The rapidly deteriorating war situation early in 1945 finally induced the Japanese to test in Malaya those two elements of policy with which they had been experimenting in Indonesia for some time already. An effort to encourage more successfully the co-operation of the population was made at the conference of the heads of the General Affairs Departments of the administrations under the 7th Area Army Command, in Singapore late in April, where an idea was put forward for the establishment of an organization to that effect. The so-called *Hodosho*, which came into being on 3 July and which was open to all ethnic communities, aimed at eliminating racial prejudice, at promoting mutual understanding and at strengthening common responsibility as a means of uniting the people for the defence of the country. It was a belated attempt at creating an all-embracing Malayan mass movement.

Enthusiasm was greatest among the radical-orientated intellectual Malays, not so much to serve Japan's purposes, however, as to arouse Malay political consciousness. For some time already they had been in a

state of excitement over developments in Indonesia, and sensing the impending defeat of Japan, they were eager to take advantage of the situation for carrying out their own objectives. On the occasion of the Koiso Declaration of 7 September 1944 the Singapore Malays had tried to form an Indonesian Association, but this had been prohibited by the authorities. Nine months later, however, the regime changed its attitude. Ibrahim bin Yaacob, the commander of the Peta, had been conducting a campaign in which he advocated the setting up of a 'Greater Indonesia', and from June onwards he made preparations to establish a political movement to give the idea a structural basis. In July the formally illegal Kesatuan Melayu Muda was reorganized as *Kesatuan Ra'ayat Indonesia Semenanjong*, or 'People's Union of Peninsular Indonesians', which was given Japanese backing after the conference of the heads of the military administrations of the 7th Area Army Command on the 29th. Adhering to the views of the radical section of Malay opinion, the Japanese for the first time abandoned the principle of relying primarily on the Malay aristocracy.

Neither the attempt at promoting a Malayan nationalism, nor the one to mobilize the Malay population by appealing to Malay nationalist sentiments materialized, however. In the context of Malaya's multi-racial society, the Hodosho was doomed to be a still-born child. The K.R.I.S. was not, but its influence was restricted to the radical, more or less leftist Malay intellectuals, while its professed aim, *Indonesia Raya*, was bound to create misgivings among the other communities. Neither was the K.R.I.S. successful in wresting a concrete promise of independence from the Japanese; on 12 August General Itagaki only referred to the greater efforts to co-operate with Japan in order to realize a glorious future. Yet, the plans of the K.R.I.S. leaders were ambitious enough, coinciding as they did with the views of the Indonesians. When Sukarno and Hatta went to Saigon on 9 August to be officially informed by Marshal Terauchi on the Japanese government's decision to proclaim Indonesia's independence, some Indonesian nationalists made a stop in Malaya for discussions with the Malay politicians. On their way home Sukarno and Hatta joined them, on 12 August, and in a conference with Ibrahim bin Yaacob and Burhanuddin al-Helmy in Taiping it was agreed that Malaya should be covered by the proclamation of independence, and that Ibrahim would be present in Batavia to attend the ceremony.

4 South-East Asia's Revolution and the Allied Occupation

THE JAPANESE SURRENDER

BOTH the plans of the Indonesian nationalist leaders and the Japanese authorities to proclaim independence under Japanese auspices and the ambitious project of a 'Greater Indonesia' were foiled by the unexpected suddenness of Japan's collapse. After one of the most ferocious battles of the entire war American troops succeeded in stamping out all resistance on Okinawa, on 20 June. With her armies retreating in all sectors of the war theatre, her navy gone and the mainland itself exposed to incessant and increasingly destructive bombings by the Allied air forces, Japan was in a desperate position, militarily, but on 27 July the cabinet of Admiral Kantaro Suzuki, which had succeeded Koiso's government the previous April, failed to respond positively to the Allied appeal, made the day before at the Four Power Conference at Potsdam, to surrender unconditionally. In early August American planes dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, while the Soviet Union declared war and her troops invaded Manchuria. Facing the 'complete and utter destruction' to which the Potsdam Declaration had been referring, Japan had no choice but to lay down her arms. She did so after she had been guaranteed that the authority of the Emperor would be preserved.

South-East Asia emerged from the war and the Japanese occupation with its economies run down and its finances in complete disorder. Its natural resources had been ruthlessly exploited and much of the region's technical and industrial equipment, its means of communication and its port facilities were destroyed. Its population was impoverished to a level hardly experienced before, and it suffered from malnutrition and disease. Material damage was greatest in those territories which had been overrun

twice, first by the Japanese armies in 1942, and again by the Allied forces in the final stage of the war, or which in the later years had been subject to incessant Allied air attacks. In Burma, the Philippines and British Borneo most towns were reduced to ruins by air-raids as well as, in the two former countries, by the actual fighting. At least four-fifths of Greater Manila had been razed to the ground; only one building survived the war in Jesselton; some towns did not exist but for their names and sites. But in the other South-East Asian countries, too, considerable damage had been wrought, and only Thailand and French Indochina escaped comparatively unscathed.

The waste of human life was appalling, not only of Japanese, Allies and local Asians who had been killed in the actual battles of traditional warfare or the guerrilla engagements, and of Europeans and Americans who had died in the internment camps or in Japanese construction projects, but also, and to a higher degree, of those among the civilian population who fell victim to Allied bombings and Japanese massacres or who perished as slave labourers or died of starvation. The overwhelming majority of Vietnamese dead during the Japanese period belonged to the last-mentioned category; in Java, Malaya and Burma the coolie recruitment scheme accounted for the greatest loss of life. In the Philippines the war itself as well as Japanese terrorism caused most of the Filipino casualties. Due to the inadequate state of civil registration in the territories concerned, correct numbers are, in general, not available in this respect, and even rough estimates are hardly reliable as long as they are not related to Western victims. It was only in the Philippines that the American and Filipino authorities arrived at a more or less dependable figure: 1,100,000 dead, wounded and mutilated. Out of this total the number of people murdered or tortured to death by the Japanese amounted to 131,000, and that of other non-battlefield Filipino dead to 91,000, while some 27,000 were killed in action as members of the Philippine armed forces. For the other territories no total estimates are obtainable, but only those of some isolated events or specific disasters such as the Tonkin famine, the Burma-Siam Railway tragedy, or the massacres in Singapore and West Borneo.

In addition to the material damage and the loss of life there was, finally, a marked decline in moral and ethical standards. Corruption was rampant in the public as well as in the private sphere. A general feeling of disrespect for any authority had emerged, resulting in widespread lawlessness and a wave of violence, crime and banditry. But this new mentality which, caused by the war and the Japanese occupation, was responsible for the breakdown of the traditional norms of social behaviour and the disregard of age-old beliefs, also accounted for a general reassessment of social values. This factor considerably heightened the contradictions of class and the conflict between generations, and in combination with the process

of social disintegration which weakened the existing social, political, educational and religious institutions and affected the customary way of life of a great number of people of all classes, it was instrumental in sparking off the final phase of South-East Asia's revolution.

THE PROBLEMS OF POST-WAR CONTROL

When Japan announced her surrender, on 15 August 1945, the greater part of South-East Asia was still under her domination: Indochina, Thailand, Malaya and, apart from New Guinea and some areas in Borneo, Indonesia. To hasten the termination of Japanese control it was imperative to guarantee a rapid and orderly repatriation of the Japanese troops. A quick liberation of Allied prisoners of war and civilian detainees was also of vital importance, for humanitarian reasons. Such a task required that the territories concerned be temporarily placed under military authority, to be carried out by those Allied powers commanding the largest forces in the region. The only suitable candidates were, of course, the United States and Great Britain.

But in precisely the week of the Japanese surrender a sweeping change in the British and American military spheres, decided upon by the chiefs of staff at the Potsdam Conference, was taking effect. For a long time already the British had been insisting on a widening of their field of action, since this might somewhat improve their battered prestige in the Far East. On the ground of strategic considerations American military circles did not, initially, like the idea to change the spheres of command, but in July 1945 they gave up their objections, knowing they would soon be able to force Japan to her knees. Furthermore the United States government readily left it to the British to bear the responsibility of restoring the pre-war colonial regimes, or at least contributing to this restoration, and at the same time to undergo the adverse political consequences of their new duties. As a result Indonesia which, apart from Sumatra, used to belong to the United States South-West Pacific Area, now fell entirely under the British South-East Asia Command. Another country to which the Potsdam decisions allowed some of its reputation to be retrieved was China: Indochina North of the 16th parallel was added to the field of operation of Chiang K'ai-shek's forces.

Several weeks elapsed between the Japanese surrender and the actual landings of the Allied troops. This was partly the result of the decision of the Allied chiefs of staff not to enter into any arrangements with the Japanese territorial commanders before Japan had formally signed the general document of surrender — and this event did not take place until 2 September. But the delay was also caused by the lack of preparations on the British side: an area marked out to be gradually conquered in a military campaign had to be occupied at once. In the British plans Malaya

received top priority, of course, and on 3 September their naval forces appeared off Singapore. After that, on 12 September British Indian troops landed near Saigon, but it was only towards the end of that month that they disembarked at Batavia. The Chinese armies started to advance into Northern Indochina early in September.

This lapse of four to six weeks between the announcement of Japan's surrender and the arrival of the Allied occupation forces delayed the liberation of prisoners of war and of civilian detainees as well as the disarming and repatriation of Japanese troops. It also created what, seen from a colonial administrative point of view, was described as a 'power vacuum'. For the European nations it was considered a matter of course that their authority should be restored in the Asian territories they had dominated before 1942. Great Britain did not face many problems in this respect: she had already conquered the greater part of Burma, and she was responsible herself for the reoccupation of Malaya and her territories in Borneo. But the prospects of restoring colonial rule seemed less favourable for France and the Netherlands. Because of their insufficient military power in mid-1945 both countries were still incapable of acting on their own: instead, they had to rely on the British and the Chinese. This period of dependence on the Allies was only regarded as a transitional phase towards the restoration of the pre-war regimes. It is true that some plans existed to adapt colonial rule slightly in the future to the ideals of democracy and liberty, in the name of which the Second World War had been fought, but a re-establishment of European sovereignty was a *sine qua non*. France had some military units at her disposal, and the day after the Japanese surrender she appointed Admiral Georges Thierry d'Argenlieu high commissioner of Indochina. Since the end of the war in Europe the Netherlands had not been able yet to build up an adequate army, but a Netherlands Indies administration in exile had already been set up in September 1944 in Brisbane, under Van Mook as lieutenant-governor-general.

The change in the military spheres of operation created some confusion and anxiety among the French and the Dutch, since no arrangements had been made so far with the British who were suddenly given supreme powers over their colonial territories. The Netherlands had signed an agreement with the United States command over the re-installation of Dutch civil administration in the conquered areas, but a similar arrangement with Lord Mountbatten's South-East Asia Command had to be worked out in a hurry when Japan surrendered. Yet the Dutch did not greatly oppose a temporary occupation of Indonesia by the British, whom they preferred to the Americans with their anti-colonial attitude. For France the prospects were dimmer: she did not have to fear the British, but she was worried about China's participation in the reoccupation of her colonial empire, and with good reason too, because the Chinese failed to show any willingness whatsoever to co-operate with the French on the

matter. In both countries, however, and particularly in the Netherlands which was militarily the weaker of the two, the greatest doubts were related to the question as to whether Great Britain was adequately prepared to carry out her tasks properly and, above all, quickly. It was feared that any delay might interfere with a smooth restoration of colonial rule.

This fear was not without foundation. In general, political circles in Europe were not closely in touch with the new situation in South-East Asia, and they also used to ascribe exclusively to Japanese manipulations whatever unfavourable news they received on the prevailing conditions. Yet they did not entirely fail to realize that the three years' absence of any European administration and, in the case of Indochina, the four years' servitude of that administration to Japan, could not but have considerably impressed Asian opinion. Asian nationalist politicians were expected to take advantage of the situation should any delay in the process of restoring colonial rule occur. And this was exactly what happened. In the opinion of the peoples and political leaders of South-East Asia, authority, to be authentic, did not necessarily have to originate outside South-East Asia, and as a result they did not regard the period between Japan's surrender and the arrival of the Allied forces in the same way as the Europeans did. To them it was not a power-vacuum; on the contrary, they viewed it as an opportunity to determine, for the first time, their own fate in order to prevent their countries, after the Japanese occupation, from sliding back into subordination to the former European masters. That the 'power-vacuum' was filled by the Asians themselves was the ultimate result of the long-standing desire for self-determination among self-conscious Asian circles, and this desire had been considerably reinforced during the Japanese period. Whatever the ambiguities and ulterior motives of Japan's rule and policies, the nationalists had come to know the Japanese as the first foreign masters who took them seriously and to whom they really mattered. In most cases the outward tokens of power and the prestige and emoluments going with authority were instrumental, moreover, in convincing the nationalist leaders as well as the indigenous officials that they were likely to lose their posts and privileges if the colonial regimes were restored.

Thus the belated arrival of the Allied occupation troops urged the nationalist politicians openly to proclaim their authority over the people before the pre-war European rulers restored their control. Yet this delay did not in any essential way affect the future course of events in South-East Asia. In Burma, where no 'power vacuum' occurred, the position of the nationalist movement was as strong as in Vietnam and Indonesia. That the national revolutions were able to consolidate themselves in the two latter countries was caused by other factors than by the absence of an Allied occupation force in the few weeks after the Japanese collapse. Furthermore, within a year after Japan's surrender the colonial regimes

were again in full control over the greater part of the region. It was only in Tonkin and Northern Annam in Indochina, and in Java and Sumatra in Indonesia, that centres of Asian resistance as well as of Asian sovereignty were able to maintain themselves in the face of European colonial ambitions.

The manner in which the Western nations re-established their domination over South-East Asia after the Japanese interlude depended, for each territory, on various separate circumstances and factors. In the Philippines as well as in Burma colonial restoration ran parallel with the fight against the Japanese in the final phase of the war, and in this both the Americans and the British were supported by the nationalist movements. The Philippines were enjoying internal autonomy already, and the date on which full independence would take effect had been agreed upon a decade earlier by the government of the United States and the Filipino leaders. Consequently there was no objection to a restoration of American authority which would be only temporary. In Burma the younger generation of nationalist leaders was not as sure of British aims as the Filipinos could be with regard to American intentions, but by encouraging the revolt of the Burma National Army against the Japanese they, too, made a considerable contribution to the success of the Allied advance which led to a restoration of colonial rule at the same time.

Malaya was the first country where the European colonial regime was firmly in the saddle after the Japanese surrender. No nationalist movement of any size existed, and the attempt of some radical Malays to establish a 'Greater Indonesia' in collaboration with Indonesian revolutionaries failed because of the lack of enthusiasm for such a scheme among the Malayan population. The communist-orientated, overwhelmingly Chinese M.P.A.J.A. did not in any way interfere with the British reoccupation which took place without great trouble in September 1945. In an equally smooth way the British reoccupied their dependencies in Borneo: it was here that the Japanese went through the only post-war retribution for their war-deeds at the hands of the indigenous population, when several thousands of them, after having laid down their arms, were attacked and killed by Murut tribesmen between Pensiangan and Beaufort.

THE REVOLUTIONS IN INDOCHINA AND INDONESIA

In neither the French nor the Dutch colonies did the political leaders have any guarantee whatsoever that the metropolitan powers would be willing to meet Asia's basic desires, and it was in Indochina and Indonesia that they took their fate into their own hands. Both in Cambodia and Laos the nationalist politicians in charge of the quasi-independent govern-

ments which had been sponsored by the Japanese early in 1945 adapted themselves quickly to the new conditions arising out of Japan's surrender. By doing so and by giving voice to the nationalist wishes of the intellectual groups they were able to secure the more or less general acceptance of their administrations' authority by the population. In Cambodia Son Ngoc Thanh assumed the function of prime minister and on 15 August he declared that he would firmly prevent any restoration of French rule; towards the end of September he organized a referendum in which some half a million people voted, an overwhelming majority favouring his policies. In Laos the initiative was with Prince Phetsarath of Luang Prabang who was supported by the 'Lao Issara' (Free Laos) committee in Vientiane, which consisted largely of members of the small Western-educated elite. In spite of the opposition of King Sisavang Vong, Phetsarath confirmed the independence of the country on 1 September and on the 15th, moreover, he solemnly proclaimed the unity of the kingdom of Luang Prabang and the southern provinces.

In Vietnam, on the other hand, it was not the indigenous administration which assumed control; it was swept aside by a people's revolution instead. In fact the revolutionaries had only to step into a vacuum, because immediately after the Japanese surrender the administrative structure, which had already started to fall to pieces in the previous months, collapsed completely. The only organization capable of taking over power was the Viet Minh. As the anti-Japanese resistance movement, uniting Vietnamese of various, be it largely leftist, political convictions, the organization commanded a great amount of prestige among the masses, and consequently its leaders were in a far stronger position than the other conservative nationalists who were either under the cloud of having collaborated with the Japanese or who had lost contact with the population in the long years of their exile in China.

The news of Japan's surrender provoked such great excitement in Hanoi that already on the next day the Japanese transferred control to Phan Ke Toai, the imperial viceroy in Tonkin. The latter, facing massive demonstrations as well as the occupation of public buildings by adherents of the Viet Minh, realized that there was little hope of saving the *ancien régime* and on 19 August he handed over his powers to the revolutionaries. On the 20th Viet Minh forces entered Hanoi. In Annam, also, people's committees were established and the Viet Minh assumed power: political prisoners were liberated and the traditional bureaucrats were pushed aside. Contrary to the developments in Tonkin and Annam the revolution in Cochin China was not exclusively a Viet Minh affair. On 12 August the Japanese, finally giving in to the wishes of the Vietnamese authorities, placed the territory under the Bao Dai regime, but two days later the conservative nationalist groups and the religious sects established a united front to take over the administration. The Viet Minh was able, however, to win a leading position among the revolutionary

forces when the communist Tran Van Giau, referring to the pro-Japanese backgrounds of many leaders of the united front, explained that the Allies should not be given too easy an excuse to destroy Vietnam's independence, and on 25 August, after a huge rally in Saigon a provisional Executive Committee for Nambo (i.e. Cochin China) was formed in which the Viet Minh occupied two-thirds of the seats.

Facing a popular movement of such dimensions Tran Trong Kim was unable to stay and the resignation of his government was followed, on 25 August, by the abdication of Emperor Bao Dai and the downfall of the monarchy. By this the last factor that might have arrested the course of the revolution gave way. Since Bao Dai was the symbol of continuity and legality and, in his Act of Abdication, he both made it clear that he handed over his authority to the new regime and, furthermore, called on the people to support it, the Viet Minh administration automatically became the legal successor of the imperial government. After this the first phase of the revolution was quickly brought to a close: on 29 August Ho Chi Minh formed a provisional government which also included several non-Viet Minh politicians, and on a meeting in Hanoi which was attended by an estimated 500,000 people he proclaimed the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on 2 September. During the August Revolution the Japanese behaved strictly neutrally: there was no question of arms or military equipment being supplied by them to the revolutionaries.

To maintain independence and to strengthen the forces of the new regime it was vital for the government that the masses, who applauded the revolution with a sweeping enthusiasm, should continue to support it. For this reason Ho Chi Minh strongly emphasized the unity of the nation. He denounced the excesses which had occurred and which, in spite of the fact that only some representatives of the hated old order, such as the former minister Pham Quynh and the Catholic mandarin Ngo Dinh Khoi, had been murdered, might create an atmosphere of terrorism and intimidation that could easily harm the revolutionary cause. In particular Ho Chi Minh turned against those of his followers who in too great a hurry wanted to carry out social-revolutionary reforms and adopt an anti-capitalist policy. It was a primary condition that the new government be enabled to consolidate itself, and for this reason the middle classes, out of which the technicians and intellectuals were recruited, were not to be alienated. For the time being capitalism was to remain the cornerstone of the Vietnamese economic system, although the leadership of the revolution was in the hands of communist politicians.

Yet the new government quickly set out to implement several reforms, to which the overwhelming majority of the population could not possibly raise any objection. Thus, immediately after taking over control, the Viet Minh abolished the very conservative Councils of Notables as well as the Mandarinate, putting an end to the old bureaucratic structure

which was replaced by an entirely new administrative hierarchy, based on people's committees. National minorities were promised the same rights as the Vietnamese enjoyed and the two million Catholics were to be treated in a tolerant way. In the socio-economic field the eight-hour working-day and minimum wages were introduced; public utility companies were nationalized and freedom of trade-unionism was proclaimed. Furthermore the entire French fiscal system with its unjust features that used to be so particularly burdensome for the lower classes, was abolished — a decision which won the government the favour of the population but which also brought her financial distress. One of the most important decrees was that of 8 September, embarking on an ambitious campaign against illiteracy.

In Indonesia the proclamation of independence did not, as in Vietnam, complete the first phase of the revolution; it marked the beginning of the process of taking over control by the nationalists. After the latter had been kept waiting for months by the Japanese, the preparations for an independent Indonesia had begun seriously on 7 August with the establishment of the Independence Committee that had to arrange for the transfer of authority. In this connexion Sukarno and Hatta paid a visit to the Japanese commander-in-chief in the Southern Areas, Marshal Terauchi, in his headquarters in Indochina, where they were promised independence at an early date. When Sukarno returned to Java on the 14th, and Japan surrendered the next day, it became clear, that the youth organizations and the anti-Japanese orientated nationalist groups were not greatly in favour of any independence granted under Japanese auspices. They put pressure on Sukarno to make a unilateral proclamation of independence. Sukarno wavered, fearful of the consequences if the Japanese should resent and resist any such action behind their backs, but on 16 August he and Hatta were carried off by members of a radical students' organization and brought to Rengasdengklok, while the impatient youngsters threatened to revolt against the Japanese forces. Later the same day the two leaders were set free on the basis of a vague undertaking that independence was to be proclaimed soon. Meanwhile, the Japanese announced that, in accordance with Allied instructions, they had to maintain the *status quo*, which meant that they were not in a position any more to give official support to a political change. The initiative was entirely with the Indonesians now: a declaration of independence was drawn up, and read by Sukarno to a small gathering in Batavia on 17 August.

Compared to the hesitant manner in which the proclamation of Indonesia's independence was arrived at, the consolidation of the republic's power was effected in a more purposeful way. On 18 August Sukarno and Hatta were elected president and vice-president, and a week later a constitution was promulgated. By the appointment of representatives of all ethnic, religious and social groups the Independence Committee was enlarged and set up as an advisory body, the 'Central Indo-

nesian National Committee', *Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat* or K.N.I.P., on the 22nd, while on 31 August a presidential cabinet was installed. Taking over the administration was also done in a quick and efficient manner, not, as in Vietnam, by substituting a new bureaucracy for the traditional hierarchy, but by a change of front of the Indonesian officials: civil servants simply went over from the Japanese to the republican authorities.

This desertion of the bureaucrats from Japan to the national government was an affair for which the older generation was responsible, which, both before and after Japan's surrender, had been primarily concerned with creating conditions that would guarantee an orderly transfer of power within the existing structural framework. At the same time, however, a more radical situation was developing in accordance with the desires of the younger nationalists. The latter were less interested in continuity of administration, and more in achieving their nationalist ideals in a truly revolutionary way: it was they who compelled Sukarno to proclaim independence. Within a few weeks the Japanese command in Java and Sumatra was facing such an impetuous *élan* and nationalist fervour of armed youth groups, students' associations and Peta detachments that it was unable to check the revolutionary development. In large areas the Japanese, dazed and demoralized already by their defeat in the war and unwilling to risk a bloodbath, had to give up control completely: they handed over their arms to the nationalists. In places where the Japanese garrisons were sufficiently strong to resist successfully, the enthusiasm and fanaticism of the Indonesian youngsters sometimes led to fierce clashes, as in Semarang which for several days witnessed a ferocious battle before the British occupation forces landed. In Batavia and Bandung the Japanese were constantly harassed, but here they were able to comply with the Allied order to preserve the *status quo*. Elsewhere in Java and Sumatra, however, the Indonesians assumed virtual control. It was only in Borneo, partly occupied by the Allied troops before the Japanese surrender, and in the Great East, areas in which, during the Japanese period, Indonesian nationalism had been given neither the opportunity nor the time to develop, that the revolutionary movement made hardly any tangible progress. Although national committees were locally established and in some areas, like Bali and Southern Celebes, revolutionary forces were quite active, ultimate control remained in Japanese hands.

THE BRITISH AND CHINESE OCCUPATION

It was evident that, in such circumstances, any restoration of colonial rule would be effected far less smoothly in Indonesia and Indochina than in the other South-East Asian countries. In these two colonies it was not the colonial powers themselves but the British and Chinese occupation forces who were the first to face the problem of dealing with the nationalist

revolution. Their task was exclusively military in nature; they had to disarm and assemble the Japanese, to liberate the prisoners of war and civilian detainees, and to maintain law and order. The relevant order dated from before the proclamation of independent states and it did not, of course, refer to overthrowing the indigenous governments which had emerged since. Yet, in practice, the Allied occupation amounted to precisely that in Southern Indochina and in the Indonesian territories outside Java and Sumatra — that these territories fell within the British sphere was no less accidental than the fact that the Chinese occupation of Northern Indochina did not bring about such a result.

Early in September 1945 British troops arrived in Southern Vietnam and encountered a rather confused situation, due to the fact that the provisional Executive Committee in Saigon had some difficulty in preserving law and order. The anti-Viet Minh-orientated nationalists, the Trotskyites, the Cao Dai and Hao Hoa sects had accepted Tran Van Giau's leadership, but they were afraid of the Viet Minh and acted on their own accord. The greatest danger to national unity came from those politicians who, in an attempt either to make a big impression on the population or to embarrass the Viet Minh, pretended to be more anti-French than the latter and organized attacks on French citizens and against European property. For such outbursts the Executive Committee was bound to be held responsible, and confronted with provocations which might provide the British and the French with an excuse to intervene, Giau had some political adversaries liquidated without much ado. He was unable, however, to stop the wave of violence against Europeans and pro-French Vietnamese, and the British commander, General Douglas Gracey, did not hesitate to restore French rule under the pretext of restoring law and order. On 12 September the bulk of the British occupation force, mainly Gurkhas, went ashore in Saigon, and after proclaiming a state of siege and banning Vietnamese newspapers, Gracey had weapons distributed, on the 22nd, to the few thousand French soldiers who had been disarmed half a year earlier by the Japanese. The next day the French took over the police stations and the town hall of Saigon, broke up the Executive Committee and arrested numerous adherents of the new regime.

It was expected in colonial circles that the capture of the administration in Saigon would create an opportunity for discussing the future political development of Vietnam on French conditions. It turned out to be a terrible miscalculation: 23 September 1945 marked the beginning of the Vietnamese war of independence. Giau called for immediate and firm resistance and on 25 September around 400 French civilians were butchered or abducted in a massacre for which the Binh Xuyen, an armed underworld organization, was primarily responsible. By blackmailing Marshal Terauchi into co-operation Gracey could make ample use of Japanese troops for guard duties; yet the battle for Saigon lasted more than a month, including a brief armistice under the cover of which French reinforcements

disembarked without danger of being molested. It was not before the end of October that the French expeditionary force of General Leclerc was able to launch an offensive for the reconquest of Cochin China, while the British stayed behind in Saigon to preserve law and order and to carry out the task for which they had come, that is, disarming the Japanese.

In the next few weeks it became evident how strongly the Vietnamese resented the French attempt at restoring colonial rule, when in the defence of their freedom they resorted to a scorched earth policy. Such a policy, ordered by Tran Van Giau, did not fail to put a heavy burden on the population; yet it was consistently and systematically carried out with the active co-operation or, at least, the tacit consent of the majority of the Vietnamese masses. Particularly in Western Cochin China the self-inflicted devastation was terrible, and it considerably retarded the advance of the French troops. The Viet Minh was, of course, insufficiently powerful to stop the French. Furthermore Giau did not have the full support of the political leaders and organizations outside the Viet Minh: while the French were slowly conquering Cochin China bloody skirmishes occurred between the armed forces of the Executive Committee and adherents of the Hoa Hao sect. It was not before February 1946, however, that most towns in Cochin China and Southern Annam had fallen into French hands and that Leclerc proclaimed the end of the 'pacification' campaign. On 4 March Gracey transferred his authority to the French administration in the area and British troops began to withdraw.

In Cambodia, too, the British forces enabled the French to restore their control. Son Ngoc Thanh was supported by the Western-educated elite but not in court circles where he was considered a dangerous competitor for popular favour. Although advocating self-government for his country King Norodom Sihanouk was not anti-French and it was his opinion that Cambodia would be incapable either of defending itself successfully against a French military invasion or surviving without French assistance in tackling the many economic problems caused by the war. A representative of the monarchy approached the Allied commanders in Saigon and urged them to occupy Cambodia immediately and arrest Son. On 16 October an airborne detachment of British and French troops landed in Phnom Penh; Son was taken prisoner and transferred to Saigon, while Sihanouk proclaimed his loyalty to France.

At about the same time the capture of Paksé marked the beginning of the restoration of French rule in Laos south of the 16th parallel. Due to the attitude of the pro-French Prince Boun Oum of Champassak, who controlled the southern provinces, the French did not meet with great difficulties. They could not interfere in the rest of the country yet. On 12 October a National Assembly was convened in Vientiane, a provisional constitution was promulgated and a Lao Issara government formed. When King Sisavang Vong refused to accept the constitution he was unseated on the 20th; the news of his deposition did not cause any perceptible popular

reaction in his favour, not even in the royal residency Luang Prabang.

For the Dutch in Indonesia, at least in Java and Sumatra, the situation was less auspicious than for the French in Southern Indochina. When on 29 September the British occupation forces, consisting mainly of Indian troops, landed in Batavia, their commander, General Philip Christison, decided to make use of the Indonesian political leaders and the administrative structure of the republic for carrying out his major duty. His policy was in sharp contrast with the one Gracey adopted *vis-à-vis* the Vietnamese administration in Saigon, and Dutch circles resented it greatly. The difference between the British attitudes in Cochin China and Java was due, however, to the different conditions in which the occupation forces had to operate. Unlike the situation in Saigon, where the French troops of the former Decoux regime were close at hand and French reinforcements arrived rather soon, there were no Dutch military forces of any size present in Java. If it had come to any conflict with the republic, the British would have been practically alone, and they lacked the means to fight Indonesian nationalism — quite apart from the fact that the troops at their disposal, Indians but not almost exclusively Gurkhas as in Saigon, could not be absolutely trusted in such a contingency. In Indonesia, moreover, it was vital to exercise great caution so as not to endanger the lives of the more than 100,000 Allied, mostly Dutch, internees scattered all over Java and Sumatra in places which were not immediately within reach. Their position was already difficult enough as it was, when the sending of Dutch troops aroused Indonesian suspicions and armed nationalist groups started to attack the internment camps. In spite of vehement Dutch protests the British military administration decided therefore to adopt a neutral posture, and in order to prevent being provoked into a clash with the republic against their will, they issued an order which, in force until March 1946, forbade the Dutch to disembark troops in Java.

The British forces restricted their direct activities to occupying such towns which they needed as a base to fulfil their duties properly. One of these was Surabaya, but after their landing they encountered resistance which became increasingly strong towards the end of October. Within a few days a force of Indonesian armed irregulars and youth organizations, obtaining support from among the poorest sections of the proletariat, seriously threatened the British positions and on 10 November fresh troops were sent in to rescue the virtually besieged garrison. Three more weeks of fierce fighting followed, during which the British had to employ their full military might in Indonesia, before, under heavy losses, they succeeded in capturing Surabaya. This unexpected demonstration of Indonesian fanaticism discouraged the Allied command from interfering with Indonesian affairs any more than was strictly necessary. It abandoned the original plans to occupy Malang or pacify West Java. Occasionally the British carried out some isolated actions, such as the occupation of the northern part of Bandung in November, the razing of Bekasi in retaliation

against an Indonesian attack in December, or the ultimatum to the Indonesians to evacuate Bandung's southern sections, in March 1946, but a British military campaign for the purpose of restoring Dutch colonial rule was out of the question. When on 30 November 1946 the British command transferred its control over Java and Sumatra to the Netherlands Indies authorities, the power of the latter did not go beyond a few enclaves — Batavia-Buitenzorg-Bandung, Semarang and Surabaya in Java; and Medan, Padang and Palembang in Sumatra. Moreover, with the exception of Surabaya, civil administration and public services in these places were in republican hands.

The Dutch had no difficulty in assuming control over the other islands. Australian forces had been able to take over from the Japanese and Dutch reinforcements were sent in during the period that they were refused entry into Java and Sumatra. Without great opposition, at any rate without irrepressible resistance, Dutch rule was restored: it was only in Bali that some serious clashes occurred. On 25 May 1946 the British command and the Dutch authorities reached an agreement on the transfer of power in Borneo and the Greater East to the Netherlands Indies administration, and on 15 July this agreement took effect.

It was not any lack of power such as that which paralysed the British occupation forces in Java which constituted the major factor preventing a restoration of the colonial regime in Northern Vietnam. Rather was it the unwillingness of the Chinese to offer the French any assistance whatsoever in this respect. Having supported the liberation movement during the war years China could not possibly tolerate the liquidation of the first independent Vietnamese government. China wished to assume political control over independent Vietnam and, aided by the activities of Chinese business circles in Hanoi and Haiphong, it also hoped to exercise greater economic influence than would be likely under a French colonial system. Unlike the British, the Chinese were not motivated by any feelings of solidarity with the French as a colonial power; furthermore, they regarded the French as collaborators with Japan. Consequently they treated the French, and among them the official representatives of the French government who had been parachuted into Tonkin, in a very unfriendly way, and they did not allow the troops of the former Decoux regime to leave the internment camps.

This anti-French attitude did not mean, however, that the Chinese smoothed the way for the Vietnamese revolutionary government which had taken over control in August 1945: after all, this government was of a different political colour than the Kwo Min Tang authorities had hoped and worked for in the past years. Their policy, therefore, was to thwart the Viet Minh as much as possible by supporting the conservative nationalist parties. During their advance in Upper Tonkin the Chinese occupation forces disbanded the local committees set up by the Viet Minh and had them replaced with administrative bodies consisting of adherents of the

Dong Minh Hoi and the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang. In the Red River delta, however, the Viet Minh had too great a following to be supplanted so easily, so that the revolutionary government was able to maintain itself. On the whole, China's policy was unsuccessful, since the pro-Chinese organizations trailed far behind the Viet Minh in arousing enthusiasm among the Vietnamese masses. The Chinese commander, Lu Han, and his staff could not avoid co-operating with Ho Chi Minh's government, and when the Chinese, having extorted considerable concessions from France in the Treaty of Chungking on 28 February 1946, finally permitted the French to disembark troops in Tonkin, the latter were faced with a powerful national Vietnamese regime supported by the overwhelming majority of the population.

In Northern Laos the Chinese, confining their activities to economically ransacking the country, allowed matters to take their own course politically. After the departure of the occupation troops the nationalists were not in a position to stop the French advance, although a small Laotian armed force, hurriedly raised by Prince Souphanouvong, Phetsarath's half-brother, occasionally offered fierce resistance. Towards the end of April 1946 the French recaptured Vientiane, in May they took Luang Prabang and in September they reached Ban Houei Sai. The Laotian army split up into several guerrilla groups and the Lao Issara government went into exile. The King, reinstalled by the nationalists when he accepted the provisional constitution shortly before the French entered Vientiane, disavowed the nationalist regime and placed his country under French protection.

Without any trouble Japan's ally Thailand was occupied by British and Indian troops in the second half of September 1945. As everywhere, it was their primary duty to disarm the Japanese and liberate the civilian detainees and the prisoners of war. In Thailand there was no interference with internal political affairs, and since no military administration was established, the Thai government remained ultimately responsible. Peace negotiations were held abroad. After the last Japanese troops had been sent home the Allied military presence came to an end on 15 November 1946.

THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Thanks to the incapability of the British and the unwillingness of the Chinese to restore the European colonial regimes in Java-Sumatra and in Tonkin-Northern Annam, the nationalist governments in these areas were given some respite which they used to consolidate their power. Circumstances in Vietnam were more favourable in this respect than they were in Indonesia. The Vietnamese revolutionary government controlled

a close-knit territory, while the Indonesian government dominated two islands inhabited by various widely different peoples. The national movement in Vietnam, moreover, almost entirely organized in the Viet Minh and under communist-orientated leadership, constituted a broad mass movement with a far stronger unity, politically, than in Indonesia where it in fact amounted to little more than a combination of politicians and parties with different interests at heart and occasionally contrasting aims in mind, but more or less accidentally co-operating in the pursuit of a limited nationalist goal. The regime in Hanoi was capable of acting in a far more resolute way than the government of the Indonesian republic, the management of which often changed hands and which, therefore, was forced to manoeuvre cautiously.

Under the circumstances it was evident that in Vietnam a strong executive authority was able to develop. Immediately after taking over power the Viet Minh liquidated the pre-revolutionary administrative hierarchy, effecting a total breach with the past. A new structure was provisionally organized by the decree of 22 November 1945. In the villages, provinces and urban districts popularly elected representative bodies (people's committees) were established, as well as executive bodies, elected by the people's committees. Initially there was a great amount of local autonomy, but a tendency towards centralization soon became evident. In the first instance the local executive bodies were responsible to the central authorities, and as the power of the Vietnamese government became stronger, the jurisdiction of the lower administrative bodies was gradually restricted.

While the process of building up the new state was in full swing in the north, the war of independence had already started in the south. In this situation the Vietnamese leaders seriously considered the possibility of a French invasion as soon as the Chinese occupation forces had withdrawn, and with this in view they hurriedly established local defence committees in addition to the national army which Vo Nguyen Giap was organizing out of the guerrilla units of the Japanese period. At the same time the Vietnamese youth constituted the enthusiastic vanguard of the regime, contributing to the defence of the revolution by taking part in the paramilitary groups and actively making propaganda for national and revolutionary ideals, particularly the one emphasizing the need for national unity.

This unity was threatened by the activities of the leaders of the D.M.H. and the V.N.Q.D.D. who, protected by the Chinese military authorities, felt sufficiently strong to demand forcefully that they be given a place in the government. Since the Viet Minh clearly commanded the loyalty of the majority of the population Ho Chi Minh initially refused to comply with their wishes. Thereupon the two conservative parties embarked on a vehement anti-Viet Minh campaign, which was not just an expression of their political opposition to the government but whose tactics also endangered the revolution itself. Adopting a more nationalistic posture than

the Viet Minh they organized acts of violence against French civilians; in their propaganda, moreover, they strongly emphasized the communist leadership of the Viet Minh in order to alienate the Vietnamese middle classes and Catholics from the government and to strengthen the suspicions of the Chinese occupation authorities.

As Ho Chi Minh could not afford a break with the Chinese protectors of his adversaries he pretended to give in. First he dissolved the Indochinese Communist Party, on 11 November, a tactical manoeuvre to deprive the opposition parties of their argument that the government was communist. He also made some vague promises on the setting up of a government of national unity in order to keep the two parties satisfied, but at the same time he disturbed them by suggesting a date for the election of a Constituent Assembly. The latter proposal thoroughly alarmed both the conservative nationalists and the Chinese authorities who very well realized that the D.M.H. and the V.N.Q.D.D. were unable to compete successfully with the Viet Minh for the favour of the public. Both parties therefore intensified their campaign of violence and threatened to boycott the elections.

This political agitation came at an inopportune moment because the revolution was now going through a critical phase of economic and financial difficulties. The economic dislocation was caused by the war, the revolutionary troubles and the Chinese occupation. The Chinese ruthlessly exploited their control over Tonkin: 200,000 troops descended on a country in which the food situation was traditionally critical. All war material, stocks and property of the Japanese was seized, but in addition to this Tonkin was stripped to the bone. Chinese commercial firms and banks set up branches in Hanoi and Haiphong; the Chinese dollar, worthless in international trade, was introduced as legal tender against a high rate of exchange; there was widespread corruption and a huge black market, operated by the Chinese army, sent up prices, particularly those of food, to unprecedented heights. The looting and racketeering practices of the Chinese occupation forces greatly aggravated Vietnam's financial troubles. These were caused primarily by the abolition of the old taxation system, which deprived the government of a substantial part of its revenues. Because of the lack of funds ministers and high functionaries did not receive salaries, but it was impossible to apply this solution to lower-ranking officials, although the system of paying wages in kind could not be avoided. The financial situation became extremely critical and lack of cash forced people to convert their belongings into money. On top of this there loomed the danger of a new famine. Since the Japanese *coup de force* of March 1945 and the internment of French technicians the dykes and irrigation works had fallen into decay. Floods, a long spell of drought and the interruption of agricultural activities during the turbulent weeks of the revolution adversely affected the crops: in November 1945 the harvest was less than half that of a normal year. A catastrophe seemed imminent

now that transport was interrupted, much rice had been requisitioned by the Chinese army and imports of food from the French-occupied south had stopped. It was the primary task of the revolutionary government to prevent a famine and on 19 November an extensive food-production campaign was launched. All available manpower was mobilized and every plot of land, including urban parks and sports grounds, were put to use for the cultivation of potatoes, soya-beans, maize and tapioca. In December the food situation was extremely serious, with hundreds of people starving, but a recurrence of the terrible calamity which hit Tonkin in the previous year was avoided in the nick of time.

The position of the government became the more difficult when the defence of Vietnam's independence proved to be unsuccessful in the Cochin-Chinese provinces, where organized resistance against the French collapsed or disintegrated. Pointing to this failure and fearful of the coming elections the conservative parties redoubled their anti-Viet Minh agitation. In these circumstances Ho Chi Minh decided, on 18 December, to comply with the demands of the opposition. Since he was not prepared to cancel the elections altogether, he only granted a two weeks' delay, coupled, however, with the promise that, irrespective of the election results, 70 out of the 350 seats in the Constituent Assembly would be allotted to the D.M.H. and the V.N.Q.D.D. On 6 January 1946 the elections took place and they resulted in an overwhelming success for the Viet Minh candidates. This result was the outcome neither of any improper pressure on the electorate, nor of any limited choice, but of the immense prestige of both Ho Chi Minh and the other Viet Minh candidates, while the politicians of the opposition, recently returned from their Chinese exile, were hardly known.

It still took some time before the government of national unity came into being. This was caused partly by the intrigues of the Chinese occupation authorities who were anything but satisfied with the developments and who feared that they might be compelled to give up their ambitions as far as Tonkin was concerned. The activities of the government's troops who launched an attack on some towns controlled by the V.N.Q.D.D. towards the end of January, also contributed to driving the Viet Minh and the opposition further apart. The D.M.H. and the V.N.Q.D.D. demanded that a government of national unity be headed by the former Emperor, and in February Bao Dai was indeed approached on the matter by Ho Chi Minh, who apparently could not see another way out at the time. But now the Chinese command intervened. It fully realized that any policy likely to be regarded as an attempt to restore the old order would irreparably damage whatever prestige with the population the two pro-Chinese parties were still enjoying. As this would jeopardize China's opportunity to use the D.M.H. and the V.N.Q.D.D. as instruments to influence developments in Vietnam, the Chinese put strong pressure on the opposition, forcing it finally to accept Ho as national leader. On 2 March Giap convened the

Constituent Assembly in Hanoi and the next day Ho formed a 'government of national unity and resistance', in which the Viet Minh had five seats and the D.M.H. and V.N.Q.D.D. two each. This way Ho succeeded in neutralizing his adversaries and at the same time he manoeuvred them into a position in which, together with the Viet Minh, they would bear the responsibility of conducting negotiations with France.

THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE INDONESIAN REPUBLIC

In Indonesia the national ideal of which the republic was the political expression aroused as fervent an enthusiasm among the population as it did in Vietnam. The reputation of Sukarno as a national leader was as great as Ho Chi Minh's. So also the Republic of Indonesia was established on as firm foundations as the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Yet, as the generating strength of the revolutionary development and as the directive force behind the government, the nationalist movement was far less united in Indonesia than in Vietnam. The Vietnamese national revolution was carried out by one single resolute organization which, in spite of the fact that a few nationalist parties were standing apart, commanded such a tremendous prestige among the population that it was, in fact, capable of monopolizing the process of political decision, and of virtually controlling the executive. In Indonesia, on the other hand, the national revolution originated with a few older individual nationalists who had been collaborating with the Japanese, who were supported by almost the entire bureaucracy and who were pushed on by a fanatical and radical youth movement. At the back of the revolutionary development there was not a more or less comprehensive nationalist organization covering the majority of political currents, but a wide variety of political ideals and socio-economic interests. While in Vietnam the internal struggle was confined to attacks by the conservative nationalists on the position of the Viet Minh in the government — a sort of opposition which was virtually impotent in the face of the Viet Minh's popularity, the Indonesian republic was the scene of a lively struggle for power.

Confronted by a far greater political opposition the Indonesian government had less authority than the one in Vietnam. It was also less capable of controlling extremist and fanatical groups. During the so-called '*Bersiap*' (Get ready!) period in late 1945 and early 1946 there were many attacks on European internment camps in the interior, undertaken by irregular bands who caused quite a few deaths. In some places the Chinese community, the traditional scapegoat, fell victim to Indonesian nationalist fervour, often coloured by economic antagonism and religious zeal. Also Indonesians suspected of pro-Dutch inclinations were occasionally given short shrift, either individually or, in two cases in Sumatra, collectively.

In these instances the revolution clearly showed an element of class struggle, namely between the newly-emerging bourgeois elite on the one hand and the traditional aristocratic groups on the other. Between mid-December 1945 and mid-January 1946 the power of the aristocratic ruling class in Atjeh was liquidated by the influential Islamic religious leaders who dominated the population. Shortly after, in February 1946, a similar upheaval took place in the cultivation areas of Sumatra's East Coast residency, but here the social revolutionary movement was inspired by communist-orientated leaders. Popular fury against the Malay ruling elite which had aroused hatred among the proletariat, mostly Javanese immigrants, as well as among the Bataks, resulted in a bloody war of revenge in which many aristocratic families were totally wiped out.

The political situation in Indonesia differed strongly from the one in Vietnam in that it was possible for the leadership of the revolution, i.e. the responsibility for the government, to change hands. This happened for the first time before the Indonesian republic was two months old. Sukarno and Hatta enjoyed too great a personal prestige to be evicted easily, but most other members of the government could not boast of a similar reputation. Particularly the more radical revolutionaries were quite dissatisfied with the authoritarian character of the new state. It was resented, moreover, that the direction of affairs was in the hands of politicians of the older generation, many of whom had collaborated with the Japanese. Although not actually belonging to the younger revolutionaries himself, Sutan Sjahrir, a fervent advocate of a democratic parliamentary system along Western lines, became their main spokesman. He was successful in convincing Sukarno that democratic reform was necessary, and on 17 October 1945 the K.N.I.P. was transformed into a legislative body, with a Working Committee headed by Sjahrir elected for the day-to-day proceedings. Less than a month later, on 11 November, the constitutionally logical consequence of this reform took effect when ministerial responsibility was introduced.

This change was also the result, though indirectly, of a political tournament in which a prominent part was played by the ex-communist Tan Malaka who for some time already planned to have Sukarno replaced. When Sjahrir published a pamphlet in which he, as a means to democratize the state, advocated that those politicians who had been collaborating with Japan be removed, Tan Malaka immediately demanded the resignation of Sukarno and Hatta. This move greatly embarrassed Sjahrir who could neither disagree without losing the confidence of the idealistic younger generation, nor agree without depriving the republic of some of her most prominent, in fact indispensable, leaders. The reform of 11 November offered the way out: Sukarno and Hatta remained in office and Sjahrir's followers were satisfied by making the council of ministers responsible to parliament. Sukarno clearly realized the implications of the new situation, and he dismissed the cabinet which was succeeded, on the 14th, by

a new one, free from any pro-Japanese taint and headed by Sjahrir as prime minister. This change of government was also prompted by the additional consideration that, in view of the impending negotiations with the Dutch, Sjahrir would be a more acceptable representative of the Indonesian republic than Sukarno.

As a result of the events of November 1945 the general direction of affairs in Indonesia was transferred from the partly aristocratic, more or less authoritarian old guard nationalists to the young generation of democratic-orientated students and intellectuals. In another respect the process of democratization had already started when on 30 October the Working Committee recommended the formation of political parties. This decision put an end to the monolithic mass organization which, planned by Subardjo, had been built up in the previous months: in its place several political parties emerged, or re-emerged, in the course of November and December. The Indonesian Nationalist Party, *Partai Nasional Indonesia*, P.N.I., commanded a large following among the middle class and the bureaucracy, as well as among the peasants with their traditional respect for the old elite groups: it was a typical party of the centre, shunning social reforms and seeking political strength in displaying a fervent nationalism. The reorganized Masjumi was a large association uniting most Islamic parties and organizations. It drew its adherents primarily from among the religious village teachers and Islamic landowners, and thanks to their influence, also among the Muslim rural population. The general management of the organization was in the hands of urban intellectuals, some of whom were advancing quite progressive social views as well as rather moderate ideas whether or not the state should be based on Islamic principles, but facing the orthodox and usually very intolerant attitude of the village teachers with their great influence among the devout peasant masses, the 'religious socialists' were unable to express their opinions too openly. Sjahrir's Socialist Party, *Partai Sosialis*, included young intellectuals and students and it advocated a system of democratic socialism. The more radical social revolutionaries were divided among the Communist Party, *Partai Kommunis Indonesia*, P.K.I., which initially had some difficulty in coming off the ground, and the Labour Party, *Partai Buruh*, which in general followed the political line of the Partai Sosialis.

This great variety of opinion within the nationalist movement did not fail to limit the scope and freedom of action of any group in power. Every government, moreover, had to manoeuvre carefully between the many armed groups since it lacked the power to ensure their loyalty. There was as yet no homogeneous army; several youth organizations and Peta detachments formed the nucleus of a regular armed force, but in addition to this a number of irregular bands were operating, some of which were allied with political parties, while others, not maintaining any such specific link, at times favoured either one cause or the other. The danger of a *coup d'état* was never absent, although it grew less acute when it

was realized that any attempt to overthrow those in office might lead to disturbances and even to a civil war which would only benefit the Dutch. In spite of the heterogeneous nature of the national political movement and its armed forces, the desire to preserve its newly-won independence and to defend the country against any attack from outside was equally vigorous in Indonesia as in Vietnam.

Part V
Attempts at Colonial Restoration

Part V

Attempts at Colonial Restoration

1 Renewed Contacts with the Colonial Powers

INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH the first year after the Japanese surrender seemed full of promise for the policy of the European powers of restoring their pre-war domination, it marked the beginning of the final phase of direct Western control in South-East Asia. Formally the struggle with Japan was won by the Allied nations and China, but it was the Asian peoples who benefited most from the war. That Asia's national aspirations coincided with the ideals with which the Allied powers used to present their cause during the Second World War did not in any substantial way contribute to this situation. A more significant factor was the general decline of Europe in world politics: it was the United States and the Soviet Union instead of Great Britain and France who set the tune in post-war international affairs, and both powers happened to be anti-colonialist. Their motives, however, had nothing to do with principles but everything with their self-interest and with their own position in the 'cold war' which developed soon after the common enemies, Germany and Japan, had been defeated.

With a view to the non-fundamental nature of the American and Russian attitudes in this respect, the impact of their policies on the post-war process of decolonization in South-East Asia should not be over-estimated. After all Moscow was not in a position to do anything beyond verbally encouraging the political phenomena directed against the West, while Washington hesitated between, on the one hand, her feelings of solidarity with the European allies in the cold war against the Soviet Union and, on the other. her interest in the political and economic advantages that might emerge out of a policy of giving support, if only verbally, to Asia's national ambitions. In fact the peoples of South-East Asia won their independence without

tangible help from outside, but mainly on the strength of their own self-confidence, tremendously stimulated during the Japanese occupation, and their vigorous desire to be themselves after so many decades of colonial domination.

The manner in which the South-East Asian countries obtained their political freedom was closely connected with the way the colonial powers reacted to the problems facing them after they reoccupied their dependencies. Apart from rebuilding the heavily damaged economies, their main task was to find a way of adapting their future relationship with their colonies to the new situation. Some plans or general directives to that effect had already been designed in the war years: Queen Wilhelmina's address on Indonesia, a French government's statement on Indochina and in the British sphere the Burma White Paper and the Malayan Union proposals. The only plan antedating the war was that of the United States *vis-à-vis* the Philippines. The renewed contacts of South-East Asia's peoples with their returned, or returning, former masters were primarily dominated by the response of the European powers to the reactions of the indigenous political leaders to their plans. A highly significant factor in this respect was the degree to which the colonial rulers were mentally prepared for the changes which had taken place during their absence from South-East Asia.

THE PHILIPPINES: COLLABORATION AND INDEPENDENCE

There was one country — the Philippines — where the renewed contacts with the colonial masters did not lead to difficulties over the future constitutional position. The American reconquest put an end, of course, to the independent status granted by the Japanese in 1943, but this was a logical consequence of the victory over Japan and not directed against the principle of independence as such. Immediately after the Japanese occupation the course of political development as had been outlined in the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 was resumed. There was only one amendment to this, effected by a resolution which had passed the United States Congress in June 1944 and which provided for the retention by the Americans of army and air force bases in addition to the naval bases initially agreed upon. On 27 February 1945 civil administration was already restored, although in the coming months it was the American commander-in-chief MacArthur rather than the Philippine President Osmena who wielded actual power. It was the intention of the former to leave behind a government in Manila that would be as well disposed towards the United States as possible, and his political interference added to the activities of those American interests which were aiming at further strengthening the economic ties between the Philippines and the United States.

To achieve this, it was vital, however, to check the social revolutionary development which during the years of Japanese occupation had emerged in Central Luzon and which threatened to jeopardize American political and economic interests. The counter-revolution, inspired by MacArthur, revealed two aspects which were clearly connected with each other. In the first place, the Hukbalahap movement, which gave expression to the strong desire for socio-economic change in the rural districts, was directly attacked and forced back into illegality. Secondly, strong support was given to the Filipino traditional ruling classes about whose reactionary attitude the Americans did not need to entertain any doubt whatsoever. The overwhelming majority of the elite happened to have played a prominent role under Japanese auspices, however, and on nationalist grounds this made them less suitable in the eyes of the population as future leaders of the nation. The Philippines was the only country in South-East Asia where collaboration with Japan became a political issue in post-war days, since this attitude was regarded as making common cause with the enemy rather than as continuing the nationalist struggle in an emergency situation. But once Japan had been defeated MacArthur was more interested in strengthening the position of the traditional elite, as a line of defence against the Huk-sponsored social revolution, than in weakening it by carrying out his promise made earlier that he would 'run to earth every disloyal Filipino'. Since the Huks, moreover, enjoyed quite some prestige as anti-Japanese guerrillas, he was anxious to obscure the distinction between freedom fighters and collaborators by allowing the collaboration issue to rapidly sink into oblivion. For this, several arguments were advanced, ranging from the consideration that the war-time political leaders in fact intended to soften the impact of the Japanese military regime, to the one that it would be improper to take revenge, but it was the major concern of the American authorities to take the problem of social inequality out of the sphere of emotional nationalism which provided the advocates of social change with a very strong case against the privileged ruling classes. As a result, the Huks were relegated to the status of rebels, but those among the elite who were unable to understand properly what was going on or catch up with it quickly enough, also became the losers, politically.

When, in the last phase of the war, the Filipino ministers of the Laurel cabinet were captured by the Americans, MacArthur immediately separated Manuel Roxas from the rest, officially cleared his name of any taint of collaboration, and allowed him to launch his political career. The American authorities also provided him with a forum, and with their strong support he soon became a dangerous rival of Osmena. The latter proved to be unwilling to convene the legislature lest it be controlled by the collaborators whom, in accordance with a directive of President Roosevelt issued in June 1944, he was expected to remove from authority and influence. On the ground that it was also the policy of the United States

government to re-install constitutional government as soon as law and order had been restored, MacArthur strongly urged him to convoke Congress, however, and Osmena was not in a position to refuse. On 9 June Congress, with 77 out of its surviving 110 members having collaborated with Japan one way or another, met in a joint session. Roxas immediately declared that the war-time officials had not been disloyal to the Commonwealth government and he was promptly elected president of the Senate. Backed by a powerful and wealthy following he succeeded in cancelling the appointment of two former guerrilla leaders as ministers and he started to harass the Osmena administration on every conceivable point, particularly on the collaboration issue. When, in an attempt to carry out properly Roosevelt's recommendation on this matter, Osmena presented a bill for the creation of a People's Court to try collaborators, with the guarantee that the judges would not be collaborators themselves, he was strongly attacked by the Roxas faction and forced to tone down his proposal. On 11 September, however, the American government reminded him of the American instruction, hinting at a possible reluctance on the part of the United States administration to grant economic aid should the Philippine government fail to convict and punish those guilty of treason. As a result the People's Court Bill was passed by Congress on 15 September, but this intervention by the United States government manoeuvred Osmena into an almost untenable position *vis-à-vis* his political opponents.

Under direct fire by Roxas and his influential following Osmena was fighting a losing battle, not only with regard to the collaboration problem which he, in fact, faced with an open mind, because he realized that the country would be virtually ungovernable for lack of officials if Roosevelt's instruction were carried out to the letter. He also failed to maintain the unity of the ruling Nacionalista Party. The rift between the two factions was formally confirmed when, in January 1946, Roxas declared his candidacy for the presidency and a convention of the so-called liberal wing of the party nominated him. Osmena received the support of those of the oligarchy who remained loyal and, in addition, of the Democratic Alliance, formed in April 1945 and composed of several peasant organizations, some sections from among the urban middle-classes, the small communist party and most of the former anti-Japanese guerrilla fighters, particularly the Hukbalahaps. Neither his personal integrity, nor the fact that he represented the majority of those who had been in the anti-Japanese camp during the war, were of any great help, however. Conducting a vigorous campaign, in which he spent substantial sums of money and made extravagant accusations and promises, Roxas was able to convince the people, confronted with the manifold problems of the post-war crisis, that anything reminiscent of the Japanese occupation and of the collaborator-guerrilla division was better forgotten for the sake of the country's rehabilitation and reconstruction. As, due to the terrible damages caused

by the war, the general recovery was progressing painfully slowly, and privation and distress continued to be universal, the opposition did not fail to charge the administration with incompetence and lack of energy. The fact, finally, that Osmena, in an effort to strengthen the anti-Roxas forces, had been compelled to accept the support, reluctantly though, of the left wing, and even of the Hukbalahap, contributed to frightening the landlords and many middle-class Filipinos, who preferred Roxas, in spite of his war record, to the risk of social upheaval. On 23 April the elections were held: Roxas polled 1,333,000 votes against Osmena's 1,130,000. In the House of Representatives the Liberals won 60 seats, the Democratic Alliance 7 and the Nacionalistas only 31; of the 24 seats in the Senate the latter gained 11. On 28 May Roxas was inaugurated as president of the Philippines.

It became evident soon that, seen from the point of view of American interests, Roxas had been a good choice when MacArthur decided to back him. To organize the future trade relations between the Philippines and the United States and to enable the Philippines to overcome the post-war difficulties, the American Congress passed the Philippine Trade Act, or Bell Act, and it was signed by President Harry Truman on 30 April 1946. Under this act free trade relations between the two countries were prolonged for eight years, after which Philippine imports into the United States would be charged, increasing annually by 5 per cent until the full tariff duty was reached in 1974. The act also contained a clause which gave Americans the same rights to exploit, develop and utilize the natural resources of the country as Filipinos were enjoying. Against this provision strong opposition arose on nationalist grounds, but also because it was in open violation of the constitution which reserved the exploitation of natural resources to Filipinos or to corporations owned for at least 60 per cent by Filipinos.

The United States Congress also passed the Philippine Rehabilitation Act, or Tydings Act, which provided for financial aid to cover war damages. In order to exert pressure on the Philippine legislature it was, however, stipulated that no amount over $500 would be given under this act as long as the Philippines failed to ratify the Bell Act. Roxas' Liberal Party, with its extensive interests in the sugar industry, was determined to have the Bell Act accepted, not only because the Americans made this a condition for the payment of war damages, but also because the trade agreement would guarantee a tariff-free American market for sugar. But because of the parity clause with regard to the exploitation of natural resources the constitution had to be amended, too, and for this a three-quarters majority had to approve of it. Roxas solved this problem in a rather discretionary way: the seven members of the Democratic Alliance in the House of Representatives and three Nacionalista Senators were not allowed to take their seats on the pretext that their election did not properly represent the will of the electorate. Thus purged of sufficient parlia-

mentarians of the opposition to guarantee the required majority, the Philippine Congress passed the Bell Act on 3 July. The next day the Philippines were proclaimed an independent republic at a ceremony in Manila which was attended by more than 300,000 people.

That the country continued to be strongly linked to the United States was the logical consequence of the pressure applied by American political, military and economic interests against which the Filipinos had not been able to stand up successfully. Seen from this point of view there was, in fact, hardly any fundamental difference between the policy of the United States in South-East Asia and that of the European colonial powers. In another respect 4 July 1946 was nevertheless a significant date. However much in accordance with the operational methods of American imperialism, the fact that the Philippines were formally granted independence constituted as such the final result of a colonial policy to which European imperialism in South-East Asia had not yet been converted.

COLONIAL RESTORATION IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS

It is true that the constitutional plans which Great Britain, France and the Netherlands proposed after the Second World War were based on the supposition that the Japanese occupation had effected some changes in the mentality of the Asians as well as in their willingness to acquiesce in a restored European domination. In general, however, the post-war programmes were either insufficiently adapted to that realization, or rendered out of date by later developments. Already inacceptable as such to the Asian nationalists, they were the more so because they were unilaterally drawn up by the European governments.

In those countries which had been reoccupied by the colonial powers and in which nationalism was not a strong enough force to resist successfully, the European solution to the political problems was imposed from above. This was the case in Cambodia and Laos. On 7 January and 27 August 1946 respectively France concluded treaties, called *modus vivendi*, with the regimes which she placed in control after the expulsion of the nationalist governments. In the agreements the future status of the two countries was drawn up according to the French policy statement of 24 March 1945. Both Laos and Cambodia were promoted from French protectorates to 'autonomous states', but this did not bring about any essential change in a situation in which the influence of France remained predominant. The two countries became part of the Indochinese Federation with the result that the French high commissioner in Saigon rather than the government in Phnom Penh or the one in Vientiane was the ultimate source of power. Even with regard to such affairs which were left to the discretion of the Cambodian or Laotian authorities, the French commissioner of each

territory continued to have a decisive voice. Compared with the pre-war situation the only change was the opportunity to create a parliamentary system. In the treaty with Laos, moreover, the territorial unity of the country under the crown of Luang Prabang was now officially recognized.

To the nationalists in both countries these agreements were utterly disappointing. Some of them took refuge in Thailand, like the adherents of the Lao Issara movement who settled down in Bangkok and established a government in exile under Prince Phetsarath. After the arrest of Son Ngoc Thanh in October 1945 several radical Cambodians fled to the provinces of Battambang and Siemreap, which were still under Thai control, and there they formed armed groups, called Free Khmer, *Khmer Issarak*. The exiles obtained support from the Thai authorities, who were in general prompted by feelings of solidarity with the Asian nationalist movements and, with regard to their interest in the Free Khmer, by the desire to obstruct as much as possible the anticipated cession of Battambang and Siemreap to France.

Of the resistance movements the one in Laos was the most active. It was organized by the left-orientated Prince Souphanouvong who maintained contacts with the Vietnamese revolutionary leaders and who enjoyed wide popular support, particularly from among the anti-French mountain peoples who were hardly motivated by any feeling of loyalty towards the government in Vientiane or the court of Luang Prabang. The Laotian freedom fighters, although supplied from Thailand and aided by Vietnamese advisers and technicians, depended in the first place on their own primitive workshops in the jungles and the hills. They did not become such formidable opponents of French colonialism as the Vietnamese, but they constituted a highly irritating factor and their resistance the French were unable to suppress.

The Khmer Issarak were not only active in Battambang and Siemreap, which Thailand had to retrocede to the French late in 1946, but they were also scattered in other parts of the country. Although the French could not suppress them either, the guerrillas in Cambodia were, in general, less effective than those in Laos. Structurally there was no unity; the movement was divided into several territorial groups, while a sense of unanimity of purpose and means was also lacking. Because of the attitude of Norodom Sihanouk, who was not obsequiously pro-French, the public was on the whole far less anti-royalist than the population in large areas of Laos. Unlike the situation in Laos, finally, where practically the entire nationalist elite went into exile, an alternative method of conducting the national struggle was open in Cambodia, and within the Khmer Issarak a strong difference of opinion already became evident towards the close of 1946 between those who wanted to continue the guerrilla warfare and those who preferred legal action instead.

The discontented elements in Cambodia, in so far as they were not involved in the armed struggle, were led by a cousin of the King, Prince

Sisovath Youtevong, a youthful idealist who not only opposed French domination but also the absolute monarchy and the predominant influence of the conservative circles around Sihanouk. The King himself was a master in skilful manoeuvring. He was not anti-French, but he did not want to play a puppet's role; on the other hand he was afraid that, by their vehement agitation, the radical nationalists would gain great prestige with the population, which might ultimately endanger his own position as well as the institutions of the monarchy as such. To take the wind out of the nationalists' sails Sihanouk adopted a few of their objectives which aimed at establishing a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary system. On 31 May 1946 he promulgated a law providing for the election of a Consultative Assembly.

The opportunity of establishing political organizations was immediately taken advantage of. On the conservative side two parties emerged, both advocating a gradual change. Early in August, however, the progressive nationalists formed the Democratic Party which, recommending a parliamentary system along French lines, succeeded in dominating the political scene almost immediately after its foundation. Prince Youtevong may have been inspired by the consideration that his programme might offset the influence of the Khmer Issarak, but the reverse happened: disgruntled intellectuals and fiery adherents of Son Ngoc Thanh joined the Democratic Party which thus took on a far more radical character. It is quite probable that the bureaucrats in the party greatly contributed to the outcome of the elections of 1 September: the Democrats won 50 out of 69 seats. On 25 September the Consultative Assembly met to discuss the constitution and, dominated by the Democrats, it unilaterally decided to transform itself into a constituent body. Favouring a powerful legislature the assembly was diametrically opposed to both the French and the conservative circles in Cambodia who preferred a strong executive, but thanks to Youtevong's tenaciousness the advocates of a parliamentary system won the day.

The constitution was the expression of the newly-emerged political self-awareness in Cambodia which, although limited to the intellectual elite, could not possibly be neglected any more. Attempts to thwart the development might have created a gap between the nationalists and the monarchy and this Sihanouk wished to avoid as long as he was uncertain about the reaction of the population and the impact of the Vietnamese revolution on Cambodia. This political self-consciousness might be utilized by the King, moreover, to strengthen his position in future negotiations with the French over a possible modification of the country's status. As a result Sihanouk did not oppose the development towards a parliamentary democracy and on 6 May 1947 he promulgated the new constitution.

Laos also received its constitution under French auspices, but here the developments were not influenced in any essential way by the progressive demands of the opposition. The opposition was either in exile in Bangkok or in the guerrilla movement which attempted to obstruct the elections

in the rural areas. Although the guerrillas contributed to the creation of a confused situation in the countryside which virtually restricted the elections for the Constituent Assembly, on 15 December 1946, to the urban districts, 44 representatives were nevertheless elected. Since there was no powerful opposition in the capital, the pro-French and conservative politicians had a free hand. The Constituent Assembly worked out a constitution which was officially promulgated on 11 May 1947. Laos became a constitutional monarchy, equipped with all the trappings of a parliamentary system, but there was no fundamental change in French domination such as it had existed since the reconquest.

BRITISH POLICY IN BURMA AND THE OPPOSITION OF THE A.F.P.F.L.

It was not until two weeks after the fall of Rangoon that the British government tabled a programme for Burma, in spite of the insistence of Governor Dorman-Smith and the Burmese political leaders in exile. That the cabinet in London acted so slowly was the result, not of any desire to get better acquainted with the Burmese demands and conditions, but of the unwillingness among conservative circles to commit themselves too soon to any plan on the constitutional future of the colony. The so-called Burma White Paper of 17 May 1945 was a unilateral British plan, drawn up after hardly any consultation with even the moderate Burmese groups in India; in fact, only the demands of British business had been taken into account. Whenever references were made to the adjustment of colonial policy to the new circumstances caused by the Japanese occupation, these were related to economic problems and the need of rebuilding the country rather than to any possible change in the attitudes of the Burmese population. On the contrary, as was demonstrated by its attempts at restoring the pre-war position of British economic interests, this plan was a clear negation of Burma's wishes. Illustrative in this respect, too, were the proposals to acknowledge the property-rights of the Indian Chettyars who had been driven from their lands in 1942, and to guarantee the unlimited supply of cheap Indian labour.

Burma's political process was subordinated to her economic rehabilitation. In British eyes the enormous war damage justified a temporary discontinuation of the development towards self-rule even to the point of making a backward step as compared with the pre-war constitutional situation. It was stated that the government had the intention of granting Burma complete self-government within the Commonwealth, but in view of the almost complete disorganization of public life in all its aspects, the White Paper proposed a delay in the re-introduction of the parliamentary system. For a period of three years Burma was to be ruled under the section of the Government Act of 1935 which empowered the governor to

rule by decree in an emergency situation. After that the normal constitutional development towards self-rule was to be resumed, but only in Burma proper, not in the Shan states and other special areas.

Seen from an economic and administrative point of view it was logical that the colonial administration should propose such a course. Of all South-East Asian countries Burma was hardest hit by the war and the British considered it their primary duty to overcome the chaos. A restoration of the parliamentary regime was regarded as a far less pressing need; in their opinion the material conditions for achieving a genuine parliamentary democracy or for holding elections were, moreover, totally absent. Yet they overlooked one vital factor. The formal recognition of Burma as an independent, sovereign state by Japan had made as great a contribution to the growth of Burma's self-awareness as the realization that, under the Japanese, the administration had been almost entirely in Burmese hands and that it had functioned reasonably well. It is true that the Burmese in general had not been very well disposed towards Japan, but this did not mean that, out of gratitude for their liberation from Japanese rule, they would welcome a restoration of British tutelage, as the White Paper seemed to imply. Both the inability of Great Britain to defend Burma in 1942 and the Japanese occupation had created too deep an impression for the Burmese to acquiesce in the factual revocation of the 1935 basic law.

In 1945 the leadership of the nationalist struggle was no longer in the hands of those who used to set the tone prior to 1942. The elder politicians were either compromised by their participation in the not very elevating pre-war political activities, or they had lost contact with the population by their exile in Simla or by their collaboration with the Japanese. The vacuum, created when the old-guard nationalists dropped out, was filled by the younger generation which found a political organization in the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League and an inspiring nationalist leader in Aung San. It is true that Aung San, too, had been collaborating with the Japanese but he had also prepared the anti-Japanese resistance movement within the Burma National Army, and this very effectively so, as became evident in March 1945 when he threw off the mask. Led by enthusiastic young men and relying on its prestige as an ally of the Allied powers in the military campaign against the Japanese, the A.F.P.F.L. won a large following among almost all sections of the population.

In conservative British circles the antipathy to Asian nationalism equalled their dislike of those who had been collaborating with Japan, and in their eyes it was the only difference between Aung San and Ba Maw that the former had changed his tack in time. This, too, was the opinion of Governor Dorman-Smith who usually held more liberal views than the colonial conservatives and who was a champion of 'Burma for the Burmese', but who regarded the A.F.P.F.L. as a bunch of untrustworthy radicals with no right to speak for the Burmese people. The Supreme

Commander of S.E.A.C., Lord Mountbatten, appraised the situation in a different way, however. He realized that the A.F.P.F.L. and Aung San were considered a patriotic institution and a national hero by the overwhelming majority of the Burmese, and he feared that any step taken against them would stir up anti-British passions and add to the chaotic conditions. The British military administration regarded the A.F.P.F.L. as the most important political party, and in May 1945 it recognized the B.N.A., renamed Burmese Patriotic Forces, B.P.F., as its ally. On 7 September an agreement was signed with the A.F.P.F.L. providing for the training and building up of a new Burmese army out of the B.P.F. which was to be disbanded.

British colonial circles, however, had not yet come to revising their point of view. As long as the military command was responsible for Burma they had to acquiesce in Mountbatten's decisions, but exactly because of this Dorman-Smith urged that civil administration be restored as soon as possible. The Labour government, which took over in June 1945, proved equally incapable of fathoming Burmese feelings effectively. It adopted the policy as outlined in the White Paper and on 28 September the governor's emergency powers were extended, though under the proviso that Executive and Legislative Councils, the latter with advisory powers, were to be set up. On 16 October, when civil administration was re-introduced, Dorman-Smith stressed once again that a transitional period was necessary to create the proper conditions for granting self-government to Burma. His address was not of a reactionary nature: he stated that self-government would (not might) be granted as soon as possible. Apparently, however, it was his intention — like Van Mook's in similar circumstances in Indonesia — to make sure, by means of a transitional period, that British authority was to be transferred to a Burmese government that would be less fervently nationalistic than one controlled by the A.F.P.F.L.

From the beginning the nationalist leaders strongly opposed the British plans and towards the close of 1945 their agitation increased. The Burmese feared in particular that a period of colonial rule without popular influence would be used primarily to enable British enterprise to regain its previous position, and once this had been achieved, that the argument of Burma's economic weakness might induce the British to slow down the development towards political independence. That the Burmese nationalist movement was capable of offering effective resistance constituted the difference between Burma on the one hand and Cambodia and Laos on the other; and unlike the French project for the two Indochinese states the British plan for Burma could not be imposed from above, in spite of the fact that colonial rule was fully restored and that a considerable military force was in the country.

The conflict between the A.F.P.F.L. and the British administration came into the open when the governor had to nominate an Executive

Council. For its participation in this organ the A.F.P.F.L. made high. though in view of its strong position in Burmese politics not unreasonable, demands: 11 out of the 15 seats and, above all, the portfolio of internal affairs. Dorman-Smith failed, however, to see the league as the major spokesman of the Burmese people and he refused to give it the much-coveted post of the interior since this would make it responsible for the appointment of officials in the administration and the police force. The negotiations were broken off and on 3 November 1945 the governor nominated an Executive Council without the A.F.P.F.L.

Dorman-Smith did not have much difficulty in setting up a council consisting of politicians who, as representatives of the older generation, were willing enough to help create a barrier against the young radicals who had succeeded in undermining the pre-war leaders' position in the political movement. It soon appeared, however, that the administrative machinery could not function as long as the one organization which was supported by the majority of the population and which voiced Burma's demands most clearly, was left in the opposition. In the months after the British reconquest the power of A.F.P.F.L. had strengthened. Apart from the nationalist groups it included several members of the B.P.F., the communists of Thakin Than Tun and the socialist party of Thakin Mya, and the latter organizations, particularly the communist party, accounted for a steady influx of peasants and labourers who, through their associations and unions, joined the league. But the A.F.P.F.L. also obtained support from among the bureaucracy and the youth and women's organizations. In spite of the fact that he was a far from captivating personality Aung San was immensely popular: he was the *Bogyoke*, the 'Great Leader', whom the people looked up to with great confidence.

The conflict between the colonial administration and the nationalists was intensified when Dorman-Smith thwarted the attempts of A.F.P.F.L. to send a delegation to London to negotiate directly with the British government. At a massive demonstration in Rangoon, in January 1946, the League urged all nationalist forces to join hands against the government, and although there was no call for violent action, the British were alarmed by the building up, at the same time, of a semi-military group, the People's Volunteer Organization (P.V.O.). According to Aung San, this was primarily done to create a means of subsistence for such members of the B.P.F. who were not to be included into the regular army, but the formation of a private militia by the opposition constituted, nevertheless, a serious challenge for the British, all the more so since it was joined by many younger people not belonging to the former B.P.F. The conflict also tended to paralyse the governing power of the administration. Quite a few politicians collaborating with the British, either in the Executive or in the Legislative Council which had been established on 31 December 1945, were frustrated by the lack of real power of these bodies. They also realized that they owed their position to the presence of the British rather

than to their own prestige with the population. Many Burmese officials feared, moreover, that those not inclined to be pro-A.F.P.F.L. would be blacklisted by the nationalists. In such an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and increasing uncertainty the administrative process was likely to stagnate, with serious consequences for the country's economic rehabilitation.

Economic recovery was, in fact, beset with all sorts of difficulties, particularly in the agricultural field. The general post-war chaos, the disorganization of the police and the huge number of weapons left behind contributed to a wave of crime which swept over the country. With armed gangs roaming around and robberies being committed almost daily, a situation of insecurity developed in the rural areas which effectively reduced the peasants' willingness to cultivate their land. The decline of agriculture was also the result of the anxiety among the peasants over the recognition, by the government, of the ownership rights of Indian landlords who had been evicted during the Japanese occupation and whose lands had been taken over by their tenants. The shortage of consumer goods also deprived the peasants of an incentive to grow crops since the proceeds could not be used for purchasing clothes and other primary commodities. In 1945 the production of rice was only 42 per cent of the pre-war figure. The government's policy of economic rehabilitation was also strongly opposed by the nationalists, particularly with regard to the manner in which it was administered. For the various sectors of the economy planning boards had been established so as to guarantee the strict control by the government which the emergency situation warranted. The committees were dominated, however, by large, mostly European and Indian industrial and commercial firms, and this could not but arouse the suspicion in nationalist circles that it was the intention of the government to restore, in a circuitous way, the pre-war monopolistic position of the big companies.

Any co-operation between the government and the A.F.P.F.L. was clearly impossible in these circumstances. Dorman-Smith attempted to restrict the influence of radical nationalism by supporting the political adversaries as a counterweight, but his efforts at bringing about a revival of the old parties failed. The power of the nationalist movement was not to be neutralized by any policy of divide-and-rule, and the A.F.P.F.L. remained the most important political organization. Aung San commanded a far greater following among the population than older politicians who had lost control over developments, such as U Saw, who in February 1946 was allowed to return from Uganda, or Ba Maw, who came back from Japan at about the same time, or Paw Tun, the prime minister of the Burmese war-government in exile, none of whom were capable of bringing about any change in this situation. While some British and conservative Burmese circles toyed with the idea of having Aung San imprisoned, the anti-British sentiments increased, finding expression, among other things,

in the demand of the A.F.P.F.L. that Burma, on becoming independent, should leave the British Commonwealth. Incidents between members of the P.V.O. and the police occurred, and gradually the colonial administration lost its control. When it became evident that the situation was slowly getting out of hand, the home government intervened in May 1946: Dorman-Smith was summoned to London and on 14 June he left Burma.

THE MALAYAN UNION AND MALAY OPPOSITION

Like the British post-war plan for Burma the plan for Malaya aimed at maintaining British domination over a territory which, apart from its economic significance, was vital for safeguarding Great Britain's influence in South-East Asia. The proposals, worked out during the war by Churchill's cabinet and officially announced on 10 October 1945 by the Labour government, contained some radical and in their consequences far-reaching changes in the country's administrative set-up. By merging the nine Malay states with Penang, Province Wellesley and Malacca, the peninsula would become one constitutional unit: the Malayan Union. Singapore was not to be a part of this: the island would be a separate crown colony. This reform was long overdue, if only out of considerations of administrative efficiency. The complicated pre-war structure with its dispersion of effort over the Colony of the Straits Settlements, a federation of four Malay states and the five remaining non-federated states was done away with. In its place there emerged the Malayan Union and the Colony of Singapore. But the plan also provided for a considerable reinforcement of colonial power by depriving the Malay rulers and the state administrations of their authority and by substituting a system of centralized direct rule under a governor for a decentralized structure of indirect government. The manner in which the reforms were carried into effect also pointed to an old-fashioned style of colonialism. In October 1945 Sir Harold MacMichael was sent to Malaya to conclude fresh treaties with the Malay rulers which would facilitate their constitutional incorporation into the new structure. Since these rulers were to enjoy considerably less authority in the Malayan Union than they used to have before, something more coercive than mere persuasion was necessary to push them into signing the agreements. Unprepared, taken by surprise and threatened that their attitude during the Japanese occupation might well be brought up for investigation, they all signed. With not so much as one representative of the people of Malaya consulted, the British plan was imposed upon the country.

The Malayan Union proposal also had another feature. It created the opportunity to achieve a representative governmental system, eventual self-rule, and a Malayan citizenship that would give equal rights to all

those who considered Malaya their home. As such the plan not only deviated from the traditionally pro-Malay British policy, but it was also unique in that it was the most progressive of all proposals put forward by the European colonial powers in South-East Asia after the Second World War. It was quite remarkable, moreover, that this progressive gesture was made in the one South-East Asian country which was not prepared for it, either mentally or politically. Without any pressure being exerted by the Malayan population, Malaya was suddenly granted concessions which the British used to make hesitatingly and parsimoniously to their other colonial territories where powerful nationalist movements already existed.

There was as yet little national sentiment in Malaya. In the Japanese period the hostility between Malays and Chinese had increased, and in the turbulent month after Japan's surrender communal clashes had occurred when Chinese guerrilla fighters started to take revenge on Malay policemen and pro-Japanese village heads. Under such circumstances the prospect was very slight indeed that any feeling of belonging to a Malayan nation might develop, as became evident when the attempts to create non-racial political parties failed. Towards the end of 1945 a Malayan nationalist movement hardly existed; neither was there any demand for self-rule. That the colonial authorities, nevertheless, seemed to assume the existence of a Malayan national sentiment, or the possibility of stimulating it, can be explained by the idealism which inspired some of the British planners during the war. The policy of abandoning the pro-Malay course and of, indirectly, favouring the non-Malays, may have been the outcome of a sudden preference for the Chinese community which had been loyal, i.e. anti-Japanese, in the war years. The planning of a democratic government and eventual self-rule may be considered as a decoy to make the primary intention of the government's policy — the reinforcement of colonial authority — more readily acceptable. But it was precisely this progressive element of the proposal which, based on a tremendous ignorance of both the racial issues in Malayan society and the mentality of the Malay community, gave rise to a large-scale protest movement.

As a result the Malayan Union foundered. The opposition of the Malays was directed against two aspects of British policy: the way it was carried out and the purport of the plan itself. The tactlessness of MacMichael and his bullying behaviour towards the rulers deeply shocked the Malays. But this was not their main objection. They regarded the Malayan Union as an attack on their position as a privileged group. The idea of a Malayan citizenship and the provision that equal rights were to be granted to non-Malays, would mean that the Malays, economically and educationally already the weaker community, would lag behind even more. Without any protection the Malays would lose the struggle for survival and this might result in Malaya ceasing to be the country of the Malays. For the first time since the establishment of British rule the

Malays were rather rudely brought to the realization that their position and their future were not so safe, after all, as they had always thought.

Against this prospect of losing Malaya to the Chinese and Indians the Malay leaders protested vigorously, and they succeeded in gaining the support of the masses. In the first months of 1946 the Malay community which, until that moment, had shown little inclination towards any organizing activity, exploded in a wave of protests and of political organization, locally in the beginning and country-wide at a later stage. This unprecedented political consciousness among the Malays was clearly demonstrated when a Pan-Malayan Malay Congress was convened which, in a special meeting, called for a complete boycott of the Malayan Union. On 1 April the Union was formally proclaimed and Sir Edward Gent inaugurated as its first governor, and a month-and-a-half later, on 22 May, Malcolm MacDonald was installed as governor-general for Singapore, the Malayan Union and the British territories in Northern Borneo. At neither ceremony were the Malay rulers, or any other high-seated Malays present — a clear sign on the wall, coming as it did from a community standing so much on formalities and courtliness. In the intervening weeks, on 11 May, the Malay Congress had been reorganized into a political party, the United Malay National Organization, U.M.N.O., under the leadership of Onn bin Ja'afar. It was proposed to replace the Malayan Union by a federal constitution; on this issue the Malay leaders were prepared to negotiate with the British authorities, provided the Mac-Michael treaties were annulled. Facing this opposition which obtained strong moral backing from a great many retired civil servants in Great Britain, among them three former governors, the British authorities gave in towards the end of May.

BURMA'S DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

Thus in two British colonial territories in South-East Asia strong protest and opposition movements emerged early in 1946 against the political plans for the future which the government proposed to carry into effect. The post-war developments in Burma clearly demonstrated the difference in colonial policy between the British on the one hand and the French and Dutch on the other. There was no fundamental difference in the desire to maintain and possibly reinforce, with the assistance of friendly politicians, the colonial system or the political and economic influence of the home country, but in their approach of the indigenous movements the British acted in a far more flexible way. When the British government learned from the resoluteness of the nationalists that her policy was unacceptable, and that it was not likely to be pushed through without jeopardizing her long-term interests, she resigned herself to the inevitable.

In such a case no efforts were made to suppress the nationalist movement or to impose her will by military violence, since this would only play into the hands of the most radical elements, particularly the communists. Neither did the British authorities attempt any longer to seek contacts with more moderate politicians for the purpose of neutralizing the less tractable nationalists.

At about the time when the British changed their course they were in a way favoured by the discord between communists and non-communists in the A.F.P.F.L. which, having erupted in June 1946, reached a climax in October when the communists party was expelled as a member of the league. Apart from considerations as to social policy in the future, it was a tactical motive which accounted for the conflict resulting in such an outcome. The fact that communists were participating in the league had not only given offence to many British officials, in Burma as well as in London, but it had also served as an excuse for their anti-A.F.P.F.L. attitude now that the previous argument of the organization's collaboration with Japan had faded away. For the anti-communist-orientated nationalists the introduction of party discipline first and the expulsion of the communists later were instruments for making the A.F.P.F.L. acceptable in British eyes; from now on, the colonial authorities did not have to deal any longer with an organization in which significant posts were filled by communists and of which, until July 1946, Than Tun had been the secretary-general.

But the A.F.P.F.L. used other, less subtle, means of influencing British policy *vis-à-vis* Burma. When Sir Hubert Rance, who in the period of the military administration had won the confidence of the nationalists as head of the Civil Affairs Department, was appointed governor in August, it was evident that the British government recognized, in principle, the league as being the major spokesman of Burmese nationalism. In order to bring to practical realization this theoretical adjustment of British policy, a tremendous strike movement broke out shortly after Rance's arrival. It was a large-scale demonstration of nationalist force rather than an expression of economic dissatisfaction, although this factor also played a significant part. The action started on 2 September in the police force and, spreading among administrative officials in the next two weeks, it virtually became a general strike, paralysing the entire country, after the A.F.P.F.L. made an appeal to this effect. As a result of the complete collapse of the governmental machinery, the Executive Council was forced to resign.

In this atmosphere of utter chaos Rance acted in a resolute way. On 26 September already he appointed a new council, with Aung San as vice-president, and five A.F.P.F.L. members on important posts; furthermore, the council was given all the powers which the Burmese cabinets had possessed since the Government of Burma Act of 1935. A week later the wave of strikes came to an end, and on 13 October the definite breach occurred between the A.F.P.F.L. and the communist party, which disapproved of

calling off the strike. After the conditions for co-operation between Great Britain and the Burmese nationalists had thus been created, both sides took up their respective positions. On 10 November 1946 the A.F.P.F.L. posed an ultimatum, with a time schedule: a British promise, to be made before the end of January 1947, that Burma would become independent within a year, and that elections should be held in April 1947. Should the British authorities refuse to comply with this demand the representatives of the league in the Executive Council would resign. On 20 December the British government replied when Prime Minister Attlee announced his willingness to have constitutional talks with a Burmese delegation in London. The A.F.P.F.L. accepted the offer.

From that moment onwards Burma passed without difficulties through all phases of development towards the termination of colonial rule, as was customary in the sphere of British colonial practice. While the members of the A.F.P.F.L. and the P.V.O militia held themselves ready for an armed rebellion, and student groups, labour unions and adherents of the communist party organized demonstrations, a Burmese delegation negotiated with the British government in London. On 27 January 1947 the Aung San -Attlee Agreement was signed. Among other things it was agreed that a Constituent Assembly was to be elected, that part of this body would act as provisional National Assembly and make preparations for Burma's independence, that the constitution, when drafted, was to be presented as quickly as possible to British Parliament, that in the intervening period the Executive Council would become an interim government and be treated as the government of a Dominion and, finally, that Burma would enjoy financial autonomy.

In Burma itself this agreement met with quite some criticism, among communists who considered the British concessions too small, the P.V.O. adherents who feared that they would miss the chance of reaping laurels in an armed struggle, and among the older-generation politicians who wanted to embarrass the A.F.P.F.L. Of the latter U Saw and Ba Maw established an opposition front which started to outbid the A.F.P.F.L. in nationalist fervour. The communists refused to collaborate with this right-wing organization and they restrained their activities, but the general unrest which locally took on the form of rebelliousness increased, and Aung San had great difficulty in persuading the A.F.P.F.L. to accept the decisions of the London Conference. Yet the prestige of the league with the population was not diminished, as became evident by the elections for the Constituent Assembly in April 1947: it won 172 out of the 182 non-reserved seats, and among the representatives on the reserved seats there were several who were either associated or co-operating with the A.F.P.F.L. The election result guaranteed that the A.F.P.F.L. would be playing the predominant role in bringing about Burma's independence and drafting a constitution.

A significant problem in this respect was related to the position of those frontier areas which were inhabited by non-Burman minorities. Until that moment they had been left out of the constitutional developments, since their administration used to be one of the governor's special responsibilities. The nationalists demanded that these areas join the rest of the country, being motivated primarily by their suspicion that the British might manage to continue their rule under the pretext that the minorities had to be protected against the Burman majority race.

The Aung San-Attlee Agreement failed to comply with the demand of the A.F.P.F.L. that representatives of the frontier areas be admitted to the Constituent Assembly, but it was decided to appoint a committee to examine the manner in which the ethnic minorities could be involved in the process of drafting the constitution. The nationalists realized that any association of these territories with the rest of Burma could be achieved only if attractive conditions were offered to the inhabitants and their princes or chiefs. In November 1946 Aung San paid a visit to the areas concerned, promising that separate states were to be established with autonomy in local affairs and participation in the central administration. This promise was confirmed at a conference held at Panglong, in February 1947, with the Shan *sawbwas* and representatives of the Kachin and Chin tribes. To ensure the co-operation of the minorities and their rulers Aung San was prepared to make large concessions: in fact, he allowed them to write their own conditions for joining Burma into the constitution, adding, moreover, that the association was not to be permanent and that the constituent states would be granted the right to secede. Although the Karens and, initially, also the inhabitants of the Karenni states continued to be suspicious, Aung San's statesmanship in this respect was instrumental in removing most of the traditional mistrust of Burman intentions among the ethnic minorities, and on 12 February an agreement was reached over the conditions under which the Shans, Chin and Kachins would join Burma. In accordance with the Panglong Treaty a report of a committee of investigation recommended, on 24 April, a federal structure for the future state. Representatives of the three areas immediately took their seats in the Constituent Assembly, while those of the Karenni states took theirs in September. An agreement with the Karens could not be achieved.

Another important problem of Burma's new status touched upon the country's future relations with Great Britain. Unlike India, Pakistan and Ceylon, Burma opted for independence outside the British Commonwealth, and the unanimous decision to that effect was taken shortly after the Constituent Assembly had been convened on 9 June. For the British this was highly disappointing, but for the Burmese it was the strictly logical consequence of their struggle for national freedom. Membership of the Commonwealth might bring Burma economic advantages, but in the past the Burmese nationalists had conceived such a strong dislike of British capitalist interests operating in their country that they considered them-

selves better capable of warding off any renewed attempt at economic domination if they broke off all constitutional links with Great Britain. The pressure exerted by British economic interests to keep Burma in the Commonwealth could not but strengthen :heir suspicions in this respect. Burmese self-consciousness, moreover, was particularly evident in the ultra-nationalist sentiments of the P.V.O., the turbulent rearguard of the A.F.P.F.L., and these militants, heavily represented in the Constituent Assembly, were to be appeased only by complete independence, without even a symbolic link with the former home country. Finally, the communists pushed the A.F.P.F.L. into a radical direction. After the expulsion of the communist party the league had not become a right-wing organization; it maintained its socialist, at any rate its overwhelmingly leftist, character and it could not afford to follow a course which might be depicted as pro-British by its communist adversaries as well as by many of its own adherents.

It was among the group of the frustrated older politicians, who had been driven from their foremost position in the nationalist movement, that the conspiracy was planned to effect their return to political prominence, and a swing back to the right as well, by killing the most important leaders of the A.F.P.F.L. The man behind the plot was the former Prime Minister U Saw, and on his instigation armed bandits forced their way into a meeting of the Executive Council on 19 July 1947. Aung San was shot and together with him Thakin Mya, the socialist leader, and four other members of the council were assassinated. For the rest the conspiracy failed, however, because Governor Rance immediately ordered Thakin Nu, the vice-president of the A.F.P.F.L., to form a new interim government. The murderers were apprehended and so was Saw. Thus a major crisis was prevented, also because the league obtained the full support of Than Tun's communist party, but the killing of Aung San and Mya, both irreplaceable men, was a damaging blow to both the A.F.P.F.L. and to Burma.

Aung San's death did not delay the development towards independence. On 24 September the Constituent Assembly adopted the constitution and in October Nu travelled to London for final talks with the British government. In the Nu-Attlee Agreement of 17 October Great Britain recognized the 'Republic of the Union of Burma' as an independent, sovereign state; on the same occasion several military, financial and economic issues as well as the future relations between the two countries were finally settled. The British Parliament had the last word: in November it gave its consent to the Burma Independence Act. Independence came on 4 January 1948 when, at a moment designated by astrologers as the most auspicious, Rance transferred his authority to Sao Shwe Taik, the *Sawbwa* of Yawnghwe who had been elected President of Burma. The same day the new constitution took effect.

THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA

In Malaya, too, the British government sacrificed its initial plan as a result of the opposition it produced in the indigenous society, but the change of policy as such was the only resemblance to the Burmese situation. In Burma the British gave in to a strong nationalist agitation which reflected the general popular dislike of any continuation of colonial rule. In Malaya, on the other hand, the opposition was not directed against British political or economic domination; it was not an expression of Malayan nationalism, advocating an independent Malaya, but of Malay racial communalism, primarily directed against the non-Malays, particularly the Chinese, as well as of Malay regional particularism, objecting to the reduction of the power of the Malay rulers. As to its character and orientation the protest movement in Malaya not only differed from Burmese nationalism but also from all other South-East Asian nationalist movements, and its unequaled position in this respect was the result, partly of Malaya's multi-racial population, partly of a different type of leadership. In Burma, and most other colonial territories in the region, the political leaders were enthusiastically nationalist, often socialist or communist-orientated, younger men who, by advocating a new future, became the spokesmen for a population which was moved by an unconscious longing for a change. But in Malaya the major politicians belonged to the old elite of Malay aristocrats and civil servants who wanted to maintain the privileges of their own group which seemed threatened by the imminent disappearance of British protection. As a result of their traditional prestige they could rely on the support of the generally conservative Malay population.

It was precisely this character of the Malay protest movement which accounted for the exceedingly tolerant British reaction to it: in a circular letter the administration even permitted its Malay officials to take some time off in order to attend U.M.N.O. meetings at which they could criticize the authorities — in colonial history a unique gesture indeed. Three weeks after the setting up of U.M.N.O. the British, on the advice of Governor Gent, decided to annul the Malayan Union, and on 2 June talks began on Malaya's constitutional status. The agitation of the Malays against the Malayan Union was also pointed, be it indirectly, against the British regime which had put forward the project, and as such it was the first expression of anti-British sentiment in a society which, until that moment, had shown little political awareness. The British authorities were not anxious to assist in the emergence of a powerful nationalist movement and, even though this was a very remote possibility, due to racial differences, it was evident that a general wave of discontent among the Malays would produce great problems, particularly since neither the Chinese nor the Indians had shown any great zeal in supporting the government's policies. The British may have realized that it would still be possible to restore the pre-war

co-operation with the Malays: the U.M.N.O. was, after all, an organization *ad hoc* against the Malayan Union, not against colonial rule as such, and its leaders and spokesmen were civil servants or members of the aristocracy who used to co-operate loyally with the British. In addition, U.M.N.O., being a Malay and conservative party, might well become an ally of the administration against the threat which the predominantly Chinese Malayan Communist Party posed to the colonial regime and to British influence. But to placate U.M.N.O. and the Malay community the Malayan Union had to be eliminated.

From the moment the decision was taken the authorities completely yielded to the demands of the Malay protest movement. The separate identity of the Malay states was recognized; Malay special rights were guaranteed. The Malayan Union citizenship was abandoned; in its place a federal citizenship was designed, to which every Malay was automatically entitled, but a Chinese only if he met some strict requirements as to birth and domicile. The British also complied with the desire of the Malays that the liquidation of the Malayan Union and the setting up of the new constitution be discussed only with U.M.N.O. and the rulers. By excluding the non-Malay communities as well as Malay leftist opinion the Malay aristocracy and the civil servants represented in U.M.N.O. were thus recognized as the sole spokesmen of the Malayan people.

While U.M.N.O. and the British were working out a new constitutional structure, the Chinese community began to show signs of uneasiness. Until that moment the non-Malays did not evince any particular preference for the Malayan Union. This was partly the result of the character of British policy after the war, which had been to the advantage of the non-Malays and, as such, did not require any specific adhesion. This attitude of aloofness was also caused by the lack of political interest among the Chinese and Indians. But this failure openly to profess enthusiasm for the Malayan Union was replaced by anxiety over the government's change of front, which threatened to cancel the advantages of the Union structure while at the same time its only disadvantage for Chinese and Indian business — Singapore's separation from Malaya — was perpetuated. It was resented, moreover, that the constitutional procedure was treated as a private affair of British and Malays. The agitation against the new course originated with the Malayan Democratic Union, a non-racial and consequently not very influential party of Indian and Eurasian democratic-orientated intellectuals, and with the conservative Malacca businessman Tan Cheng Lock, as mouthpiece for the Chinese. On 22 December 1946 the Pan Malayan Council for Joint Action was set up as an organization for all those who disapproved of the liquidation of the Malayan Union and feared that U.M.N.O. was wielding too strong an influence.

This agitation brought together the representatives of several social classes and political convictions among the non-Malays, who were motivated by discontent over the preferential treatment accorded to the

Malays, as well as the tiny group of radical, either leftist or pro-Indonesian Malays, who resented the favouring of the Malay aristocracy. Even within the non-Malay group it was in several respects a unnatural alliance, in that conservative communal organizations as the Straits Chinese British Association and the Malayan Indian Congress, the latter established in August 1946, co-operated with the moderate M.D.U. and the communist M.C.P. in attacking British policy. This character of the alliance was clearly demonstrated by the intrinsic weakness of the P.M.C.J.A.: there were racial differences between the non-Malay organizations and the representatives of the anti-U.M.N.O. Malay parties; there was also the antagonism between left and right. The movement in favour of the Malayan Union was seriously jeopardized by this. When it came to the point of direct action the conservatives feared the driving power of the leftist groups behind the coalition and they reconciled themselves with the policies of the government.

Just as the British authorities had been lenient in the face of the U.M.N.O. protest movement against the Malayan Union, so they were intolerant towards the opposition to their new course. They refrained from taking any repressive action since this would have played into the hands of the communists, but everything else was done to bring about the failure of the agitation. Meanwhile the plans which had been put forward by U.M.N.O. and approved of by Malay royalty were worked out. After a symbolic consultation of the non-Malay communities the British administration adopted, on 24 July 1947, the proposal to establish a Federation of Malaya. A constitutional counter-proposal of the P.M.C.J.A., due to the racial controversies a rather colourless compromise, was disregarded after U.M.N.O. declared itself against it. In a last effort to exert pressure Tan Cheng Lock organized a *hartal* on 20 October: it was a great success — economic life was paralysed for one day — but it did not serve any long-term purpose, while its short-term achievements thoroughly alarmed Chinese business circles as a result of which Tan's attempt to organize a second hartal failed. Thus the British authorities were able to press on with their policy and on 21 January 1948 the Federal Agreement was signed by representatives of the government and the Malay rulers. On 1 February the Federation of Malaya came into being.

Of the Malayan Union project only the one element was maintained which, for obvious reasons, had not been opposed by the Malays: the separation of Singapore with its overwhelmingly Chinese population from the rest of the country. So also the greater powers of the central — now federal — government over the constituent states were preserved. It was stipulated that the constitutional development would eventually lead to self-government, but as a result of British preponderance in the federal administration, autonomy was effected only in the sphere of the state governments, and even this in only a limited sense. The opportunity

to achieve a democratic and representative form of government was also considerably reduced. In the constituent states the prerogatives of the Malay rulers were restored; executive power was vested in them as well as in the state governments, that is, put into the hands of the Malay aristocratic class and the Malay bureaucracy. No popular influence whatsoever endangered either their position in the state administrations or that of the British authorities and, in the economic sphere, of European, Chinese and Indian capitalist interests in the federal government: the federal Legislative Council in Kuala Lumpur and the State Councils in each of the eleven constituent states were composed of nominated members.

In no Asian colonial territory was a political movement able to gain such a quick and complete victory as U.M.N.O., and in no territory did the colonial administration behave in such an accommodating way. This is evident when one compares British complaisance in Malaya with British policy in Burma where it took the civilian administration a year to come to the recognition of A.F.P.F.L. as the foremost representative of public opinion. This attitude of the colonial power was based, of course, on the realization that U.M.N.O., as the political organization of a community which had to rely on the protection of the British government, was not representing any Malayan nationalism and could not, therefore, constitute a permanent challenge. After the authorities readopted their policy of favouring the Malays they fulfilled the condition for resuming the traditional co-operation with the dominant Malay circles. In February 1948, when the federal proposals took effect and the Federation of Malaya officially came into being, the colonial government was more firmly established than in 1945 after the Japanese occupation. Based on a constitutional structure which sustained the conservative forces of society, and sure of the collaboration of the most powerful political party, the colonial government's prospects of maintaining itself were also far brighter than at the moment when some elements of the Malayan Union project offered the opportunity to embark upon a democratic development towards self-rule.

SARAWAK AND NORTH BORNEO

In Northern Borneo the British also succeeded in reinforcing their colonial rule, but unlike the situation in Malaya, they were not compelled to give up the system of direct rule which they introduced as the most suitable instrument for achieving this end. Plans for establishing direct rule existed only with regard to the protectorate of Sarawak where British influence in internal affairs was infinitesimal. In accordance with its general desire to strengthen British power in South-East Asia after the war the British government began to plan its future relations with Sarawak

in 1943. As its major argument for advocating a change it stated that, due to the Rajah's policy of protecting native society and excluding Western capitalism as much as possible, the country was lagging behind, economically as well as in a material sense and that the British government was far better equipped to carry out a policy of modernization. Yet the negotiations between the Colonial Office and the representatives of the state government broke down in February 1945 when the Sarawak delegation refused to allow Great Britain a decisive voice in its internal administration. In October the talks were resumed, however, this time with Sir Charles Vyner Brooke, the Rajah. The latter not only complied with the British demands but he also went further; facing the tremendous difficulties of rebuilding and modernizing the state he proposed to transfer Sarawak to the Crown. The British government was willing to accept this offer on the condition that the population agreed. After the people's wishes had been ascertained in a rather cursory way, the final decision was left to the Council Negri. In this advisory council, a nominated body, the Europeans and Malays were over-represented, and it was among the Malays in particular that the proposed transfer was resented most strongly, because they were afraid to loose their position as the most privileged group in Sarawak's bureaucracy. It was only because a few Malays had voted for the proposal that it was adopted by the Council Negri on 17 May 1946.

On 1 July 1946 the administration of the Brooke dynasty came to an end: Sarawak became a Crown colony. A fortnight later the same happened to North Borneo. In this case there had not been much insistence by the Colonial Office to effect the change: administered by the British North Borneo Company which entertained very close relations with the authorities in London and in Malaya, the territory used to be ruled according to the directives of the British government. At the end of the war, however, the problems of rehabilitation and rebuilding were so immense that the company was quite unable to cope with them, and its president, Sir Neill Malcolm, approached the British government for assistance. In June 1946 an agreement was reached: the government took over the possessions, interests and sovereign rights of the company against a provisional sum of £860,000 pending the definitive assessment of the compensation by an impartial mediator. On 15 July North Borneo, into which Labuan was incorporated, was transferred to the British Crown.

THAILAND: THE TREATIES WITH BRITAIN AND FRANCE

The renewed contacts of the Western powers with Thailand were of a different nature than those with the rest of South-East Asia: Thailand was a sovereign state, not a territory over which colonial domination had to be restored. Yet, by siding with Japan during the Second World War.

Thailand had aroused the displeasure of the Allied nations, particularly Great Britain, and afraid of the consequences the Thai government started to adapt her policy to the new situation immediately after the Japanese surrender. The declaration of war was annulled, and it was announced that the annexed Burmese Shan states and Malay states would be returned and that the Allied prisoners of war were to be liberated. The United States did not raise great difficulties in this respect: the government in Washington had always ignored the Thai declaration of war, which had not been properly delivered anyway since the Thai ambassador had refused to carry out his government's instructions. The declaration of war was considered not to reflect the wishes of the Thai people, and this argument, taken up by the Regent of Thailand, Pridi Phanomyong, in his proclamation of 16 August 1945 in which he withdrew the country from the war-alliance with Japan, was repeated by the State Department on the 20th: there had never been a state of war between the United States and Thailand; Thailand was not an enemy but a liberated country. In anticipation of the Japanese defeat this stand of the United States was also based upon the consideration that it would be an advantage to the prestige and future position of the Americans, in Thailand as well as in South-East Asia in general, if they could avoid becoming entangled in tricky peace negotiations and reparation claims which, in Asian public opinion, might rank the United States among the European colonial powers. Adopting this attitude the government in Washington kept aloof from the policy of her European allies.

Thus Thailand had nothing to fear from the United States; on the contrary, it could rely on American sympathy when it felt unreasonably treated by Great Britain. The British government was not excessively vindictive: she realized, after all, that a harsh peace treaty was bound to create resentment which might jeopardize Britain's future position and endanger the political stability of the country. The British intended primarily to restore the *status quo ante bellum*: retrocession of the annexed Shan and Malay states, compensation of damages, and restoration of British financial and commercial interests. Also Thailand had to promise not to build a canal through the Kra Isthmus without British consent and, until September 1947, not to export any rubber, tin and teak at prices not internationally agreed upon. British imperial, strategic and commercial considerations were, of course, responsible for these provisions. But the clause which met with the strongest opposition, in Thailand as well as in Washington, was the one which forced Thailand to deliver 1.5 million tons of rice to the British for distribution in Malaya, Singapore, Burma and India. This was meant to make Thailand realize that the British lion was not to be teased with impunity, but it also served to alleviate the general shortage of food in Asia: the British government intended to charge an international committee with the task of distributing

the rice. On 1 January 1946 the peace treaty between Britain and Thailand was signed in Singapore.

There was quite some indignation over British policy *vis-à-vis* Thailand in America, stirred up by statements of Thai representatives to the effect that Great Britain was aiming at imposing economic colonialism. After only a few months the British government had to change her course, partly because of American pressure, partly as a result of the failure of the rice-agreement. The local Chinese who controlled the rice-trade in Thailand were unwilling to hand over their supplies to Britain, or even to sell them to the Thai government, and with the consent of the latter they exported rice illegally. On 3 May, after new negotiations in which the United States took part, it was agreed that Great Britain would pay for the rice delivered to her. The price was still below the world-market price, but in December 1946 the agreement was modified again, this time to the effect that the world-market price had to be paid in full.

In the Singapore Peace Treaty Great Britain promised to support Thailand's admission to the United Nations. The Soviet Union and China did not raise objections in this respect provided that Thailand was willing to repeal the anti-communist laws of 1933 and the discriminatory regulations with regard to Chinese. But before Thailand could take her seat in the United Nations the consent of France was also required, and the French government made it a condition that the Cambodian and Laotian provinces, taken from her in 1941, be retroceded.

In Thai opinion the affair was not quite so simple. Thailand had not been at war with France; the cession of the territories concerned had been arranged by treaty and, as such, it could not be compared with the war-time annexations of the Burmese and Malay states. The French, however, did not recognize this treaty which had been concluded with the Vichy government. In order to regain her damaged prestige in Indochina France was as eager to wipe out this stain on her war-time conduct as, for nationalist reasons, the Thais were interested in preserving the recovered provinces.

Early in 1946 the Thais began to negotiate with the French, but they were not in a hurry, hoping that the difficulties which France was facing in Vietnam might dissuade her from taking drastic steps. Thailand added to these difficulties, moreover, by giving support to the Khmer nationalists who were seeking sanctuary in the border territories. Relations deteriorated further when, after the French reconquest of Laos, a Lao Issara government in exile based itself in Bangkok and Laotian guerrilla fighters began to operate from Thai territory without being obstructed by the Thai authorities. In April and May several incidents took place in which French troops crossed the frontier and shelled some Thai towns.

Although not yet a member of the United Nations Thailand made a complaint against France on 31 May, but the conflict did not come up for discussion because on 1 August France consented to refer the matter to the International Court of Justice. Before any decision could be taken,

however, serious clashes occurred on 10 August when Khmer Issarak fighters, according to French sources coming from Thai territory and supported by Thai troops, attacked a series of French posts in the area of Siem Reap. France withdrew her offer to have the conflict settled by the International Court and announced firm steps to recover the disputed territories. She also opposed any discussion on the Thai complaint in the Security Council on the grounds that the charter of the United Nations did not provide for the council's intervention in any matter in which a former enemy state was involved.

In these circumstances Thailand could not but give in. The United States was unable to support the Thais: in 1941 the cession of the Indochinese territories to Thailand had obviously been the result of Japanese pressure, and, after the defeat of Japan, any perpetuation of this settlement would not be made acceptable to world opinion. The public at large, which by that time had already forgotten that French Indochina had been collaborating with the Japanese as much as Thailand, regarded France only as a victim. Formally Thailand had a strong case: there had never been a state of war between her and France, and this might well have been a consideration of the French government when, on second thoughts, she decided to take the matter out of the hands of the International Court of Justice. Yet the French demands were generally considered justifiable, and equivalent to the desire of the British to return to the *status quo ante* with regard to the annexed Burmese and Malay territories.

New talks eventually led to an agreement which was adopted by Thai parliament on 15 October and officially signed in Washington on 17 November 1946. The Treaty of Tokyo of 9 May 1941 was annulled and Thailand had to cede the provinces which she had regained under that treaty. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were resumed after that and on 12 December Thailand was admitted to the United Nations.

2 Negotiations and Colonial Divide-and-Rule

THE AGREEMENTS OF HANOI AND LINGGADJATI

BOTH Indonesia and Vietnam had to complete the disastrous course of a policy which aimed at imposing a solution, devised by the colonial government and rejected by the nationalists. Since neither the Netherlands nor France had been able to restore their authority fully, and the military power of both nations was insufficient, for the time being, to guarantee an easy reconquest, the first phase of the post-war period was characterized by negotiations. Immediately after the Second World War which had been fought in the name of liberty, and in view of public opinion in the United States, talks were preferred to violence anyway. Finally such a course enabled the two colonial powers to make quiet preparations for the use of armed force in the future, in case that should be inevitable from their point of view.

In Indonesia and Vietnam, too, negotiations were considered to be of vital importance. Both in Djokjakarta, the seat of the Indonesian government since early 1946, and in Hanoi, the political leaders were convinced of their own weakness in any military conflict. It was feared that such an event would bring about an untimely end to the national regimes, and consequently seriously jeopardize the cause of freedom. Moreover the two governments were not essentially anti-Dutch or anti-French. They realized that they badly needed European technical, economic and cultural assistance for the rehabilitation of their countries and they wanted to achieve their goals in co-operation with rather than in opposition to the Netherlands and France. But at the same time the Indonesian and Vietnamese nationalists were not at all convinced that the colonial mentality of the

European governments had fundamentally changed during the war, and for this reason, too, they regarded negotiations as a means of gaining time and of strengthening their countries' military preparedness.

In Indonesia the formation of the Sjahrir cabinet, on 14 November 1945, provided an opportunity to negotiate with a Dutch government that was still unwilling to talk to Sukarno, who was considered by the Dutch as a collaborator. A few months later the necessity to enter into discussions with the French was presented to Vietnam when France was bargaining with China over the price she had to pay for the evacuation of Tonkin by the Chinese occupation forces and their relief by French troops. On 16 February 1946 Ho Chi Minh announced his willingness to negotiate.

When the talks started a wide gap existed between the various points of view. On 1 November 1945 the Indonesian government demanded complete independence as well as the recognition of her authority over the whole of the Netherlands Indies. In his announcement of February 1946 Ho Chi Minh made it a condition that France recognize the independence and territorial unity of Vietnam. The Netherlands and France, on the other hand, offered a federal structure and a partnership in a wider imperial context, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the French Union respectively. The relevant Dutch offer was made only in a second proposal, since the first one, of 6 November 1945, completely failed to refer to the right of the Indonesians to decide on their own future. This plan was so out of touch with the real situation that it had to be dropped altogether. At the instance of Lieutenant Governor General Van Mook the new proposal, like the first one based on the royal address of 7 December 1942, provided for a federal Commonwealth of Indonesia, with a well-balanced division of power between the regional authorities and the central administration, the latter to be headed by a representative of the Crown. This statement of 10 February 1946 did not contain any more than the previous one, a recognition of the Indonesian republic, but it might at any rate serve as a starting-point for negotiations. For the Dutch this plan constituted the only solution to the problem of Indonesia's future and they were bent upon carrying it through at any cost. The French offer was included in the government's statement of 24 March 1945. An Indochinese Federation was to be set up, consisting of five territories enjoying some internal autonomy, but the federal administration would remain firmly in French hands. To the Vietnamese this plan amounted to nothing more substantial than the revival of the old structure under a different name, while it also confirmed the splitting up of their country into three regions.

During the negotiations neither France nor the Netherlands displayed any great willingness to deviate from their basic stands so that the concessions had to be made by the Asian nationalists. It was in Vietnam that the discussions led to the first tangible result: the Hanoi Treaty, or Ho-Sainteny Agreement, of 6 March 1946. The French recognized Vietnam as a 'free state' within the Indochinese Federation, and they undertook

to organize a referendum on the problem of the country's territorial unity. Throughout the Western world France was loudly praised; yet it was France and not Vietnam which gained a significant victory. No reference was made to Vietnam's independence, but only to its position as a free state. The territorial unity of Vietnam was not guaranteed at all; instead an undefined promise was given with regard to a plebiscite. In exchange for this the Vietnamese government made precisely the one concession in which the French were most interested, by permitting them to station garrisons in Tonkin, the major bastion of the Vietnamese revolution. It is true that a large French invasion fleet had appeared off Haiphong and that the Vietnamese government signed the agreement under strong pressure of the Chinese military command, but it is also true that the French commander, Leclerc, feared a retreat of the Viet Minh into the mountains more than anything else. The Treaty of Hanoi prevented such an eventuality: the French were allowed to establish peacefully a military foothold in Tonkin. That Ho Chi Minh was prepared to make this concession was due both to his expectation that the left wing in France might win the coming elections and to his desire to avert a long-drawn-out war that would cause terrible hardships. He had great difficulty in soothing the worries of the highly alarmed Vietnamese people, and he was compelled to defend himself against charges of treason, but at a mass meeting in Hanoi, on 7 March, he and General Giap pointed to the fact that independence could and should be achieved by other means than by war. The agreement was immensely unpopular but his enormous personal prestige enabled Ho Chi Minh to make the Vietnamese acquiesce in it.

Negotiations in Indonesia did not lead so quickly to a settlement so favourable to the colonial power. Militarily the Netherlands depended on the goodwill of the British occupation authorities, and although the latter were in principle not unfavourably disposed towards the Dutch, the bloody events in Surabaya clearly dissuaded them from duplicating their Cochin-Chinese policies in Java. As the Netherlands was still weak, the Indonesian government was not under any immediate obligation to water down her claims. Furthermore she lacked the naive confidence in the Dutch intentions such as Ho Chi Minh placed in the promises of France. The first proposal of the Dutch government had been entirely negative and only after strong pressure by Van Mook it had been replaced with a slightly more accommodating offer. Internationally the case of Indonesia's liberty looked more promising than that of the Vietnamese revolution.

Yet it was Indonesia and not the Netherlands which moderated its original pretensions in order to come to an agreement. Using the Treaty of Hanoi as a model Van Mook drew up a similar scheme as a basis for a discussion: representing Java the republic was to become a constituent state of the Indonesian Federation which would be a partner in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. During the talks the Netherlands Indies

negotiators complied with Sjahrir's demand that the authority of the republic also be recognized in Sumatra. They intimated, moreover, that the representatives of Borneo, Celebes and the smaller islands might be appointed in concert with the republican government. In exchange for these vague promises the Indonesian government dropped its initial demand that the republic be considered the sovereign power over all of Indonesia. To Van Mook, however, these promises were nothing more than a means to lure both the Indonesian and the Netherlands government into believing that the prospects of achieving a settlement were quite auspicious. Sjahrir may have made his concession out of the consideration that an arrangement was vital now that the Dutch were busily engaged in restoring their authority in the territories outside Java and Sumatra, but Van Mook was well aware that this was the utmost the Indonesian government would be prepared to concede. Afraid that any postponement of an agreement might result in a further consolidation of the republic's authority in Java and Sumatra, he intended to rush both governments into the approval of a settlement.

Van Mook's tactics were successful only in that the Indonesians really believed that an agreement was within reach: they sent a delegation to the Netherlands. But the government in the Hague was not to be taken by surprise. With the parliamentary elections one month ahead of them the Dutch ministers were clearly unwilling to commit themselves to any definite policy. The result was the entirely useless Conference of Hoge Veluwe (14–24 April 1946) from which the Indonesian delegation returned home empty-handed. The Dutch refused both to recognize the republic's authority in Sumatra and to consult the republican government in appointing representatives of the non-Javanese territories. They also opposed a settlement in the form of an agreement between two governments.

The latter objection clearly reflected the subordinate position which the Indonesian government held in Dutch eyes. To this insult Sjahrir retaliated, in an indirect way, by stating on 17 June that a constitutional link with the Netherlands was unacceptable and that the future relations between the two countries were to be ruled according to international law. Indonesian suspicions, aroused already by the landings of Dutch troops in Java in March, were further strengthened by the failure of the Hoge Veluwe Conference, and consequently, the attitude of the government in Djokjakarta became less accommodating. She continued to emphasize her demand that her authority be recognized in Sumatra as well as in Java, including the British-occupied enclaves. In a proposal aimed at reaching an armistice the Indonesian government asked, moreover, that the sending of Dutch troops to Indonesia be discontinued, but this request was rejected by Van Mook on 9 July. The Conference at Malino, which was convened by the Netherlands Indies administration in mid-July and which was attended by Indonesian politicians of the areas under Dutch rule, was

not conducive to diminishing Indonesian mistrust either. Yet the increasing military power of the Dutch and the fact that the date when the British occupation forces would be leaving was rapidly approaching, tended to impress upon the republican Indonesians that a quick settlement was necessary.

At the instance of the British government which sent Lord Killearn as a mediator to Indonesia, it was decided to resume the talks. The Netherlands authorities were not opposed to the idea: Van Mook was still haunted by the fear that any further delay in bringing about a solution could not but be to the disadvantage of the Dutch position in Indonesia. A General Commission, headed by the former Prime Minister Willem Schermerhorn and vested with special authority, was appointed. After an armistice had been concluded, on 14 October, political negotiations started on the 22nd. The result was a provisional agreement which was signed at Linggadjati, near Cheribon, on 15 November by the Indonesian delegation and the General Commission. Under this treaty the Netherlands recognized the authority of the Indonesian republic over Java and Sumatra. The two governments pledged to co-operate in establishing a sovereign, democratic and federal state, the 'United States of Indonesia'. So far this agreement did not greatly differ from the concept which the Dutch had refused to adopt at the Hoge Veluwe talks. In one respect only the new treaty contained a clause which was less favourable to the Dutch: in the future Indonesia was not to be associated with the Netherlands in any constitutional structure of an imperial nature. But the Indonesian demand for a relationship based merely on international law was not heeded either. As a compromise a plan for a loosely-knit Netherlands-Indonesian Union was drawn up, consisting of the United States of Indonesia on the one hand and on the other the new Kingdom of the Netherlands, that is, the old Kingdom minus Indonesia. The Queen of the Netherlands was to become head of the Union which would have its own executive bodies for foreign affairs, defence and some financial and economic matters. But this deviation from the original Dutch point of view as expressed on 10 February 1946 was small in comparison to the pretensions which the government in Djokjakarta had been compelled to abandon.

DETERIORATION OF FRENCH-VIETNAMESE AND DUTCH-INDONESIAN RELATIONS

The agreements of Hanoi and Linggadjati, which referred to fundamental matters the details of which had to be worked out next, were first steps only. It was in this new round of talks, however, that the negotiations failed to be successful and that both in Vietnam and Indonesia the colonial powers resorted to armed force to assert their will.

To the Vietnamese and Indonesians it was highly distressing that their struggle for freedom aroused hardly any support among the peoples of France or the Netherlands. In Paris as well as in The Hague social democrats were taking part in the governments, but the process of adaptation of socialism to a capitalist society had affected their party organizations to such an extent that their leading politicians did not have the imagination to evaluate properly the revolutionary situation in the colonies. Their ideas were not essentially different from those evinced by the right-wing and centre parties, and furthermore, they were not prepared to jeopardize their position in the political set-up of the home countries by adhering too much to their erstwhile principles. Whenever some leftist conscience caused a difference of opinion between the social democrats and their partners in the cabinet, the former lacked the parliamentary means to change the policy of the government as well as the courage and the tenacity to act according to their principles and withdraw from the cabinet.

It was in the Netherlands that a great part of the urban working classes was controlled by the social democrats. In France, on the other hand, the communist party was dominant in this field, but this did not make Vietnam's prospects any brighter than Indonesia's. Out of considerations of party politics the communists, who were partners in the French cabinets until May 1947, made little effort on behalf of the Vietnamese. It was not in their interest to alienate the French voters, neither was it in the interest of the Soviet Union to rebuff France. In both countries the major labourers' organizations did nothing to support Asia's liberation; this was left to a tiny group of left-wing intellectuals and radical socialists. With the left wing thus neutralized, with a safe majority in parliament and the influential newspapers on their side, and with the silent backing of an essentially disinterested population which, exposed to vehement patriotic propaganda was, in general, quite easily persuaded into considering the Indonesian and Vietnamese republics unacceptable, the colonial interests, the military authorities and the conservative-orientated political groups were able to press on with their own policies.

In these circumstances both the French and the Dutch tenaciously adhered to their standpoints. The new French-Vietnamese talks were preceded by a quarrel about where they should take place. Ho Chi Minh suggested France, since he wanted to have the negotiations carried on outside the sphere of influence of High Commissioner d'Argenlieu, a noted adversary of the agreement of 6 March. The latter, on the other hand, did not want Ho to make contacts with political circles in Paris and he even threatened to separate Cochin China from Vietnam should Ho proceed to France. A compromise was worked out: preliminary talks in Indochina, the conference itself in France. In practice it did not make any difference at all where the negotiations were held: neither in Dalat (17 April - 11 May), nor in Fontainebleau (6 July - 10 September) did the French and Vietnamese come any nearer to reaching an agreement.

The French kept to the view that the *Union française* was to be a closely-knit structure, consisting of states which would ultimately remain dependent upon France; similarly they preferred to see the Indochinese Federation in terms of an all-embracing government, covering Vietnam as well as Laos and Cambodia. To the Vietnamese this interpretation meant that their country's subordinate position would be maintained, this time, however, with the federal Indochinese authorities interposed between themselves and the government in Paris. They regarded the Union as an alliance of sovereign states, and as far as the Indochinese Federation was concerned they were only prepared to entrust it with co-ordinating functions. The unity of Vietnam, that is, the status of Cochin China, was the second issue on which no agreement could be reached. The Vietnamese pointed out that this region belonged to Vietnam and that the plebiscite to which France committed herself was intended only to establish the degree of autonomy it should enjoy within the Vietnamese republic. The French, on the other hand, considered Cochin China a separate country, and they were unwilling to carry out the referendum as long as law and order had not been restored, in other words, as long as the resistance movement failed to lay down its arms.

After the talks in Dalat French-Vietnamese relations deteriorated further when d'Argenlieu, in an effort to sabotage the attempts at reconciliation to be made at Fontainebleau, unilaterally proclaimed Cochin China a 'free state' on 1 June. Consequently no progress was made at the Fontainebleau Conference. At the last moment an attempt was made to come to some kind of understanding by working out a compromise solution for a few financial and economic problems, but by that time the Vietnamese had lost almost all confidence in France. They did not dare return to Hanoi, moreover, with a treaty that would pilot Vietnam into the Indochinese Federation on French conditions without one single French *quid pro quo*. The day the agreement was to be signed the leader of the Vietnamese delegation, Pham Van Dong, suddenly pressed for a reopening of the discussion on the sovereignty of Vietnam and the referendum in Cochin China, and by this move formally wrecked the conference which had been a failure anyway.

But while the Vietnamese delegation sailed home Ho Chi Minh stayed behind. He was greatly disappointed in the turn events had taken and in a final effort to save the situation he went so far as to make concessions on his own authority. On 14 September 1946 he and the Overseas Minister Marius Moutet signed a *modus vivendi* in which Vietnam recognized, in principle, the Indochinese monetary and customs union, and a special committee would be charged with working out the details. Ho also promised to facilitate French economic and cultural activities. In return France pledged herself to grant democratic rights to the people of Cochin China.

In a similar way the Indonesian-Dutch talks revolved primarily around the elaboration of the points which had been agreed upon in principle at Linggadjati. An additional obstacle to smooth negotiations was the fact that this agreement met with considerable opposition in the Netherlands, and the government, in an attempt to make it more easily acceptable to parliament, charged the General Commission with drawing up an explanatory note. In several respects this note contained a specific Dutch interpretation, and it also added quite a number of modifications and reserves. Thus 'dressed up', the Linggadjati Agreement was adopted by the Second Chamber of the States General, on 20 December 1946, with the proviso, moreover, that the Indonesian government had to submit to it in this new form.

It soon became evident that the Indonesian government was unwilling to accept as binding what the Dutch had been adding to the initial agreement. During the next months tension was building up, but the Indonesians did not budge. To break the deadlock the General Commission finally suggested that the Indonesian delegation should consider the Dutch explanatory note merely an expression of Dutch views and intentions. Satisfied that this way the republican government would not commit herself to any acceptance of the Dutch interpretation, the Indonesians were prepared to ratify the agreement, and on 25 March 1947, after a delay of five months, the Linggadjati Treaty was officially signed in Batavia-Rijswijk.

Such were, from an Asian point of view, the poor results of several months of negotiations: in Vietnam the essentially nugatory Ho-Moutet Agreement which failed to meet any one of the basic Vietnamese demands; in Indonesia the Linggadjati Treaty, saddled with a unilateral Dutch statement which, although not adopted by the Indonesian government, demonstrated precisely what the Netherlands was bent upon realizing. The negotiations had been conducted, moreover, in an atmosphere of growing mistrust and irritation.

Strong feelings of suspicion were prevalent among the Asian leaders who, faced with an increasingly less favourable military situation, had more reason to doubt the sincerity of the colonial powers than the colonial powers had reason to doubt the sincerity of the nationalist leaders. When General Giap witnessed the disembarkation of French troops in Haiphong he was appalled at the enormous quantities of war material which were unloaded, and the tempestuous enthusiasm with which, on 18 March 1946, the French community welcomed the entry of Leclerc's forces into Hanoi also made him very uneasy. It is true that the military agreement, signed shortly afterwards on 3 April, did not provide for the stationing of more than 15,000 French troops in Vietnam north of the 16th parallel. They were to be encamped in eight garrison towns and a few posts along the border, and any troop movement had to be announced to the Vietnamese authorities forty-eight hours in advance, but all this did not allay the

Vietnamese fear of a pending aggressive French action. That such fear was not unfounded was proved by a secret order, dated 10 April and sent to all French garrison commanders, in which they were advised to collect files on Vietnamese politicians and to make preparations for a political *coup de force*. Vietnamese suspicions were aroused further when, in June 1946, French troops occupied Kontum and Pleiku in the Moi Plateau, in spite of the armistice which since the military agreement of 3 April also covered Southern Annam.

The same kind of suspicion existed among republican Indonesians, fostered by the uninterrupted arrival of more Dutch troops. Fighting occurred more or less continuously along the cease-fire line around the Dutch-held enclaves. In many cases such clashes were caused by the activities of Indonesian irregulars or undisciplined republican army units, often as a result of the soldierly language of General Sudirman, the commander-in-chief. They were instrumental in heightening the tension as well as in providing the Dutch with excuses to take retaliatory steps. Such steps, occasionally clearly out of proportion to the incidents themselves, such as the military occupation of Modjokerto near Surabaya on 17 March 1947, did not fail to arouse Indonesian distrust even further.

Yet it was not only the fear that the colonial powers would resort to armed force as soon as the opportunity presented itself and a suitable justification was found, but the entire policy of the French and the Dutch which aroused Vietnamese and Indonesian distrust. The establishment by d'Argenlieu of a separate state of Cochin China, and the setting up, by Van Mook, of constituent states for the planned United States of Indonesia, were regarded in Hanoi and Djokjakarta as attempts at divide-and-rule. When French control on imports and exports in Haiphong was imposed as of 15 October 1946, and similar steps were taken by the Netherlands Indies authorities on 28 January 1947, by virtue of which the Dutch navy started to blockade the Indonesian-held territories of Java and Sumatra, the Vietnamese and Indonesian republics were confronted with increasing financial difficulties. In the eyes of the Asian politicians this policy of the colonial powers was a clear attempt at economically strangulating the national regimes in the two countries.

Feelings of irritation existed mainly among the French and Dutch, not only in the colonial communities but also in the home countries. Their national pride was hurt because, in their opinion, of the humiliating situation that the restoration of colonial domination was obstructed by what was considered to be a tiny group of agitators and rebels who did not represent their nations, but with whom, nevertheless, negotiations had to be conducted on the conditions which would allow them, the rightful rulers, to return. There were feelings of annoyance at the ingratitude of Asian leaders who owed their education and status to the colonial authorities but who were now fighting them. Military men felt frustrated that, as long as the talks were going on, nothing could be

undertaken to sweep away the govèrnments in Hanoi and Djokjakarta, regarded as the source of all evil. Economically interested groups worried about the state of their properties in the territories which were under the rule of the Vietnamese or Indonesian republic. Colonial officials, particularly in the lower echelons, entertained doubts as to their future position. In general it was queried whether the negotiations served any purpose, whether the Vietnamese or Indonesians might be expected to live up to their pledges, and whether a military solution was not preferable. To many people the entire problem was essentially one of a military nature, to be solved in the old-fashioned way. Others, however, feared that in such an event a long and bitter struggle might be the result, since not only the armed forces but also the population of the two countries had to be dealt with. But there was also the question whether protracted negotiations, with hardly any prospect of success, would not be as disastrous to the future relations between the home countries and the overseas territories. It was feared that while the talks were going on the national regimes might succeed in consolidating their position.

THE CONSOLIDATION OF HO CHI MINH'S GOVERNMENT

This was exactly what happened. In Vietnam the reinforcement of the state ran parallel with the consolidation of the authority of the government and the decline of the organized opposition. This did not mean that the Viet Minh declined to take dissenting opinions and interests into consideration. On the contrary: now that Vietnam was exposed to strong outside pressure it was necessary that the entire population should support the government, and for this reason the policy of Ho Chi Minh was aimed at entertaining good relations with all sections of the people. Since a far-reaching social revolution might produce misgivings among the middle classes such a course was carefully avoided. Because of this, and also because of the social reforms which it carried out, the Viet Minh was able to gain a tremendous prestige. The conservative parties of the pro-Chinese orientated opposition could rely only on a sterile anti-French nationalism which worried the government in so far that their agitation threatened to thwart her efforts to come to an honourable agreement with France. In retaliation against incidents provoked by the D.M.H. and the V.N.Q.D.D. the French might well attack Vietnam and thus compel the government either to bring her policy into line with that of China, the patron of these two parties, or to leave the direction of the national struggle and the state to the opposition.

In mid-1946 the situation changed when the Chinese occupation forces began to withdraw. In order to emphasize again the unanimity of the nationalist movement, and also to present himself at the coming Fontaine-

bleau Conference as the leader of a united people, Ho Chi Minh founded an all-comprehensive national front, on 27 May, the *Hoi Lien Hiep Quoc Dan Viet Nam*, *Lien Viet* for short, in which all sections of the population were adequately represented. While the Viet Minh continued to be the revolutionary vanguard, this new front attempted by means of local committees to rally the entire nation behind the government.

Yet it was impossible to prevent the opposition parties from committing violent actions and provoking incidents with the French. While Ho Chi Minh was in France to attend the Fontainebleau Conference, Vo Nguyen Giap decided to crack down upon the two organizations. In doing so he was not motivated by the desire to deprive France of an excuse to attack: unlike Ho Chi Minh he was under no illusion about the intentions of the French. It was precisely because he expected France to resort to a policy of violence that he wanted to strengthen the authority of the Vietnamese government as soon as possible and to put an end to the armed power of the conservative nationalist parties. While the Chinese were slowly retreating from Tonkin in June and July, Giap sent his Viet Minh units into the areas evacuated by the occupation forces in order quickly to overrun the strongholds of the V.N.Q.D.D. and the D.M.H. The French army remained strictly neutral: due to their extreme nationalism the two opposition parties were without any value to France as possible pawns in a future divide-and-rule scheme. Thus the Vietnamese troops had a free hand in conquering the bastions of the opposition in Lang Son, Phu Lang Thuong, Vinh Yen, Viet Tri and Phu Tho. Occasionally there was some bitter fighting but in the end they succeeded in defeating the armed militias of the V.N.Q.D.D. in Upper Tonkin, and in mid-July they took over the parties' Hanoi headquarters. The major leaders of the opposition escaped to China.

By carrying out this swift action Giap put a definite end to the provocative policies of the nationalist ultras, but he also immobilized the only significant organized opposition. When the process of building up the Vietnamese republic entered its final stage towards the end of the year, the dominant position of the Viet Minh was evident. Ho Chi Minh's new cabinet, formed on 3 November, was more to the left than the previous one. The constitution of 9 November placed executive powers in the hands of the president and the cabinet, who were responsible to the legislature, but at the same time a permanent committee was established which supervised both the executive and legislative bodies and which was empowered to rule by decree in an emergency. In this committee the Viet Minh occupied most of the seats.

The Vietnamese government not only consolidated her authority in internal political affairs, but it also reinforced the republic's military power. Realizing that the armed forces under his command would not be sufficiently strong to wage successfully an open battle with the French troops, Giap based his strategy on Mao Tse-tung's recommendations for

a people's war, and made preparations for a guerrilla campaign of long duration. In view of this, resistance bases were established in the mountainous areas of Tonkin, the so-called Vietbac zone, which had already played a similar role during the Japanese occupation. In case of hostilities with France the army would fall back upon this stronghold in order to be trained for the day it would be sufficiently drilled and adequately equipped to re-emerge and meet the enemy. In the meantime the actual fighting outside the Vietbac zone was to be carried out in a decentralized way by small separate units. Great attention was paid to political instruction but also, particularly, to discipline, since it was Giap's motto that the soldier ought to be the friend of the population. In the economic field preparations were made, too. The people were told that, in case of a war with France, the French would interrupt all trade and that a 'closed economy', depending as little as possible on imports from the outside world, should be embarked upon as a means to absorb more effectively the shock of such a contingency.

THE SJAHRIR CABINET AND THE ABORTIVE COUP D'ETAT

The Indonesian republic was far less stable, politically, than Vietnam. With the introduction of ministerial responsibility and the appearance of the Sjahrir cabinet in November 1945 a first step was taken towards a parliamentary democracy, but such a form of government was the desire of only a small vanguard of young idealistic intellectuals. It represented neither the wishes of the older-generation nationalists, nor those of the civil servants who had been nourished in authoritarian, Dutch or Japanese, traditions. Among the mass of the population, moreover, feelings of respect for and submission to a strong authority were still very much alive. Sjahrir might have been successful in capturing the direction of the revolution, but he had to take account of the opposition of those whom he had evicted: the older nationalists who had entrenched themselves in the P.N.I., in some irregular fighting units, in some sections of the army and in the conservative wing of the Masjumi. At the same time Sjahrir's policy came under fire from those who cherished social radical ideals and who were dissatisfied with his cautious type of socialism. Finally there were revolutionary young nationalists whose impetuousness had been responsible for sweeping Sjahrir into office, but who disliked his diplomatic policy towards the Netherlands.

At the instance of Tan Malaka an opposition popular front, *Persatuan Perdjuangan*, was inaugurated at Surakarta in January 1946. In general the demands of this organization appealed to the mass of the population: unity and national solidarity in the struggle for freedom; no negotiations with the Dutch until they had recognized Indonesia's independence; and

the confiscation of foreign property. On the strength of this programme the P.P. was joined by a great number of political parties such as P.N.I., Masjumi, P.K.I. and Partai Buruh, by some trade unions and semi-military organizations, while it also received, quite unequivocally, the backing of the army commander Sudirman. In its propaganda the front put great emphasis on the non-representative character of both the cabinet and the K.N.I.P. Yet the P.P. was unanimous only in its agitation against the Sjahrir administration. On 28 February, when the prime minister suddenly resigned and Sukarno invited the leaders of the front to form a new cabinet, the opposition's inability to bring anti-socialist Muslims, conservative civil servants, ex-collaborators, revolutionary youth and communists together for a constructive purpose was clearly demonstrated. In the new cabinet, formed on 12 March, the Sjahrir faction remained prominent.

This failure to capture power was a sign of the P.P.'s weakness, and although the front continued to be a formidable competitor for popular favour, this fact preceded its downfall. The Sjahrir group availed itself of its success by arresting a number of politicians of the opposition, among them Tan Malaka, and by launching, on 11 May, a rival front. When it was intimated that this new organization was to be consulted in the talks over the composition of a widely-based coalition government, the Masjumi, P.K.I. and Partai Buruh were lured away from the P.P. The opposition still received the backing, however, of those sections of the armed forces which were dissatisfied with Sjahrir's attempts to have Japanese-trained officers replaced by more reliable men as well as with the formation of some new units responsible to the cabinet rather than to the army chief. Some discontented military elements and the remaining P.P. leaders took up the idea of staging a *coup d'état* when it became evident that the chances of ousting Sjahrir in a legal way would become very slight after a national coalition government had been established.

The first trial of strength between Sjahrir and Sudirman took place in May 1946. A few leaders of the P.N.I. and its semi-military organization were involved in an unauthorized action to strip the princely ruler of Surakarta of his governmental powers. The cabinet had them arrested, but they were released later by the orders of the army commander. This challenge to its authority as well as the fact that it was powerless to undo the results of the upheaval in Surakarta made the government step up its attempts to arrive at a political agreement on the formation of a coalition cabinet. When these efforts appeared to be successful the opposition struck. On 27 June Tan Malaka and other politicians who had been arrested early in May were set free by troops under the command of General Sudarsono who was also responsible for the kidnapping of Sjahrir when, on his way back from a tour in East Java, he passed through Surakarta later that day. It was the intention of the conspirators to put heavy pressure on Sukarno to disband the cabinet and replace it by a

council headed by Tan Malaka; some of them aimed at removing the president himself. For the first-mentioned purpose Sudarsono travelled to Djokjakarta, but at the same time troops of the socialist fighting organization *Pesindo* and a loyal army division converged upon Surakarta, while another unit released Sjahrir. Facing strong resistance against the attempted coup, which might well lead to a civil war, General Sudirman abandoned his original idea of backing the plotters. On 3 July Sukarno, vested with full emergency powers, flatly refused to give in to the demands of the coup leaders and he also persuaded Sudirman to support the government and re-arrest those among the opposition politicians, such as Tan Malaka, who had been planning the removal of the president. The events clearly demonstrated that no attempt to overthrow the government would stand any chance of success when it did not have Sukarno's backing.

For making the attempt the radical young nationalists were reproached rather than the army officers or the leaders of the semi-military organizations who had taken part in it. With the exception of Sudarsono and a few of his subordinates none of the latter were arrested: in addition to the forced evacuation of Surakarta by the Pesindo troops this was the price to be paid for Sudirman's loyalty. Consequently the *coup d'état* was primarily instrumental in putting an end to the significant role the revolutionary younger generation had been playing in political developments since the Japanese surrender. In this respect the course of the revolution differed sharply from the one in Burma where the equivalent of Indonesia's 'generation of '45', Aung San's A.F.P.F.L., not only wrested the direction of the national struggle from the hands of the pre-war nationalists but also succeeded in maintaining control. This did not mean that the Indonesian old-guard nationalists assumed full control immediately after 3 July. Sjahrir, the link between young and old, remained in office, and in the new cabinet, which did not emerge before 2 October, his faction was still strongly represented. His victory over the radical nationalists, accompanied by the dissolution of the P.P., inevitably weakened his position *vis-à-vis* the older generation, however. Until then Sjahrir had been able more or less to ignore the political parties, but now he was compelled to take their demands more seriously; the composition of his new cabinet, more representative than the previous one, was as clear an indication of this as the long time it took to bring it into being. Sjahrir and his group were still vital to producing a parliamentary democratic façade designed to win American sympathy, but as such they were only temporarily indispensable. Whatever the outside appearances, after 3 July 1946 it was apparent that the country's leadership would slide back into the hands of the older nationalists.

The Linggadjati Agreement did not fail to produce the propagandistic lever which could be used by the opposition against Sjahrir. A new front, *Benteng Republik*, was formed, in which the Masjumi and the P.N.I. played a prominent part. Both parties also came to the fore in the con-

stitutional conflict which emerged when Sukarno suggested, on 26 December, the appointment of a great number of new members to the K.N.I.P. in order to guarantee a more adequate representation of ethnic minorities, regional interests and various social and economic groups. Several parties opposed this move since an influx of new members threatened relatively to diminish their influence. The Working Committee rejected the proposal in January 1947 and in its plenary session at Malang, in February and March, the K.N.I.P. itself was unable to come to a decision on the matter. The deadlock lasted until Vice-President Hatta pointed to the possible consequences: either a dissolution of parliament, or the resignation of Sukarno. As no one was prepared to take such risks, Sukarno's proposal was adopted. The K.N.I.P. was considerably enlarged in such a way that the position of the government was reinforced. A new Working Committee was nominated in which a combination of left-wing groups, *Sajap Kiri*, consisting of the socialist party, Pesindo, the Partai Buruh and the communists, was numerically stronger than the oppositional Benteng Republik.

This state of political instability did not prevent the Indonesian republic from consolidating itself, in spite of the fact that various additional factors worked against it. The rather chaotic general conditions interfered with the country's social and economic development. The Dutch naval blockade around the republican ports aggravated its economic and financial difficulties and, in combination with the disruption of transport, seriously affected the food situation in several areas, particularly in Madura. In Sumatra, moreover, the power of the government was rather ineffective. The Indonesian nationalist ideal was a strong force on the island and the republic had been applauded enthusiastically. In principle the government's authority was recognized, but Djokjakarta was far away, and the Sumatran feelings of self-respect were quite powerful, so that the government had no choice but to treat the island as an autonomous part of the state. Yet a republican delegation headed by Amir Sjarifuddin which toured Sumatra in April 1946 succeeded in establishing closer relations with Java and in reinforcing the power of the local republican authorities.

For the forthcoming trial of strength with the Netherlands, Indonesia had to be fully prepared. In one respect, namely in establishing diplomatic relations with foreign countries, she was far more active than Vietnam. While Ho Chi Minh did not officially make diplomatic contacts with the outside world before January 1950, the Indonesian republic started in this field already in July 1946 when she signed an agreement with India over the delivery of rice. The ties of friendship with India were further strengthened at the Inter-Asian Conference in New Delhi in March 1947. Indonesian nationalist propaganda was quite intense in the Western countries, particularly in the United States, but it was in Asia, of course, that it was most influential. After attending the Conference in New Delhi

an Indonesian delegation, headed by Agus Salim, travelled to the Middle East, where it concluded pacts of friendship with Egypt and Syria. By embarking upon this policy the Indonesian republic succeeded in bringing her conflict with the Netherlands to an international level.

In view of this conflict the Indonesians were primarily interested, however, in strengthening the armed forces and in co-ordinating and unifying all fighting groups. It was the major aim to achieve closer contacts between the government and the army command, to establish full control over the semi-military organizations and to reduce the undisciplined, often terrorist activities of the extremist groups. The formal merger of the armed forces and the irregular units into an official national army took place on 3 June 1947. In the face of an imminent Dutch attack plans were made for a scorched-earth strategy, which would primarily cause damage to the colonial plantation companies, but also obstruct any policy of economic rehabilitation the Dutch might wish to undertake in the territories they would overrun. In co-operation with the powerful S.O.B.S.I. trade union, the army already began to carry out large-scale demolitions in the weeks when the Dutch increased their pressure on the republican government by sending ulimatums.

THE FAILURE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

Meanwhile the negotiations with the colonial powers entered their final phase in Vietnam towards the end of 1946 and in Indonesia by the middle of 1947. By putting his signature under the *modus vivendi* of 14 September Ho Chi Minh staked his prestige with the Vietnamese population, but he took the risk in order not to return empty-handed from France, since this might play into the hands of the more extremist leaders of the Viet Minh or the remaining nationalist ultras of the V.N.Q.D.D. Yet, at the moment of signing the agreement it was already rendered out of date by the order of the French commissioner for Tonkin on 10 September that, as of 15 October, the supervision of imports and exports through Haiphong was to be exercised exclusively by the French authorities. When the news of the *modus vivendi* broke in Vietnam, the French sought to use it as a justification for their policy by referring to the fact that Ho Chi Minh had recognized the Indochinese customs union: they conveniently ignored, however, that this was a recognition in principle only and that the details had to be worked out by a joint committee.

For the French authorities in Indochina the time had arrived to press on with what they wanted to achieve and since all cablegrams between Hanoi and Paris went through Saigon they were in a position to hold back Ho Chi Minh's protest to Prime Minister Bidault. The colonial circles around High Commissioner d'Argenlieu were fully aware that the Vietnamese republic was strengthening its military power. French interests

were directly injured, moreover, by various economic measures taken by the Vietnamese government, such as the abolition of the heavy duties on cotton, the recommendation to nationalize the entire foreign trade, the issuing of Vietnamese currency and the regulation of working conditions according to a new labour code. The fact that the constitution of 9 November did not mention either the Indochinese Federation or the French Union also constituted a source of French resentment. The authorities in Saigon decided to restore the old order by force of arms, and they were urged to act in a hurry when they were informed of the outcome of the French elections of 10 November which resulted in gains by the communists and losses for the social democrats and the Christian-democratic M.R.P. It was feared that the next cabinet in Paris might be somewhat more to the left than that of Bidault.

The Vietnamese government was not prepared to be rushed into an armed conflict. On 20 November, when the French seized a Chinese junk with a cargo interpreted as contraband goods, fierce fighting broke out in the streets of Haiphong, but after the authorities in Hanoi offered their mediation the matter was peacefully settled. The colonial administration in Saigon, however, made a case of the incident in order to carry on with her policy of forcing the Vietnamese into submission. At that moment d'Argenlieu was in France, so it was the acting High Commissioner Valluy who demanded in an ultimatum that Haiphong be evacuated by Vietnamese troops. When this demand met with no reply the French bombed the residential districts of the town with artillery and naval guns, causing 6,000 Vietnamese deaths according to French figures, and three times as many by Vietnamese calculations.

Beginning with this terrorist French attack on Haiphong on 23 November 1946, the Vietnamese war of independence which had begun fourteen months earlier in Cochin China extended over the entire country. In December the Foreign Legion occupied Tourane, and fighting started around Huê. In Hanoi, where a French assault was expected any time, even Ho Chi Minh was unable to pacify the popular fury against the French and allay the criticisms levelled at his policy of trusting France. His cable, in which he made a last appeal to the new French government of the social democrat Blum, was again held back by the Saigon authorities. While the number of incidents rose sharply the regular Vietnamese army units left Hanoi *en route* to the Vietbac base, to which the ministries and administrative bureaux also transferred their personnel and files. By cutting the roads the Vietnamese isolated the French troops in Hanoi and other Tonkinese garrisons; the task of defending the capital was left to the militia. When the French commander demanded that these forces be disbanded Giap decided to strike and take revenge for the outrage at Haiphong; on 19 December the Vietnamese fell upon the French garrisons in Hanoi and elsewhere in Tonkin. The attack was repelled and followed by bloody reprisals. The next day Ho Chi Minh

and Giap, after escaping from Hanoi, called for a nation-wide people's war against French colonialism.

In Indonesia a policy of military violence was provoked less rashly and in a less brutal manner, but here, too, it was resorted to when the Dutch realized that they would be unable to force the republican government into accepting that the bilateral Linggadjati Agreement was carried out in a unilateral, that is Dutch, way. Economic and financial factors were primarily responsible for pushing the Netherlands into such a course. The deficiency of the budget and the exhaustion of economic resourses, caused among other things by the necessity to keep a large military force constantly under arms, required a restoration of Dutch rule in those territories which contained the oilfields, mines and plantations. The political advantage of such a solution would be that the Dutch would no longer necessarily have to take account of an Indonesian government which was apparently not in a hurry to come to terms with them on what had been agreed upon at Linggadjati. The tardiness which the Indonesians displayed in this respect was not due to any consideration that there was any greater urgency for the Dutch than for them to settle the dispute. While time might be working in favour of the Indonesian republic, politically and militarily, it was certainly running out in the vital economic and financial spheres. That a settlement was not forthcoming was primarily the result of the unwillingness of the Indonesian government to give up the means which enabled her to act independently, and this was exactly what the Dutch required her to do. According to Dutch views the Indonesian republic should, under Dutch responsibility, assist in carrying out Dutch plans for the setting up of the proposed United States of Indonesia. To the Indonesians, on the other hand, the procedure was to be one of joint discussions and joint responsibility. They were particularly opposed to maintaining the sovereignty of the Netherlands during the so-called interim period, i.e. the time needed to establish the United States of Indonesia. In their opinion, too, the Indonesian republic, with 85 per cent of the archipelago's population, should have a more significant share in the federal structure than the Dutch, anxious to reduce it to just one of many component states, were prepared to allot it.

After a visit of a ministerial delegation from The Hague to the Netherlands Indies authorities, on 27 May 1947, the conflict entered the phase of Dutch ultimatums which were presented in rapid succession to the government in Djokjakarta. The Indonesians were given to understand that they had to accept the setting up by the Dutch of an interim administration under Dutch sovereignty, and to recognize the full responsibility of the representative of the Netherlands Crown. The republican government had to renounce her rights of entertaining independent diplomatic relations. Finally, as part of a 'joint gendarmerie' Dutch police-troops were to be admitted to republican territory for the purpose of guaranteeing the safety of Dutch enterprise.

The Indonesian government yielded and modified its point of view on the recognition of Dutch sovereignty and on its participation, on Dutch conditions, in the interim administration. It is true that Sjahrir was brought down on 26 June when the Sajap Kiri withheld its support from his cabinet, but both Sukarno and the new, more left-orientated cabinet of Amir Sjarifuddin maintained the concessions he had made. On the other hand the republican government proved adamant on the issue of its foreign relations, while it also flatly refused to comply with the demands concerning a joint gendarmerie: after all it was clear that the Vietnamese government had been dragging a Trojan horse within its walls by admitting French troops into Tonkin. On 15 July Van Mook presented his last ultimatum on the matter, coupled with the demand that, as a demonstration of its good intentions, the Indonesian government should order its military forces to withdraw to positions 10 kilometres behind the cease-fire line; after that the Dutch troops would do the same. A delay was refused and so was an Indonesian request for arbitration. When the Indonesians failed to surrender the Netherlands government decided to use force of arms. On 20 July 1947 the Indonesian administrative bureaux in the Dutch-occupied enclaves were closed and Dutch troops invaded republican territory. It was officially termed a 'police action', but instead it marked the beginning of the Indonesian war of independence.

THE MALINO POLICY

To dictate their solution of the colonial problems to the nations of Vietnam and Indonesia, the French and Dutch did not only resort to force of arms. In fact they explained this military violence as a means of dealing with an unreasonable opponent with whom an agreement was not likely to be reached. The war did not preclude the possibility of further talks, but these, then, had to be conducted with political leaders other than Ho Chi Minh or Sukarno. For some time already the French and the Dutch had been searching for such politicians, anti-republican Indonesians and anti-Viet Minh Vietnamese, depicted either as responsible and respectable people of goodwill, or as genuinely representative nationalists with a better understanding for the French and Dutch points of view; it was they who were brought to the fore as more acceptable partners while the negotiations with the Vietnamese and Indonesian governments were still going on. At the same time they served to demonstrate that the Indonesian republic and the Vietnamese government of Ho Chi Minh did not have the right to speak exclusively for the Indonesian and Vietnamese nations.

Initially the Dutch were quite successful in their attempts to throw a cordon of pliable personalities around the republic, that recalcitrant stronghold of Indonesian nationalism. In the Dutch-occupied territories many non-Javanese politicians were quite agreeable to Van Mook's

federal plans which would protect them from Javanese supremacy in any republican-controlled Indonesia. In general, they belonged, moreover, to the old aristocratic elite which feared the loss of its privileged position if Indonesia were to be dominated by the middle class nationalist leaders and urban intellectuals who were setting the tone in the republic. Sentiments of local patriotism and the readiness of the ruling groups to defend their traditional prerogatives with the support of the Dutch were conditional for the success of Van Mook's policy. However these conditions were complementary: with one of them lacking the Dutch-proposed federal structure was bound to fail. This was the case in Atjeh, where a powerful regional patriotism did exist. Yet, since the elimination of the aristocratic class there was no common interest whatsoever between the new elite of Islamic religious leaders and the colonial system: the Dutch authorities did not so much as even think of forcing Atjeh to join the projected United States of Indonésia. So also in Minangkabau the authority of the traditional chiefs had been seriously impaired in the previous decades in the face of continuous clashes with the religious leaders and the emergence of an intelligentsia. Here, too, Dutch policy was a failure: Minangkabau was the intellectual bastion of the Indonesian revolution.

The federal concept was announced in the statement of the Netherlands government of 10 February 1946, and it was worked out at the Conference of Malino, held from 16 to 25 July, immediately after the British military command transferred authority over Borneo, the Greater East, Banka, Billiton and the Riau archipelago to the Dutch. The majority of the Indonesian participants were appointed by the existing local councils in which the aristocratic element was traditionally strongly represented; the elective principle applied only to such areas where the population was either Christian and likely to be pro-Dutch, as in Ambon or Minahassa, or to a large extent Chinese and expected to be anti-republican, as in Banka. On a number of points the delegates disagreed, but utterly shocked by the anti-aristocratic revolution in East Sumatra and by the events in Surakarta state, most of them eagerly subscribed to the view of the Netherlands Indies authorities that a close co-operation under Dutch sovereignty was essential during the interim period. It was suggested, moreover, that the projected 'United States of Indonesia' should not be fragmented too much, but be composed of only a few large territorial units: Java, to be controlled by the republic, Sumatra, at that moment not yet recognized by the Dutch as republican territory, Borneo and the Greater East.

The Conference of Malino was followed up by another conference, held at Pangkalpinang from 1 to 12 October 1946 between the Dutch and the ethnic minorities. There was far less unanimity here since the Chinese and Arab delegates were not willing to commit themselves to any anti-republican course. After all, large Chinese and Arab communities were living in republican territory and the Chinese in particular were an attractive target

for actions which without too many risks could be undertaken in the name of Indonesian nationalism by irregular armed groups. Early in June 1946 a massacre had already occurred in the Tangerang district in West Java which claimed some 650 Chinese lives, while around 200 had been killed in a pogrom at Bagansiapiapi in East Sumatra in September. With a view to these and similar atrocities the Chinese representatives at Pangkalpinang refused to take sides openly.

The talks at Malino formed the starting-point of what has been referred to ever since as the 'Malino policy'. In carrying out this policy the setting up of constituent states of the future federation was greatly stressed, but federalism as such was not Van Mook's major object. To him it was only an expedient to enlist Indonesian partisans with whom he could co-operate in the pursuance of his real goal, an Indonesian state founded primarily on the traditional, partly 'feudal', social forces which would effectively curtail the influence of the revolutionary and nationalist elements. Since such counter-revolutionary groups, left to themselves, would be in a rather weak position, however, a period of transition was considered necessary to ensure that, with the support of the Dutch, they would be able to strengthen their power *vis-à-vis* the republic. This was exactly the reason why Van Mook insisted on an interim period of long duration. As a result an independent Indonesia was expected to emerge in which the Dutch-controlled bureaucracy would be the dominant factor.

The first constituent state set up in the context of this policy was East Indonesia. It came into being on 24 December 1946 at a conference at Denpasar which was mainly attended by the traditional rulers in the area and their representatives. Territorially the new state coincided with the Greater East, with the exception of New Guinea; it had a Balinese nobleman as president and a Bugis aristocrat as prime minister. In anticipation of the erection of a state of Kalimantan, a special autonomous region was established in West Borneo on 12 May 1947, after a procedure in which the West Borneo Council played a leading part. In this council the sixteen rulers of the West Borneo division made up more than one-third of its total membership and consequently one of them, Sultan Hamid II of Pontianak, became the head of the new state.

The Malino policy was regarded by the Indonesian government as a clear evidence of Dutch divide-and-rule. The nationalists pointed out that the constituent states were based on provincialist chauvinism, the self-interest of the propertied classes and the desires of reactionary bureaucrats and intellectuals, and that the wishes of the people had not been properly ascertained. This had not been the case in the republican territories either, but the Indonesian nationalists were nonetheless right in asserting that the constituent states were Dutch creations, supported by such politicians and traditional leaders who sided with the Netherlands Indies authorities either to safeguard their privileges or because of mere opportunism. In the federal set-up the Netherlands continued to occupy a predominant posi-

tion. The Malino states had their own governments, but important financial, economic, military and police matters remained under the control of the central, i.e. the Netherlands Indies authorities, while for the rest their autonomous position did not amount to anything substantial. The application of the federal principle as such constituted on paper a significant deviation from the pre-war colonial practice of extreme centralization, but it did not in any way modify the nature of Dutch domination.

In the Malino areas there were, of course, political trends opposing Dutch policy and looking to the Indonesian republic for inspiration. In Borneo more or less strong pro-republican sentiments prevailed among the Malay and Javanese population of the island's Southern and Eastern division, particularly in Bandjar. This was the reason why the Dutch planners refrained from establishing the fully-fledged constituent State of Kalimantan and confined themselves to setting up four autonomous regions in addition to the one in West Borneo. In East Indonesia Bali and Southern Celebes were centres of nationalist resistance. In Bali the republican cause was supported by members of the Indonesian armed forces who infiltrated from East Java, and fighting continued until well in 1948. The south-western peninsula of Celebes was the scene of such a vehement pro-republican agitation that the authorities banned the P.N.I. on 11 September 1946, but this did not put an end to the tension. On the contrary, the acts of violence increased in number from mid-October onwards and on 11 November Van Mook proclaimed a state of war in the area. At the same time the Dutch army embarked on a 'cleaning-up action'. This punitive expedition took place from December 1946 to February 1947, with the Dutch troops behaving in such an unrestrained way that thousands of Indonesians lost their lives.

In general the Netherlands Indies authorities closely supervised the composition of the representative bodies and often they jailed leaders who were too nationalistic to their taste. Yet in spite of both these precautionary measures and the tactics of non-cooperation adopted by those Indonesians who were in favour of the republic, a display of strength by the pro-republican elements in the political set-up of the Malino states could not always be avoided. Thus, it was only after three ballots that, at the Denpasar Conference, Tjokorde gde Rake Sukawati obtained the required majority for the East Indonesian presidency. His pro-republican opponent Tadjuddin Noor was elected chairman of parliament and he performed this function until he was evicted in May 1947. After the opposition walked out the 'feudal' character of the parliament was accentuated far more. Shortly after, in September, Prime Minister Nadjamuddin daeng Malewa was deposed, allegedly on account of corruption but more probably because he was considered politically unreliable by the Dutch and the aristocratic group. The latter strengthened its position even further in May 1949 when a Senate was established in which it carried a clear majority.

THE COCHIN CHINA 'FREE STATE'

The finding of suitable Asian collaborators proved to be a far more difficult problem for the French in Vietnam than it was for the Dutch in Indonesia. The latter controlled large areas outside Java and Sumatra where Indonesian nationalist sentiments were, in general, not so strong as to cause too many disturbances during the restoration of colonial authority. In Vietnam on the other hand the French had been able to obtain a foothold only in Cochin China, which they recovered from the Vietnamese by military violence, and it was here that they were facing armed nationalist resistance of an increasingly vehement nature. In Vietnam, too, there were fewer opportunities for successfully resorting to the policy of divide-and-rule than in Indonesia which ethnically was a far more heterogeneous country. It is true that there was some distrust of Tonkinese in Cochin China, and the mountain races harboured anti-Vietnamese sentiments, but regional chauvinism based on ethnic differences did not exist to such an extent as in those parts of Indonesia where people feared the numerical strength of the Javanese. Except in Atjeh and Minangkabau the Indonesian supporters of the Dutch Malino policy — the aristocratic elite — enjoyed considerable local prestige among the rural population, while the pro-French notables and bureaucrats constituted the most bitterly hated group in Vietnam. Initially the French were looking for totally servile puppets, and when a collaborating politician occasionally inquired after the chances of bringing about more autonomy or a more democratic form of government, such initiative immediately reduced his usefulness in the eyes of the colonial authorities. At a later stage, however, the French were forced to enlarge the standards of measuring their Vietnamese allies' suitability for entering their service, but then it turned out that the anti-Viet Minh orientated politicians whom they approached were as fervent nationalists as the leading men in the Vietnamese government, and they also had far fewer contacts with the mass of the population, and consequently commanded far less respect. Finally, unlike the Dutch military operations against Indonesian nationalism, those of the French against Vietnam were a failure almost from the start, and also because of this, their political activities did not produce any positive response among the Vietnamese people.

Cochin China witnessed the first attempts to use indigenous collaborators for the purpose of isolating Vietnamese nationalism. For the French authorities it was vital to cut off this rich territory from the rest of Vietnam, not only because it would give a free hand to the powerful economic interests, but also because it would enable France to check the exports of rice to, as well as the flow of immigrants from, the overpopulated areas in the North; in this way the stronghold of the Vietnamese government might be manoeuvred into a situation of economic impotence. Early in

1946 the French colonial community in Saigon had already started to encourage the idea of separatism in the South. On 1 June the High Commissioner, d'Argenlieu, unilaterally proclaimed Cochin China an autonomous republic and a 'free state' in the Indochinese Federation. This was clearly illegal since Cochin China was, formally, still a colony under direct rule and any change in its constitutional status could be effected only by the home government. It was not only on the grounds of such legalistic considerations, however, but also because of political reasons that the cabinet in Paris was not greatly pleased with d'Argenlieu's high-handed behaviour at the moment when preparations for the French-Vietnamese Conference at Fontainebleau were in full swing. Yet the French government lacked the courage to disavow openly its highest representative in Indochina.

Cochin China's autonomy existed on paper only. Some administrative functions were performed by Vietnamese, but the French continued to control the government's offices, and they held the right to approve of the nomination of provincial governors. Internal security remained in French hands, and for its finances Cochin China depended on the federal treasury. French economic interests and the French bureaucracy in Saigon merely regarded the Cochin Chinese regime, led by Nguyen Van Thinh, as an indigenous extension-piece of their own administrative apparatus, exclusively charged with passing on the commands from above to the lower echelons. In such circumstances the Cochin Chinese regime was unable to win the confidence of the population. It was generally regretted that, instead of bringing about any fundamental changes, the French had only restored pre-war colonialism behind the unimpressive façade of Cochin Chinese autonomy. Nationalist intellectuals who opposed the Viet Minh but who also criticized the French authorities were almost driven into the arms of the resistance movement by the French policy of consistently thwarting anything which bordered upon originality and independent initiative.

During and after the French military campaign of late 1945 and early 1946 the Viet Minh forces, split up in several small groups, retreated to the impenetrable wastes of the Ca Mau peninsula, to the Plain of Junks and the region between Chau Doc and Long Xuyen. Here they made preparations for a guerrilla campaign, and from here they infiltrated into the French-occupied territories. Under the leadership of Nguyen Binh, Tran Van Giau's successor, they started, in March 1946, a large-scale campaign of terrorist attacks against those Vietnamese who co-operated with the French. It was their intention to disrupt the governmental process and they were quite successful in this; the outlawed pro-French officials hurriedly left their posts and fled to the towns, causing an almost complete collapse of regular administration in the countryside. This situation also deprived the French colonial authorities of the opportunity to fabricate, with the help of their figure-heads, the results of a plebiscite which they

planned to use against the Vietnamese government's claims on Cochin China.

Confronted with this selective terrorism of the Viet Minh, the French took retaliatory actions which, by their nature of collective punishment, claimed hundreds of totally innocent people among its victims. French policy, the actions of the separatist Cochin Chinese, and the ruthlessness of the army did not fail to stir up the anti-French sentiments, and many people, particularly from among the younger generation, swelled Nguyen Binh's fighting force. On 10 April a united front was established, consisting of the Viet Minh, the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao sects, the Youth Brigade and some Catholic and Buddhist organizations, and in July Nguyen Binh intensified the struggle by launching an offensive in which half the number of villages and hamlets in the districts immediately to the east of Saigon fell into his hands. The mobility of the freedom fighters prevented the French troops from taking any effective counter-action; they might 'pacify' a special district, but after their withdrawal the Viet Minh returned. Because of their brutal behaviour the French lost almost all the sympathy of the population while Nguyen Binh's efforts to check banditry and to select his victims carefully from among the most hated pro-French collaborators clearly aimed at winning the confidence of the people. Towards the close of 1946 the Viet Minh controlled about three-quarters of Cochin China. In French circles the administration of Nguyen Van Thinh was blamed for the deteriorating situation: in spite of everything the puppet regime was not considered docile enough. Thinh, duped into taking up the post of head of the Cochin Chinese government, was unable to bear with the intrigues and the obstruction of the French any longer, and when he realized that 'autonomy' was completely different from what he had expected it to be, he hanged himself in despair on 10 November.

3 The First Phase of the Wars of Independence

THE FIRST DUTCH MILITARY ACTION

ALTHOUGH initially the Dutch had more luck than the French in their attempts to out-manoeuvre Asian nationalism with the help of indigenous collaborators, they failed in the end to have their federalist scheme accepted. The French political creation in Vietnam, on the other hand, managed to survive the end of colonial rule in Indochina. The major, if not the sole factor responsible for the different outcomes of what was basically the same type of divide-and-rule, was the vital trump-card of communism which France, unlike the Netherlands, was holding. In spite of their efforts, the Dutch did not succeed in representing the Indonesian war of independence to the outside world as something different from what, in effect, it was — a national war of liberation. But France was able to convince the Western world that the Vietnamese war of independence was a civil war, and part of the ideological struggle between the West and communism.

The Indonesian revolution as it was championed by the republican government and the major political parties was an affair of middle-class nationalists. The communists took part in the fight for national liberty, but they did not play as dominant a role as they did in the Vietnamese struggle for independence. This difference in character and outlook between the Indonesian and Vietnamese revolutions greatly affected the manner in which both the two revolutions and the colonial policies of France and the Netherlands were viewed by the rest of the world. In this respect the attitude of the United States clearly tipped the balance. It is true that other factors contributed to shaping American policy, such as the view that the French were more important allies in the cold war situation

than the Dutch, and the realization that while there were hardly any American business investments in Indochina, there were very substantial ones in Indonesia which might be in danger in case of an anti-colonial nationalist war. But the American conduct was primarily motivated by the consideration that the Indonesian nationalist revolution was not communist-orientated, while Vietnam's was. As a result the United States government was able to adhere to the traditional American anti-colonial views in the conflict between Dutch colonialism and Indonesian nationalism. But in her dealings with the Vietnamese struggle for liberation she completely jettisoned this principle.

In this situation the Dutch failed to mobilize American and, through the influence of the United States, world opinion against their Asian adversaries. Yet the policy of the government in Washington towards the Indonesian republic was not diametrically opposed to the one she adopted with regard to the Vietnamese war of independence; although not aiding the Dutch she did not proceed to support the republic as might have seemed the logical complement of her stand. In 1947 and the first half of 1948 it was still impossible to foresee what the internal political developments in the republic would lead to, so that it was not immediately clear by which policy American interests in South-East Asia and the world would be better served in the long run. Initially the United States was neutral, and she was definitely not prepared to turn openly against the Netherlands or the West European governments which were in sympathy with her. Since in the Dutch-Indonesian conflict the Netherlands was the aggressor and the stronger party, this American posture tended, in fact, to be detrimental to the Indonesian republic. A few weeks before the war, on 28 June 1947, the government in Washington sent a note to both parties in which she subscribed to the Dutch view that Indonesia should be under Dutch sovereignty during the interim period. When the fighting broke out and India and Australia brought the conflict before the Security Council of the United Nations, an Australian draft resolution was amended by the United States in such a way that the controversies over several legal implications of the proposal were effectively circumnavigated. Related to the sovereignty over Indonesia and the competence of the Security Council, these points were exactly the ones most strenuously opposed by the Dutch delegation. A compromise solution was adopted on 1 August: both parties were requested to end hostilities and to settle the conflict by arbitration or other peaceful means. Complying with this appeal the Netherlands officially called off the 'police action' on 5 August.

Militarily the action was a success. The Indonesian forces proved incapable of checking the advance of the Dutch troops, both directly and indirectly, and it was the Chinese who were the major victims of the scorched-earth tactics. Within two weeks the most important towns of East and West Java — Cheribon, Purwakarta, Tegal, Tjilatjap, Bondowoso,

Banjuwangi, Pasuruan and Malang — were occupied by the Dutch, while in Sumatra the cultivation areas of the East Coast residency and the oil and coal centres in the south were overrun. That the campaign was officially terminated was only partly the result of the Security Council's intervention. It was also due to the announcement of the Netherlands government, when she embarked upon a policy of military violence, that it would be a 'limited' action only — this was to reassure public opinion in the United States as well as some social democrats at home. On 5 August the primary military objectives of the campaign had moreover been attained: the republican blockade around the Dutch enclaves was lifted and economically vital areas had been captured.

But the major political purpose of the military action had not been effected: the republic was not intimidated. That the Indonesian government persisted in its refusal to comply with the Dutch demands was not so much due to the fact that the intervention of the Security Council had strengthened its international status, but more to the circumstance that the Dutch attack undermined the position of those republican politicians who previously had confidence in the Dutch intentions. Furthermore the war situation tended to reduce the already limited authority of the government over the armed forces and the more extremist political groups. In spite of the territorial amputations and the economic losses the Indonesian republic continued its resistance and, as a result, the Dutch soon noticed that, in fact, they had not come any closer to achieving their goal. It also became apparent that politically they were far from successful in the occupied territories. A few anti-republican demonstrations took place, but on the whole the Indonesian civil servants shrank from siding too openly with the Dutch as long as they were not convinced that the Dutch occupation, which to them meant Dutch protection, would last. There were frequent acts of sabotage and terrorist attacks on collaborators, and in these circumstances the programme of economic rehabilitation came to nothing. On the Dutch side one school of thought supported the idea of occupying Djokjakarta and eliminating the Indonesian republic altogether, but the Netherlands government, afraid that in such an event less restrained international repercussions could be expected, did not follow this suggestion. Yet, although the direct onslaught on the republic was discontinued, the military campaign went on after it had been officially terminated, in those areas which the Dutch troops had either by-passed or cut off from the republic in the previous weeks. On 29 August Van Mook unilaterally drew a new demarcation-line which connected the most advanced Dutch positions and enclosed far more territory than had been actually occupied during the official action. Since Indonesian armed forces were still present behind this line and they did not fail to oppose the Dutch military operations, now termed 'cleaning-up actions', the cease-fire of 5 August could not be effected.

THE RENVILLE AGREEMENTS

The intervention of the United Nations was a diplomatic victory for Indonesia. The legally correct but in the circumstances untenable arguments of the Dutch government that the 'police action' was an internal affair and did not constitute a threat to peace, went unheeded. The willingness of the Security Council to allow a republican delegation to attend the discussions, while it refused admission to the delegates of East Indonesia and West Borneo, which were not directly involved in the conflict, was also to the advantage of the Indonesian government. For the rest, however, the republic had little reason to be pleased with the Security Council's activities; however piqued the Dutch were at the proceedings in the council, their quarrel with Indonesia was treated with full consideration for their point of view. A Soviet proposal that the troops should be withdrawn to the positions they held before the outbreak of hostilities was rejected; another Soviet proposal on the setting up of a committee to superintend the cease-fire order was vetoed by France, and two resolutions recommending arbitration as a means of achieving a political settlement did not carry a majority. The proposals which were eventually adopted on 25 August were compromise solutions, providing for the setting up of two commissions. The first, consisting of the Batavia-based consuls of the countries represented in the Security Council, was charged with reporting on the cease-fire, not with superintending it. The other commission was established to tender its good offices to the two parties in order to assist in the peaceful settlement of the dispute.

The consular commission came to the conclusion that the cease-fire order was not properly complied with, and its report forced the Security Council to find a new means for ensuring that its resolution of 1 August would be observed. A proposal to make a request to the Dutch that they evacuate the territories they had seized after the formal cessation of hostilities was rejected, but the use of the armed forces of either party to extend its control over areas which it had not occupied by 4 August was considered inconsistent with the cease-fire resolution. This advice was contained in an American proposal which was accepted on 1 November and which called upon the two parties to consult with each other, either directly or through the Committee of Good Offices, as to the means to be employed to give effect to that resolution. Ten days later Dutch troops crossed the demarcation-line and forced their way into the eastern part of Madura island, proving that in practice even the weak resolutions and the pious recommendations of the Security Council were of no help to the Indonesian republic. So also the activities of the Committee of Good Offices were utterly disappointing from the Indonesian point of view.

The Committee, consisting of representatives of Australia, Belgium and the United States, lacked the power to do anything beyond making attempts at reconciling the two parties. But since the Netherlands adopted a most intransigent attitude and, on 9 January 1948, threatened to 'reassume her freedom of action' if the Indonesians persisted in refusing to accept the Dutch demands, the Committee's efforts amounted only to soothing the republic's suspicions and persuading it to sign an agreement. The Dutch demanded that Van Mook's demarcation-line be accepted, and they refused to restore the republican civilian administration in the occupied territories. They also refused to suppress what was referred to as 'the free expression of popular movements which were in accordance with the principles of the Linggadjati Agreement', and as this clause was a euphemism for anti-republican organizations it could only mean that the republic had to acquiesce in the establishment of new Malino states in the territories it had lost during the Dutch military action. As a *quid pro quo* the Dutch offered some vague recommendations on future political developments. To these the Committee of Good Offices added a few promises of its own, related to the Dutch sovereignty during the interim period, the representation of all states in any provisional federal government as well as in the projected Constituent Assembly, and the plebiscites to be held in several areas of Java, Madura and Sumatra.

Without much enthusiasm, without confidence in the Security Council and disappointed in the United States which the Indonesians had expected to adopt a stronger anti-colonial line, but also recoiling for the consequences of a genuine people's war such as was waged by the Vietnamese, the republican government gave in and on 17 and 18 January 1948 the so-called Renville Agreements were signed. To a certain extent the government in Djokjakarta was reassured by the announcement made by the Australian and American members of the Committee of Good Offices, that the republic would retain its own armed forces, its own finances and foreign relations during the interim period, but this interpretation was immediately contested by the Dutch. The Renville Agreements were beneficial to the republic only in that they came about under international supervision, thus making it less easy for the Dutch to violate them. For the rest the position of the Indonesian republic was weakened. Militarily it was forced to withdraw its troops from behind the demarcation-line; materially the loss of economically important territories was confirmed; and politically it had to abide by the setting up of new Malino states.

PREPARATIONS FOR A FEDERAL INDONESIA

After the Renville Agreements had been signed the Dutch policy was clearly intended to cripple the republic further in order to bring about its economic and political collapse: in this way a military liquidation would

be unnecessary. For this purpose the blockade of the territories held by the republic was intensified. To stress the limited influence of their adversaries the Dutch started to refer to the 'Djokja republic' while they proceeded to set up five new Malino states, all of them in areas previously controlled by the republican government. The economically vital special cultivation districts of East Sumatra, one of the major objectives of the Dutch military campaign in July 1947, were elevated to the position of a constituent state on 29 January 1948. The strong pro-republican and social revolutionary tendencies among the estate workers, who consisted mainly of Javanese immigrants and their descendants, prevented the Dutch from organizing a plebiscite. Neither were they able to appeal openly to the Malay aristocracy, since its powers had been effectively curtailed during the disturbances of early 1946, its surviving members having been released from jail only after the arrival of Dutch troops. Thus the management of East Sumatran affairs under Dutch auspices fell to representatives of the local middle classes, urban intellectuals and civil servants who, extremely shocked by the outrages of the social revolution and fearful of the radicalism of the immigrant proletariat, decided in favour of an anti-republican stand. A Malay surgeon, Mansur, became the head of state.

In Madura, on the other hand, a plebiscite was held. It was closely supervised by the village chiefs and the electorate was strongly influenced by the memories of the famine which, brought about by the Dutch blockade, ravaged the island in the republican period. As a result an overwhelming majority favoured a separate state; this was formally established on 20 February. The procedure of setting up a Malino state in West Java encountered more difficulties. Even before the Dutch military action against the republic an anti-republican movement, led by Suria Kartalegawa, engineered a *coup de force* in Buitenzorg, on 23 May, in which the republican administration was taken over. The Dutch authorities announced that this had been done without their knowledge, but they nevertheless quickly adopted the idea of carving a separate state out of the area once the war with the republic had broken out. In October 1947 a first West Java Conference was already convened in Bandung, soon followed by a second and a third. During these procedures Kartalegawa was pushed into the background, but the direction of affairs remained in aristocratic hands insofar as it was not in those of the Dutch themselves, and on 4 March 1948 the state of Pasundan came into being. Yet Indonesian nationalist sentiments were so strong that the constituent — third — West Java Conference elected a high republican, though because of his age an easily pliable official, Wiranata Kusuma, as head of state. For several other posts in the administration, too, candidates were proposed who were not fully acceptable to the Netherlands Indies authorities. Because of this, and the fact that strong republican military units were still operating throughout West Java, Pasundan was granted far less self-rule than East Indonesia.

South Sumatra, hardly more than the Dutch-occupied territories in the Palembang residency, was made a constituent state on 30 August 1948, and after a conference to that effect at Bondowoso East Java followed suit on 26 November. The rest of Indonesia, insofar as it was not formally controlled by the republic, was split up into autonomous regions: Borneo, Banka, Billiton and the Riau islands. This policy as well as the establishment, on 9 March 1948, of a provisional federal government in which the republic was not represented, clearly pointed to the Dutch intention of going ahead with the formation of the United States of Indonesia without the government in Djokjakarta.

The Dutch authorities announced that they were prepared, in principle, to let the republic participate in the proceedings towards establishing a federal Indonesia as soon as the talks on her position as a constituent state of the federation had produced good results. But precisely on this point the negotiations, which began in March and which were alternately held in Batavia and at Kaliurang, near Djokjakarta, failed. The Dutch insisted on their control over the federal government until the Netherlands should formally transfer to her the sovereignty over Indonesia. This meant that the republic would have to renounce her claims to possessing her own army and controlling her own foreign relations. The government in Djokjakarta was not inclined to accede to this since she feared that during the months of the republic's participation in a federal structure under the supreme authority of the Netherlands, her administrative system and her armed forces would be thoroughly revised and purged under the guise of effecting conformity, but in fact to guarantee the continuation of a strong pro-Dutch influence in the future independent United States of Indonesia. As an alternative she proposed that her entry as a constituent state into the federation should coincide with the transfer of sovereignty, but this suggestion the Dutch would not consider.

The American and Australian members of the Committee of Good Offices made an effort to break the deadlock. The so-called Critchley-DuBois proposal of 10 June 1948 provided for the acceleration of the development towards the establishment of a provisional parliament and the appointment of a cabinet, responsible to this parliament and enjoying full powers of self-government which would be subject only to certain veto-rights of the Netherlands representative of the Crown. This recommendation was accepted by the republic as a basis for further discussion, but the Dutch authorities rejected it altogether, and the mediation effort failed in an atmosphere of insinuations in which the Committee, accused by the Dutch of partiality, was also involved. Rather listlessly the Security Council took up the dispute once more, and although some annoyance at the policy of the Dutch was to be noticed, the results of the debates did not go beyond a resolution, on 29 July, expressing the wish that both parties strictly observe the cease-fire and the Renville Agreements.

Meanwhile Van Mook continued to make preparations for establishing a federal state with the exclusion of the republic. At Bandung, on 27 May 1948, he convened a conference of delegates from all the Dutch-controlled areas to 'carry out the principles of the Linggadjati Treaty', and on this occasion he warned that Indonesia could not go on waiting until it suited the republic to co-operate. Early in June a committee of the provisional federal government started to draft a concept for the administration during the interim period, and barely a month later, on 8 July, the heads of state and the prime ministers of the Malino territories constituted themselves into a federal consultative council, *Bijeenkomst Federaal Overleg*, or B.F.O., which was also charged with discussing the structure and the competencies of the interim government. After parliamentary elections in July a new cabinet took office in the Netherlands early in August; it was more to the right than the previous one and in its policy statement of 12 August it referred to its determination to establish the United States of Indonesia, if need be without the republic's participation.

In these circumstances republican suspicions were aroused and the chances of reaching an agreement faded rapidly. The number of incidents along the cease-fire line rose steeply and so did the acts of sabotage in the Dutch-occupied territories. In republican circles the conviction grew that the government in Djokjakarta had been wrong in placing too great a faith in the anti-colonial sentiments of the United States, since in the Security Council the Soviet Union had been the only great power which consistently supported the Indonesian nationalist cause. In addition to many other factors this idea contributed to the increasing political unrest in the republic, culminating in the 'Madiun affair' of September 1948.

THE WAR IN VIETNAM

The Vietnamese war of liberation differed greatly from the one in Indonesia, particularly in its military aspects. While during its advance in republican territory the Dutch army had relatively little trouble with the Indonesian troops and met with an intensified guerrilla action only in a later stage, it was a bitter and desperate war which the French expeditionary force — 20,000 strong in December 1946 — had to fight from the very start. The battle for Hanoi began on 19 December 1946 and lasted until 19 February 1947 when the last Vietnamese resistance was finally broken. It was only in February and March that the French garrisons in Tonkin, under siege by the Vietnamese since December, were relieved, the last one at Nam Dinh on 11 March. But this was precisely the moment that the French discovered that, in fact, they had not gained anything. The resistance in and around the towns had been a mere delaying action, while the main body of the Vietnamese army was retreating towards the Vietbac base in Tonkin and the Thanh Hoa-Nghe An zone in

Northern Annam. It was evident that the invaders were committed to a long-drawn-out war against an elusive enemy. The French were safe in the towns and in their fortresses; in the countryside the Viet Minh was in full control, and roads were passable only in broad daylight. In Cochin China, finally, fierce guerrilla fighting flared up.

The French were not likely to achieve a quick victory, certainly not during the early months of 1947 when the great rebellion in Madagascar prevented France from sending reinforcements. Later that year the French were not successful either, as was demonstrated by the result of their offensive against the Vietbac zone in October and November. The attack was launched to destroy the Vietnamese armed forces, overrun their stores and close the frontier between Vietnam and China. None of these objectives was attained. A few towns were taken — Son Tay, Tuyen Quang, Cao Bang, Bac Kan and Lao Kay — but French losses were so heavy that the capture of these places was nothing more than a Pyrrhic victory. Towards the end of 1947 France only controlled the industrial basin and the coal-mining centres of the Red River delta, the Thai territories in North-West Tonkin, a string of frontier fortresses, a few places along the Annam coast and, in Cochin China, Saigon and some other towns as well as the rubber areas. Furthermore, the Vietnamese republic did not collapse, in spite of the tremendous difficulties and the disorganization it was facing in the first months after the war spread to the northern part of the country. The most important factor which enabled the Vietnamese revolutionary regime to hold out was the support it received from the overwhelming majority of the population, even when the French, in an attempt to weaken its authority, set up an alternative Vietnamese government.

When the war spread to the North the French policy of searching for indigenous collaborators entered its second phase. It was no longer directed at supporting Cochin Chinese separatism in order to weaken Vietnamese nationalism, but at utilizing anti-Viet Minh-orientated Vietnamese politicians as tools to turn the Vietnamese war of independence into a civil war. The government in Paris did not shut the door entirely to negotiations with the Vietnamese government, and on 20 February 1947 she even dismissed the hated High Commissioner, d'Argenlieu. She did so in compliance with the insistence of the French social democrats and communists not to exclude the Viet Minh from further talks, as well as with the many appeals of Ho Chi Minh to come to a peaceful settlement. Yet her policy clearly intended to ignore Ho Chi Minh. The conditions for an armistice which Professor Paul Mus, a scholar of Indochina, submitted in its name to the Vietnamese government amounted to a demand for total surrender, to which Ho Chi Minh gave the historical answer: 'In the French Union there is no place for cowards. If I accepted this, I would be one.' The new High Commissioner, Emile Bollaert, was instructed after all to be on the look out for 'representative nationalists',

and when Ho Chi Minh's rejection of the cease-fire proposals created the desired impression that he was unmanageable, the French had the excuse to carry out this part of their policy.

THE 'BAO DAI SOLUTION'

The French now set their hopes on the ex-Emperor Bao Dai who had accepted the post of adviser to Ho Chi Minh's government during the revolution in August 1945, but who deserted to Hong Kong when on a tour of duty abroad in mid-1946. It was expected that he might be helpful in restoring French domination since his prestige could easily be taken advantage of to lure a considerable number of nationalists away from the Viet Minh. This attempt of the colonial authorities to win his support coincided with the desire of a few Vietnamese politicians to set up Bao Dai against Ho Chi Minh. Among these were the V.N.Q.D.D. and the D.M.H., both in exile in China again, the Cao Dai sect which had gone over to the Cochin Chinese separatist regime in January 1947, and some individual persons like Ngo Dinh Diem. But although the method of achieving their ends was the same, the French and the anti-Viet Minh Vietnamese cherished different ideals; neither the V.N.Q.D.D., nor a man like Diem was likely to acquiesce in the continuation of colonial hegemony. Bao Dai kept aloof, moreover, since he was well aware that the French overtures only intended to persuade him into permitting France what Ho Chi Minh had refused her, and he knew enough of the general mood of the Vietnamese to realize that he would lose all his credit with them, should he rise to the French bait. He hinted at his willingness to talk, but only after the independence and territorial integrity of Vietnam had been recognized.

Convinced of the strength of national sentiments among all political leaders, Bollaert tried to break the deadlock by suggesting, in July 1947, the proclamation of a cease-fire and the opening of negotiations with all Vietnamese parties on the basis of Vietnam's independence. Government circles in France realized, however, that such a proposal was likely to be accepted by the anti-Viet Minh politicians, but also by Ho Chi Minh; and if this should happen, the latter could not possibly be ignored any more. Because of Ho's tremendous prestige with the Vietnamese people, the projected 'Bao Dai solution' would then have to be shelved. Thus Bollaert was summoned to Paris and sent back with the instruction to frame his proposal in such a way that it would be entirely unacceptable to the Vietnamese government. As a result Bollaert's so-called 'final offer' of 10 September 1947 did not refer any longer to independence. This word was replaced by 'freedom and autonomy within the French Union'; France would continue to be responsible for defence, foreign affairs, financial matters, the protection of minorities and the relations

between the various regions of Vietnam. On the 15th the Vietnamese government gave the expected, and desired, reply, but for the rest the French scheme failed in that the anti-Viet Minh nationalists also rejected the proposal. They sent a delegation to Bao Dai, however, for the purpose of inducing him to carry on negotiations with France on the basis of equality and justice, and on 18 September the ex-Emperor, still in Hong Kong, expressed his readiness to mediate.

Several factors contributed to bringing Bao Dai and France together. Bao Dai feared that the communists in the Viet Minh would be successful in completely capturing the direction of the nationalist movement, and that in such a case France would have an argument to persist in her intransigence while, internationally, the cause of Vietnam's independence would be deprived of all official sympathy, except in the communist world. The 'Bao Dai solution' appealed to France because it might prevent basically anti-Viet Minh orientated but in their nationalist ideals frustrated intellectuals from drifting towards Ho Chi Minh who, on 19 July 1947, had broadened his cabinet by including a few right-wing politicians. By presenting Bao Dai as the alternative to the Vietnamese government which, in spite of this reshuffle, was still quite radically leftist in character, the French might also induce the United States to adopt a more accommodating attitude towards their policy. It took quite some time before France managed to carry her schemes into effect. The offensive against the Vietbac base, late in 1947, did not lead to the destruction of the Vietnamese army and failed to make the desired impression on Bao Dai. Furthermore the anti-Viet Minh nationalists were highly suspicious of the French designs; they were particularly shocked by the change of regime in Cochin China on 1 October, when the prime minister who was apparently not insensible to unitarian ideas was suddenly pushed out by the colonial authorities and replaced by a fervent separatist, Nguyen Van Xuan.

In the end France and Bao Dai came to some agreement and on 7 December 1947, in a joint statement made at Along Bay, Bollaert, the first French representative officially to do so, openly referred to Vietnam's right to independence and territorial unity. Immediately after that, the talks again reached an impasse when it became known that in a secret protocol Bao Dai had consented to a limited type of independence. His adherents reproached him with this, and fearful of losing his political support he backed out of his engagement with the French. He left for Europe, followed by Bollaert who caught up with him in Geneva in January 1948 but failed to persuade him to change his mind. The ex-Emperor was in a difficult position. The Vietnamese government already considered him a French puppet, and the anti-Viet Minh nationalists were only willing to support him on their own conditions. With the exception of the Cochin Chinese separatists they all voiced the same demand: independence and territorial unity. In talks between Bollaert and Ngo

Dinh Diem, on 23 March, it became evident that France was not yet prepared to accede to such requests.

That Bao Dai insisted on the realization of these basic demands made him less attractive in French eyes, but on the other hand he could still be made use of as an instrument to by-pass the Vietnamese government. For this reason Bollaert was not interested in any Vietnamese counter-administration in which Bao Dai would not be participating, since such a regime, unlike Ho Chi Minh's, would represent no one. When delegates of the anti-Viet Minh nationalist groups, assembled in Hong Kong on 26 March, emphasized the need for the setting up of an alternative government to that of Ho Chi Minh, and Bao Dai continued to hesitate, Bollaert decided to force the issue. He ordered a French social democrat, who was known for his opposition to the 'Bao Dai solution', to seek contacts with the Vietnamese government. As the French had been right in sensing that the anti-Viet Minh orientation of the political groups around Bao Dai would be stronger than their national ideals, this stratagem worked immediately: put to the test, the latter rushed into discussions among each other as well as with the French over the ratification of the Along Bay statement. On 27 May Xuan formed a provisional government at Saigon, which he presented to Bao Dai. This was not yet exactly what the French had in mind, since the ex-Emperor persisted in refusing to return to his country as long as the national aspirations had not been complied with, but Bollaert decided not to forego this marvellous opportunity for setting up a Vietnamese counter-government. As a *quid pro quo* for his readiness to tolerate the Xuan administration he demanded, however, that it confirm the Along Bay statement, including the secret protocol, and that Bao Dai set his seal to it. He brought strong pressure to bear upon the ex-Emperor, and when, on 5 June 1948, Xuan signed the statement it was indeed countersigned by Bao Dai.

As a French concession the Along Bay Treaty was hardly more than a pretence: Vietnam became 'independent' as an 'associated state within the French Union', with the opportunity to regain its territorial unity. In practice nothing came of it. Any change in the status of Cochin China could be achieved only with the approval of the French National Assembly, and now France was more particular about this legal issue than she had been in 1946 when the territory was declared a 'free state'. Although Bollaert went to Paris in July to advocate the ratification of the treaty, the colonial minister, Paul Coste-Floret, did not support him. He was willing to accept the 'Bao Dai solution', provided that the ex-Emperor agreed with the French conditions: so far Bao Dai had been demanding the same as Ho Chi Minh in exchange for his offer to co-operate, while he was far less representative of the people. On 19 August the French government approved, in principle, of the policies of its high commissioner, but Bao Dai was not convinced that the French were taking him seriously and he remained adamant in his refusal to return to Vietnam as long as the

colonial regime in Cochin China had not been eliminated or genuine independence for the whole of Vietnam had not been guaranteed. Neither request was acceded to: the French and the separatist movement in Cochin China vehemently opposed Bollaert's policy and they refused to recognize the Xuan government. The two parties clearly found themselves in a vicious circle: as long as independence had not been granted the ex-Emperor kept aloof, and as long as he had not officially sided with Xuan the French were unwilling to transfer any of their powers. As a result the Xuan regime did not have any authority; it was unable to entice a single influential anti-Viet Minh politician, and it did not command any respect among the population which saw through the nature of the French concessions and continued to set its hopes on the Vietnamese government, the only one capable of presenting herself as a genuinely national government. The psychological shock of the alternative solution, such as France had been hoping for, did not materialize, and convinced of the total failure of his policies Bollaert resigned in October 1948.

His successor, Léon Pignon, was an undiluted colonialist, but the situation could not be allowed to remain in an impasse. The unsuccessful outcome of the experiment with the Xuan government deprived France of the opportunity to engineer the defection of a considerable number of Vietnamese away from Ho Chi Minh to a régime with which it might negotiate on its own conditions. Thus the war continued. To the anti-Viet Minh-orientated politicians, on the other hand, this failure meant that the Viet Minh remained the incontestable guiding force of the national struggle. To break the deadlock, it was necessary for France to make genuine concessions to Vietnamese nationalism so as to enable the anti-Viet Minh-politicians as well as any eventual counter-government to obtain real authority and to counterbalance effectively the influence of the Vietnamese government. This necessity was the more urgent towards the close of 1948; militarily the French did not score any success in their fight against the Vietnamese forces, while the expenses of the war were assuming alarming proportions. From their point of view the situation became even more dangerous when it was evident that the communist armies in China were winning the civil war against Chiang K'ai-shek and that in due course, as a result of this, the Vietnamese government might be expected to emerge from its isolated position.

THE SETTING UP OF THE VIETNAMESE COUNTER-GOVERNMENT

Until that moment the outside world had hardly shown any interest in the Vietnamese struggle for independence. Influenced by the anti-French posture of the American intelligence agents in Indochina during the final phase of the Japanese occupation and the beginning of the revolution, and

with a naive faith in the promises of the Atlantic Charter as well as in the anti-colonial statements of American political leaders, Ho Chi Minh initially nourished high expectations as to the role the United States might be playing in the process of Asia's emancipation. In this respect he was disappointed even more rapidly and cruelly than in his hope that the post-war attitude of France might be different from its pre-war policies. Already on 25 October 1945 the State Department announced that the United States recognized French sovereignty over Indochina, and from that moment onwards Washington carefully avoided rebuffing France, in spite of some occasional criticism levelled at French colonialism. This attitude did not fail to affect the stand of the United Nations which in those years was entirely dominated by the West. In September 1947 Secretary-General Trygve Lie did not deign to acknowledge receipt of, let alone reply to an appeal made to him by the Vietnamese government. But not only the West, also the Asian governments were adopting a far more guarded attitude with regard to Vietnam's national cause than to the Indonesian fight for independence. Like the Indonesian republic Vietnam was allowed to participate in the Inter-Asian Conference in New Delhi, in March 1947, but while no Dutch-led delegation of the 'Netherlands Indies' was present, a French-headed 'Indochinese' deputation was. To the second Asian Conference in January 1949 the Vietnamese republic was not even invited. Confused as they were by the spectacle of a communist-orientated nationalist movement the recently liberated Asian countries did not officially express any sympathy with Vietnam. Since China failed to maintain her influence in Tonkin with the help of the V.N.Q.D.D. and the D.M.H., the government of Ho Chi Minh could not count on any support on the part of the Chiang K'ai-shek regime either. The Vietnamese fought their war on their own, without help from the outside, apart from, materially, the clandestine import of arms through China or the Philippines and, verbally and initially in a very discreet way, the condemnations of French colonialism by the Soviet Union.

The communist victories in China from mid-1948 onwards considerably affected developments in Vietnam, but it was definitely not the Vietnamese government which benefited most from the new situation. The revolutionary republic was likely to be morally supported in the near future by a powerful neighbouring state under a regime which was ideologically more or less identical to its own; it would no longer be isolated, internationally, and it would become less difficult for it to obtain war material. Yet these immediate benefits did not in any way offset the indirect disadvantages. A united China under an efficient communist government would pose a greater threat to Vietnamese nationalism than Chiang K'ai-shek's impotent and divided regime had been capable of. By depending too much on China, Vietnam might run the risk of becoming a Chinese satellite state, and in spite of his ideological affinities with the new government in Peking Ho Chi Minh was not willing to accept such a position. Seen from

the point of view of the Vietnamese government two other by-products of the communist take-over in China were far more serious, however. First, there was the hysterical reaction in the United States to the developments in China which were primarily seen as the result of communist aggression. Following such a train of thought the Vietnamese fight for independence, too, was bound to be considered part of a world-wide communist conspiracy. Secondly, France was not slow in exploiting these American feelings. By presenting herself as the defender of the 'free world' against communism, she hoped not only to justify her colonial war for which she maintained close to 150,000 troops in Vietnam, but also to lure the United States into supporting her efforts to restore French domination over Indochina.

In the previous years France had occasionally been hinting at the communist nature of the Vietnamese government, but only the psychological shock of the crushing defeat of American diplomacy in China produced the mood in the United States which favoured French designs. Officially the policy of the United States could not be one of supporting France as a colonial power; American anti-colonial tradition prevented such a course which was not likely, moreover, to be greatly appreciated by public opinion in Asia. But supporting France as the ally of a pretendedly legitimate Vietnamese regime that was fighting a life-and-death struggle with communism was a workable proposition. With this in view France and Bao Dai resumed their negotiations, intending to bring about an agreement that would give the French-sponsored Vietnamese counter-revolutionary government a legal foundation.

In the course of these talks the French could not avoid complying with some of the basic nationalist aspirations of the Vietnamese people as a *sine qua non* for obtaining the full co-operation of the ex-Emperor. In the so-called Agreement of the Elysée of 8 March 1949, in fact a private letter of President Auriol to Bao Dai who was sojourning in France at the time, France yielded to the demand for national unity: Cochin China was allowed to merge with the rest of Vietnam. In addition to this the French government committed itself to granting independence, but this promise was made only to consider the anti-colonial scruples of the Americans. Consequently Vietnam's independence was of a very limited nature. According to the agreement France would continue to be responsible for foreign affairs, defence and ethnic minorities; French citizens were to retain their special privileges, and no French enterprise or property was to be expropriated unless the government in Paris had given its consent. The 'Indochinese Federation' was to be eliminated, but Vietnam was obliged, nevertheless, to enter into a monetary and customs union with the other so-called 'associated states'. Finally, Vietnam's independence was effectively neutralized by the country's membership of the French Union, in which real power and authority rested with France.

The Auriol-Bao Dai Agreement did not in any essential way modify French colonial policy. On 23 April 1949 the 'free state' of Cochin China was abolished on the strength of a resolution adopted by a territorial council *ad hoc*: on 4 July the merger of this territory with the other regions of Vietnam was approved of by the French National Assembly. But these were not genuine concessions. Cochin China did not return to the authority of the Vietnamese government from which it had been taken a few years earlier; instead, it was handed over to a Vietnamese regime which was in the process of being established by the French and which constituted, in fact, a direct continuation of the Cochin Chinese puppet state. Cochin China was not re-united with Vietnam, but Vietnam was annexed by Cochin China. This procedure did not strike the Vietnamese as sincere; neither did the promise of independence for that matter. The nationalist intellectuals were far from satisfied, and Ngo Dinh Diem declined to become prime minister of the counter-government. The religious sects and the Binh Xuyen underworld organization, too, kept aloof and the great majority of the people remained loyal to the Vietnamese government. In its day-to-day practice French policy was not conducive either to allaying the suspicions of the nationalists; the French remained in full control and they were not in any hurry to start negotiations on the future transfer of power to the Bao Dai regime.

Whatever the dislike and opposition it evoked among the nationalist leaders and the majority of the Vietnamese, French policy was accepted by precisely those whose support and adherence France was most interested in obtaining. Bao Dai returned to Vietnam and on 14 July 1949 he was formally made 'head of state'. More than he, however, the Americans were the major champions of this French approach to the problem. They were well aware that the independence of Vietnam was far from perfect, but in the mood the United States were in at that moment this defect was considered of minor importance compared with the necessity to build up a barrier against the onrush of Asian communism. It is true that the Americans put some pressure on France, asking her to transfer power to the Bao Dai government as quickly as possible, but in this they were primarily motivated by formalistic considerations rather than by any concern at the continuation of French colonial rule. Extremely anxious to give military support and economic assistance to the anti-Viet Minh forces, the United States was hardly able to wait for the official inauguration of a Vietnamese regime to which she might extend her recognition.

Negotiations between France and Bao Dai on the implementation of the Elysée Agreement started on 1 September. They were concluded on 30 December 1949 when the Conventions of Saigon were signed, which provided for the formal transfer of French sovereignty to what was called the 'State of Vietnam'. The independence of the new state was limited to education, social services and police matters; there was no delegation of powers in the economic and financial sphere. Although it was agreed that a

Vietnamese army should be raised in order to provide the French forces with indigenous auxiliary troops and to underscore the civil war element of the Franco-Vietnamese war, the French authorities were dragging their feet in this respect too. No one in Vietnam was satisfied, but Bao Dai resigned himself to the new situation in the naive hope that in the end and with the help of the United States he might be able to extricate himself from the position of a mere recruiter of Vietnamese mercenaries for France and to achieve genuine independence. The American government did not hesitate to accept the arrangement, albeit with some doubts as to the success of the attempts to lure the Vietnamese away from Ho Chi Minh with hardly any bait available. The major argument of the United States for coming to the rescue of France and extending her support to the Vietnamese counter-government, was the complete collapse of Chiang K'ai-shek's regime in China. In October the People's Republic of China was officially proclaimed in Peking, and in December 1949 Yünnan province fell to the Chinese communists, while in Kwangtung province, too, their forces reached the Vietnamese border. The United States strongly urged the French National Assembly to adopt the Conventions of Saigon, and after this had been done, on 29 January 1950, the French government ratified the agreements on 2 February.

The policy of France to turn the Vietnamese war of independence into a part of the cold war, with a view to obtaining American support, did not fail to disturb the Vietnamese government considerably. It prevented a peaceful settlement altogether, and it might also force Ho Chi Minh into orientating himself towards the Chinese communist regime, with all the unwelcome consequences such a course might produce. Within the Viet Minh the extremist communists and the advocates of a war until final victory were gaining strength, and in an attempt to limit their influence the moderate Pham Van Dong was appointed vice-chairman of the Vietnamese government in August 1949. Yet in December Ho Chi Minh announced that the Vietnamese people was fully prepared to co-operate with France. But to obtain a stronger diplomatic position *vis-à-vis* an adversary which was successfully engaged in subordinating her colonial war to the strategic interests of the United States, the Vietnamese republic could not avoid seeking contacts with the outside world. It was the first time since the outbreak of hostilities that they embarked upon such a course; on 14 January 1950 Foreign Minister Hoang Minh Giam declared that his government was willing to entertain diplomatic relations with any country that was prepared to recognize Vietnam's independence. Since the United States, and the Western world in general, were allied with France, and the independent Asian governments were afraid of the radical left-wing nature of the Vietnamese regime and not inclined, moreover, to gamble away their chances of receiving Western economic aid by expressing open sympathy with Vietnam's national struggle, the only positive response to this appeal came from the communist states. The diplomatic recognition of the Vietnamese

republic by China, on 15 January, and the Soviet Union, on the 30th, provided the American government with a convenient excuse to carry out the policy she had long been determined to undertake. On 7 February 1950 Bao Dai's Vietnam was recognized by the United States as an 'independent state within the French Union': what this independence was worth was demonstrated by the fact that in Saigon the United States had to be added in great haste to the list of countries with which the 'State of Vietnam' was allowed to entertain diplomatic relations under the Elysée Agreement. The British government, too, recognized the Bao Dai regime. Internationally, French colonial policy in Vietnam had been victorious all along the line.

Part VI

The End of European Domination

Dominication

The End of Empedem

Part VI

1 Social Revolutionary Aspects

THE ROLE OF COMMUNISM

THE fight for national independence was the most sensational spectacle South-East Asia witnessed immediately after the Japanese surrender. With rather unexpected vigour it presented itself to a Western world which was, in general, quite unprepared for this, and in its final consequence it caused the termination of colonial rule over countries which for several decades had been subordinated to Europe. But as such the nationalist struggle was not the sole aspect of the development; neither was liberation from colonialism the only objective of the political leaders responsible for and participating in South-East Asia's revolution. In their totality the upheavals which took place from 1945 onwards were the continuation of the pre-Second World War renaissance movement, and since the latter had been combining various political, economic, social and cultural trends and ambitions, it was inevitable that the post-war development should also be characterized by an all comprehensive drive at modernization and emancipation. In so far as South-East Asia's aspirations and desires were intended to effect fundamental changes in the pattern of power structure and in the economic situation, the revolution also displayed strong social revolutionary tendencies and unmistakable elements of internal class struggle.

This social revolutionary aspect manifested itself on two levels. In the first place, and clearly connected with the fight against Western political and economic preponderance, there existed the antagonism between the newly-emerging group of nationalist-orientated middle-class leaders and urban intellectuals on the one hand, and on the other the members of the

old aristocratic elite who, traditionally employed by the colonial administration as civil servants, feared being deprived of their prerogatives after a nationalist victory. Related to the class struggle at a different level of society were the ideals of those politicians who advocated that the revolution should proceed beyond merely winning national independence and enabling the middle classes to capture political and economic power and enjoy the social privileges formerly held by the colonial government and the traditional elite. In their opinion the masses should also benefit from the new situation, but they were well aware that this would not be achieved should independence produce some change in personnel only and fail to bring about a structural transformation of society. The activities and views of these leaders, of middle-class descent themselves, added a strong anti-capitalist and proletarian trait to the otherwise essentially middle-class nature of South-East Asia's social revolution.

This proletarian trend found its expression in political parties, trade unions and peasant associations, actuated by the ideal of improving the living conditions of the masses, as well as in rebellious movements among the lower classes which, by their nature, were directed against the economic and social prerogatives of the old colonial Western or traditional aristocratic ruling groups, but also against the newly-won privileges of the emerging middle-class nationalist élite. Such movements were greatly stimulated by the general conditions prevailing immediately after the Second World War. In previous decades the erosion of traditional norms and long-established customs had, in effect, begun beneath the surface of an outwardly stable society, but it was only during the Japanese period that this process was tremendously accelerated and intensified. Unlike the situation in the old colonial days the feelings of dissatisfaction were not limited any more to the intellectuals and the middle classes; instead they had extended to the mass of the population, in the rural areas as well as in the towns. This was most marked in Vietnam, where the post-Japanese development took on the form of a genuine people's revolution. But in the other South-East Asian countries, in which the revolution remained basically a middle-class affair, the lower classes were also strongly influenced by a general mood of restiveness. They were no longer the passive onlookers or the docile followers of the dominant indigenous groups, such as they had been in the colonial era or, to a lesser extent, during the Japanese period. On the contrary, the mass of the population, greatly affected by the fight of the middle-class politicians who needed popular support for the realization of their nationalist objectives, had been roused to a strong sense of self-consciousness as well as to a proper appreciation of its own needs and of its desire to shape its own destiny.

Among South-East Asia's social revolutionary movements the communist-orientated groups were the most prominent and active. In general, they were the best organized and the most resolute and, guided by firm convictions as to the structural problems of society, and the need to offer

easily comprehensible solutions, they did not fail to gain wide appeal. In this way the communists made a far deeper impression on the minds of the depressed masses than the other social revolutionary organizations. Their significance was emphasized even more by the circumstance that communism was a world-wide movement, inspired by the example and the achievements of the Soviet Union and, since the late 1940s, the Chinese revolution.

Yet the international character of communism affected the position of the South-East Asian communist parties in two diametrically opposed ways. On the one hand it was bound to raise their prestige with those people who were well disposed towards them anyway or who were given brighter hopes for a better future. But it had also a negative effect in that it inevitably added to the hostility communism evoked among those who feared that it would threaten their economic and social privileges or weaken their political status. Pointing to its international connexions, its opponents did not regard communism in South-East Asia as a genuinely indigenous phenomenon caused by the local political, social and economic conditions and tensions and, for obvious reasons, entertaining more or less close relations with similar movements elsewhere, particularly in such countries where it came to power. Instead, they depicted regional communism as part of an ambitious drive towards global conquest, which was master-minded by and directed from the major communist centres; in the pursuance of this goal the feelings of discontent among South-East Asia's masses were cleverly and competently exploited.

In the years immediately after the Second World War this representation of communism as a huge conspiracy closely supervised by the Soviet Union was apparently proved correct, as far as South-East Asia was concerned, by the simultaneous occurrence of communist-led rebellions in Burma and Malaya, the Madiun affair in Indonesia and the intensification of the Hukbalahap guerrilla activities in the Philippines. In this respect special attention has been paid to the South-East Asian Youth Conference, held in Calcutta in February 1948 and organized by the communist-orientated World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Union of Students; it was generally believed to have been the occasion where Moscow's command to create confusion was passed on to the local communist parties. At this conference grievances were indeed ventilated in a very outspoken manner, while vehement verbal attacks were made against the policies of the United States and the colonial powers. But the delegates also took strong exception to the governments of those Asian countries which had won independence through negotiations rather than by armed force: such freedom was considered a cover to conceal the continuation of Western domination.

As to the tactics to be employed it was stressed that co-operation with the 'bourgeois nationalists' was out of the question altogether since, for fear of the revolutionary mass movements, the latter were evidently

making a bargain with the imperialist forces. This tactical recommendation seemed to fit in, more or less, with the new line of communist policy which, clearly related to the intensification of the cold war situation in Europe after the announcement of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, had been formulated by Andrey Zhdanov late in 1947 when the Cominform was founded. But in interpreting communist strategy the Youth Conference in Calcutta went further than had been outlined in Moscow. While the official Soviet definition did not, in principle, rule out some co-operation between communists and 'bourgeois nationalists', the conference adopted the more rigid stand of total non-co-operation. The recommendations of the conference also differed from the views expounded in Moscow with regard to the basic theory that the post-war world was divided between two major camps: the imperialist camp headed by the United States and relying on reactionary and anti-democratic forces everywhere, and the anti-imperialist camp, led by the Soviet Union and backed by progressive groups. Although the Soviet interpretation adhered to the general principle that no middle course was possible between an imperialist and a communist policy, so that the world, in fact, consisted of allies and adversaries only, the category of adversaries was, in practice, divided into two groups. Moscow made a clear distinction between American, in a wider sense Western, imperialism, with which communism was directly in conflict, and, on the other hand, the independent Asian 'bourgeois' regimes which it was prepared to meet in a more accommodating way, partly on the consideration that the national liberation forces in the colonial territories were potential allies, and partly because of its eagerness to respect Asian nationalist susceptibilities and to avoid weakening its own position in the Asian sector of the cold war. The participants of the Calcutta Youth Conference did not make any such distinction, however; according to them the governments of India and Burma were not to be regarded as genuinely independent, but as lackeys of imperialism.

These differences of opinion made it highly improbable that Moscow would have used this conference for conveying its orders to the South-East Asian communist parties — orders, moreover, which were contrary to the policy of the Soviet Union *vis-à-vis* independent Asian states. On the strength of outward appearances the view that the decision to resort to armed force was taken at the Youth Conference seemed corroborated by what happened later the same year, but in fact these events belied this theory. For one thing communist opposition was very strong, leading eventually to an armed clash with the authorities in Indonesia, precisely one of the countries which at the conference was lauded to the skies because of her fight against colonial oppression. No communist revolt, on the other hand, took place in India, the government of which had been described at Calcutta as a tool of Western imperialism. That the Indian communist party did not launch a rebellion — the Telingana Soviet

occurred in Hyderabad which was not yet part of India at the time — may be explained by the tremendous popularity of Nehru's administration: a revolt could not have resulted in anything but political suicide. But since one communist party was persuaded by local circumstances not to resort to violence, it is hard to see why other communist parties which did embark upon such a course, should have done so at the insistence of the Calcutta Conference and on Moscow's orders rather than on account, too, of the situation prevailing in their own countries. Only the insurrections in Burma and Malaya in 1948 may be associated with the conference and the one in Malaya, a country still under colonial rule, also with an order from Moscow. In both cases it is more plausible, however, that armed opposition was decided upon by local communist leaders on the grounds of purely local political and social conditions, and that the Calcutta Conference did not have any greater influence than providing, after the event, the Burmese and Malayan communists with a justification of their policies. There was no connexion whatsoever between the conference and the resumption of hostilities, in August 1948, by the Hukbalahaps; at Calcutta the Philippines had been represented by a non-communist delegation which afterwards strongly condemned the proceedings.

All communist parties in South-East Asia agitated against the political and economic forces controlling their countries, whether they were Western colonial rulers or indigenous leading classes. All of them started from some general theories about the structure of state and society which were derived, one way or another, from the writings of Marx, Engels or Lenin. This, however, was the only resemblance between them. They adapted their tactics to the political and social conditions peculiar to each country. By doing so, they made themselves the mouthpiece of the discontented groups among the population — and these varied widely from country to country: socially depressed classes in the one case, discriminated ethnic communities in the other. This does not mean that always and everywhere in the region the communists acted with the flexibility of mind as was required by the circumstances, or refrained from pushing through dogmas which did not fit in with reality. Yet communist strategy as applied to South-East Asia as a whole was definitely not characterized by its homogeneity or its capability of co-ordinating its activities; neither was it carried out in conformity with a fixed pattern imposed by Moscow or Peking.

THE VIETNAMESE REPUBLIC DURING THE WAR OF NATIONAL LIBERATION

The inaccuracy of the conception held by anti-communist Asians as well as by the West, that the South-East Asian communists constituted the local fifth column of the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China

— which implied that their attitude was unpatriotic and anti-national — was convincingly proved by events in Vietnam. Here communism was not, as it was in Burma, Indonesia and the Philippines, a political movement opposing or even fighting the national government; instead it occupied a predominant place in that government. It also became the major representative of Vietnamese nationalism and the driving force behind the struggle for independence against French domination.

It was the Vietnamese communists' greatest asset that, unlike their Malayan counterparts who were also engaged in fighting a colonial regime, they were backed by an overwhelming majority of the population. They were able to win such mass support because they refrained from adopting any doctrinarian attitude while carrying out their policies. Of course they believed strongly in communist theories and principles, and this enabled them to tackle the problems that faced them with great singleness of purpose: among the nationalist movements in South-East Asia the Viet Minh was the most tenacious; similarly the Vietnamese government was the most efficient of the region's national governments. Yet, in their actions the Vietnamese communists were anything but short-sighted dogmatists, certainly not in the first phase of their revolution. Like Mao Tse-tung they used to emphasize the importance of the peasant masses rather than the urban proletariat as the major revolutionary force, and in addition to this, they adapted themselves to the prevailing situation as soon as they had the opportunity to carry their ideals into effect. Their main consideration was that the majority of the peasantry, the support of whom was vital to guarantee their success, were illiterate and lacked any insight into what the communists considered the real background of the deplorable living conditions in the rural areas. Any revolutionary change in the social structure that would put an end to the traditional circumstances under which they had been living for generations, the peasants were bound not to understand properly; neither would they be capable of regarding such a transformation as the first step towards the improvement of their own situation. It was considered necessary, therefore, to embark upon activities aimed at producing a change of mentality that would enable the rural masses to free themselves gradually from the norms to which they had grown accustomed.

Another and a more compelling reason why the Vietnamese government restrained itself from putting its theoretical principles into practice, was the fact that, when taking over in August 1945, she inherited a country which was bankrupt. The treasury was almost empty; the dykes and irrigation canals were neglected, the means of communication destroyed and contacts with the outside world disrupted. Agricultural production was at its lowest, and while the food-producing areas of the south were in French hands Vietnam was faced with a famine. This was not the proper moment to embark upon any grand-scale revolutionary experiment which would have made the economic situation even more precarious. But also

after the most imminent dangers which threatened the Vietnamese republic and the government of Ho Chi Minh had either been removed or made less acute, it remained good policy to practise moderation, particularly so when the war of independence extended over the entire country in November 1946.

The Vietnamese had been prepared for this contingency, so that the removal of the government and the administrative apparatus from Hanoi to the Vietbac base was effected without causing the downfall of the state. The war situation created conditions, however, which might interfere with the authority of the government. In her relatively isolated position she was facing increasing difficulties in maintaining contacts with the lower administrative bodies. This was most marked in Cochin China, where the impact of French control was strongest. It was in this region that the Cao Dai sect, early in 1947, broke away from Nguyen Binh's united front, at the instigation of the organization's supreme leader, Pham Cong Tac, when he returned from his place of exile. At about the same time the Hoa Hao sect, which for months had been following quite a vacillating and ambiguous course, joined the French against the Viet Minh after its leader, Huynh Phu So, had been assassinated in April by the orders of an exasperated Nguyen Binh. Problems of loyalty arose everywhere in the country, though not to such an extent as in Cochin China. They induced Ho Chi Minh into reorganizing his cabinet on 19 July 1947; in order to keep the confidence of the non-Viet Minh politicians, he reduced the share of the Viet Minh to one-third of the total number of ministers.

In another effort to reinforce its power, the government resorted to introducing emergency measures. Because of the war parliament could not meet; the key position in the constitutional structure was held by a so-called permanent committee in which the Viet Minh occupied most of the seats. The local representative councils, the people's committees, were abolished while the executive bodies, or administrative committees, were replaced by 'committees of resistance and administration' which included specially-trained Viet Minh cadres and of which political leaders rather than civil servants were the most influential members. At a later stage larger administrative units were established which were integrated with the military regions into which the country had been divided. This reorganization was aimed at strengthening political control over the civil administration in the more distant areas, but because of the extraordinary circumstances produced by the war the increased powers of the central government were greatly neutralized. The administration was, in fact, highly decentralized. As far as this reorganization had been embarked upon to tighten the control of the Viet Minh over the population, it was equally unsuccessful: local authority was, in general, not in the hands of the Viet Minh.

Nevertheless, both the government and the Viet Minh succeeded in securing the loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the population. It was to their advantage, to begin with, that the people regarded the Vietnamese state as symbolic of its independent national existence and Ho Chi Minh as the champion of national freedom. The Vietnamese accepted the hardships imposed upon them as unavoidable by-products of their desire to defend their national independence against the French attempts at colonial restoration. Because of this, the revolutionary regime was capable of surviving the switch, effected late in 1946, from more or less normal circumstances to an emergency situation. But in order to maintain its position in this emergency situation the government had to rely on the permanent backing of the population. To a far greater extent than in Indonesia the struggle for national liberation in Vietnam was a war in which the entire nation was involved: from the start it was a genuine people's war in which the Vietnamese masses showed an unyielding determination, and for South-East Asia, a unique quality of perseverance. Such a situation made high demands upon the Viet Minh leaders, however. Apart from the fact that the prospect of a long-drawn-out fight and the immediate material advantages of collaboration with the French might reduce their power of resistance, this type of war demanded overwhelming sacrifices which compelled the leading politicians to make sure that, in the eyes of the common people, the objective of the conflict continued to be worth the suffering of such tremendous privations.

In determining their strategy the Viet Minh leaders took the line that any doctrinarian communism might throw the middle classes and the intellectuals into the arms of the enemy and that this would irreparably damage the cause of the republic. The ultimate goal — a socialist, or communist structure of society — was never lost sight of, but although the programme they carried into effect during the first half decade after the August revolution contained several elements aimed at achieving this end, the Viet Minh prudently refrained from emphasizing them. It was considered far more important to fight the anti-colonial war successfully and, as a prerequisite, to create an economic basis for waging this war and to stimulate the unanimous feelings among the population.

The government's economic policy was expounded in the course of 1947 by the communist theoretician Truong Chinh. It started from the realization that Vietnam, subjected to an enemy blockade and with most of her towns in French hands, was thrown entirely on her own resources. For this reason the programme emphasized the need to achieve economic self-sufficiency: all activities had to be directed towards provisioning the troops and feeding the population. Since Vietnam was an overwhelmingly rural and peasant-based country, most of the attention was devoted to agriculture. Labour was recruited from among the masses to construct and repair dykes and maintain the irrigation works. There was a constant appeal for increasing production; to achieve this Ho Chi Minh announced,

on 19 July 1948, the movement of 'patriotic emulation'. This campaign, in the interest of which committees were set up, slogans thought out and heroes' proclaimed, was not limited to the agrarian sector, although in view of the country's food supply this was the most vital. It also applied to the handwork and manufacturing industry. Handicrafts, no longer obstructed by French monopolistic ordinances, neither regulated by the Vietnamese state, entered a phase of spontaneous revival, which was particularly significant with regard to the production of textiles, paper and tobacco. As to the industrialization programme the economic planners stressed the need to produce arms and consumer goods. The nationalized French factories were primarily used for this: their machinery and equipment had been removed to the Vietbac base. At the same time new industries were built up, working raw materials which were locally available and using the local population as labour force. These were small undertakings, outwardly primitive, but easily movable and extremely important for satisfying local needs.

National unity was also essential for the success of the struggle for freedom, and it was strongly stimulated by Ho Chi Minh. This was done most spectacularly by the propaganda 'for the native country against French imperialism', but far more effectively by the policies which were designed to prevent the increase of feelings of opposition towards the government and of dissatisfaction with the existing conditions from enabling the French to benefit politically by them. Acts of terrorism and intimidation committed by over-eager extremists might spoil the good relations between the Viet Minh and the peasant masses, and because of this the civilian and military authorities did their utmost to impress upon their subordinates that such incidents had to be avoided at all cost. With the same end in view the Viet Minh introduced the clause into the constitution which provided for an autonomous position and equal rights of the ethnic minorities. It was vital for the government to win the support of the non-Vietnamese races since the power centre of the Vietnamese state, the Vietbac zone, was situated right in the middle of a Thai-speaking area. In much the same way the regime succeeded in securing the loyalty of the religious minorities, particularly the Catholics.

In so far as the unity of the people might be endangered by differences of class, the policy of the government aimed at allaying the fears and suspicions which the social radical tendencies of the Viet Minh were likely to provoke. Any drastic programme of social and economic reconstruction which might alienate the land-owning class or other privileged groups was not considered feasible. A few reforms were carried out, and in a sense they foreshadowed the agrarian revolution to be effected at a later stage, but for the moment neither the feudal nor the capitalist structure of society were essentially interfered with. The government affirmed its respect for the institution of private property: there was to be no redistribution of land to any great extent, and agricultural collectivization was

entirely out of the question. Landowners were dispossessed only when they were French colonists or Vietnamese collaborators — a political move, inherent to any war, rather than a step towards bringing about changes in society.

By virtue of a decree of 20 November 1945 lands thus seized were provisionally allotted to landless peasants. It was not until four years later, however, when the setting up of a counter-government by the French opened up better opportunities for changing sides, that a final settlement was decided upon. On 14 July 1949 land belonging to the French and their indigenous helpers was officially expropriated and redistributed. More acute than the issue of land ownership were the excessive rents and the usurious rates of interest which were mainly responsible for the problem of rural indebtedness. In this respect, too, it took the government four years before it embarked upon any action: by the same act of July 1949 all rents were reduced by 25 per cent. Until that date tenant farmers had been compelled, often by legal action taken against them, to pay the often outrageous rents to the landowners — in a country ruled by communist politicians. It was only at that time that the minimum duration of land tenure was finally fixed at three years.

However moderate, this policy highly alarmed the land-owner class and many of them left their lands and moved into the French-occupied territories, often taking their animals and equipment with them. The confusion in the rural areas, caused by these desertions, increased when peasants who used to work on inferior lands allowed these to lie fallow while they started to cultivate the better plots left behind by the landlords. Hence a stagnation in agrarian production seemed imminent. To avert this danger and prevent any further disruption in the countryside, the government declared on 19 February 1950 that all abandoned land was to be proclaimed public domain the moment the original owners entered the service of the French colonial regime. In case the landlords were only taking refuge in the enemy-held enclaves without actually collaborating with the French, their lands would not automatically fall into this category, but in the future confiscation might be considered all the same. This regulation did not improve the situation, with the result that the problem had to be tackled anew. By decree of 22 May 1950 it was announced that all agricultural land which was lying fallow and which was not owned by people fighting in the Vietnamese army, would be expropriated and redistributed among landless peasants by the end of the year. In a fresh attempt to fight usury and rural indebtedness the same decree reduced the annual rates of interest on loans. Debts dating from any time before August 1945 were cancelled altogether, and so were debts contracted after that date if the interest paid so far exceeded 100 per cent, the debtor had been killed in battle, or the creditor was collaborating with the French.

These reforms did not in any way unleash a communist-style agrarian revolution. Land was seized only when it belonged to people who were

considered enemies and traitors, or who were unable to meet the strict requirements of a war economy; there was no grand-scale attack on land ownership as such. Unlike the situation in the regions occupied by the French, landlordism was not an extremely urgent problem in the territories controlled by the Vietnamese government, where more than 90 per cent of the cultivable land was owned by smallholders. Primarily attempting to redress the major evils of land rent and rural debt, the reforms were intended only to restrict somewhat the economic control of the propertied classes and limit their political influence. They might be considered a preliminary move towards more far-reaching steps to be taken in the future, but they also aimed at making a favourable impression on the depressed peasant masses in the French-held territories. Well-to-do farmers who met their obligations properly were not pressed by any restrictive measures; tenants and small peasants continued to pay their — reduced — rents or the interest over their debts. The lands which had been divided among the peasants had not become their property, moreover; they had been loaned out instead. Finally, the agrarian reforms were not carried into effect everywhere. In districts in which the peasants were not yet organized, or where, as a result of the uncertainties caused by the war situation, they preferred to wait and see before speaking their minds openly in favour of agrarian reforms, the landlords managed to maintain control over the rural associations.

In these years the Vietnamese met with several serious setbacks. The presence of the colonial expeditionary army constituted a constant threat. Local French military activities often compelled the Vietnamese to remove their small factories, or to dismantle and 'hide' them until they could be built up again after the danger was past. The French air force continuously destroyed the food crops. There were not enough technical personnel. Due to the economic blockade imposed by the French no articles could be imported, although on a minor scale some trade continued between the Vietnamese republic and the territories under French control. The Vietnamese were completely thrown on their own resources and on their own inventiveness for increasing the country's productive capacity, for carrying out repairs or finding substitutes. Financially the state was in great difficulties: between 1946 and 1950 its annual expenditures were four times higher than its revenues. In addition to this, inflation and steeply rising prices continued to disrupt the economy: in 1950 the price of rice was twenty-seven times as high as it was in 1946. The agrarian reforms, inevitably leading to a more minute subdivision of the cultivable land, were bound to affect agricultural production adversely. Yet there was no food shortage, because although Tonkin produced less rice than before, the production of alternative foodstuffs like maize, potatoes and manioc flower had increased.

The war and the general state of insecurity, the scarcity of commodities, the constantly rising prices and the increasing taxes put a heavy burden on

the population. But whatever the inadequacy of their immediate results, the reforms as such proved that the Vietnamese government was honestly trying to improve the living conditions of the small peasants, the tenant farmers and the landless labourers, and this realization was of immense importance. That the overwhelming majority of the population continued to support the government was neither the product of coercive measures nor of efficient indoctrination by Viet Minh functionaries. Rather was it the result of the plain fact that this government had succeeded in inspiring the people with confidence. For the first time in Vietnam's history corruption was absent among civil servants, even among tax collectors who, as a group, were most open to temptation. The army was not a gang of licentious ransackers, as so many armies in the past had been. It was a well-disciplined force, behaving correctly towards the rural population out of which, in fact, it was recruited; and it often assisted the peasants in harvest-time. Politicians and government leaders lived as simply as the people. However adjusted to the necessity of not alienating the middle classes and the intellectuals, the government's policy of carrying out reforms aroused hopes of a better future among the peasantry. The ambitious campaign to combat illiteracy stimulated the people's self-respect, and realizing that they were indebted to the government which was taking them seriously the lower classes did not fail to side enthusiastically with that government.

The general feeling that Ho Chi Minh was pursuing a noble cause added to his prestige as national symbol, and enabled his administration to involve the entire population in its policy of developing the country's economic resources, as well as in its war efforts. On 4 November 1949 it was announced that men and women over eighteen years of age were liable to be mobilized, and this decree was supplemented by the one of 12 February 1950 which provided for the total utilization of all manpower and all material and financial assets. The unorthodox way in which the Vietnamese fought this war and the elusiveness of the guerrilla forces gave the French tremendous difficulties, militarily, but the Vietnamese army was also confronted with colossal problems. By virtue of the mobilization decree the population was used primarily for rendering assistance to the fighting units. Instead of constructing dumps for food, arms and ammunition which the French might trace and destroy, the Vietnamese army resorted to employing bearers who, traversing the jungle in long single files and invisible from the air, provisioned the troops. But since the bearers also had to carry their own food, this practice created enormous logistic problems, particularly after the war entered the offensive phase by the end of 1950: a fighting force of 12,000 troops needed a provisioning column of 15,000 men. Such problems the Vietnamese republic would have failed to overcome had it not been for the enthusiastic support of almost the entire nation.

Unlike the French, the Vietnamese were fighting in their own country, on familiar terrain. Their goal was simple: national independence instead of colonialism, while the French objectives varied, outwardly at least, from the one vague concept to the other: 'autonomy within the Indochinese Federation' or 'limited independence and association with the French Union'. In Vo Nguyen Giap Vietnam possessed a commander-in-chief of outstanding capabilities. All this was to the advantage of the Vietnamese. But the major factor accounting for the republic's endurance was the competence and efficiency which Ho Chi Minh's government displayed in its policy of inspiring the population with a strong and unbending determination to persevere. In this war such a zeal proved to be a weapon of tremendous power. With all their superiority, materially speaking, the French were not able to imbue either their own forces — including Senegalese, North Africans and legionaries — or the auxiliary troops of the Vietnamese counter-government — with a similar spirit. The result was the complete failure of the policy of France and several anti-Viet Minh-orientated political leaders to have Bao Dai's counter-regime recognized by any substantial section of the population. To the majority of Vietnamese Ho Chi Minh's government continued to be the legitimate one, and it was in defence of this government that the people was prepared to make tremendous sacrifices and to suffer unprecedented hardships in a long and cruel war. This loyalty and devotion enabled the Vietnamese national state to survive.

THE MALAYAN EMERGENCY

Malaya was the only other country in South-East Asia where, immediately after the Japanese surrender, the communist party emerged as the sole anti-colonial organization of any significance. Paradoxically this happened although almost all factors combined against communism except, initially, the economic conditions. Anti-colonial sentiments hardly existed among non-communist Malayan political leaders. Only the Malay Nationalist Party, led by Burhanuddin al-Helmy and Ishak bin Mohammed and inspired by the Indonesian revolution, and the Malayan Democratic Union, were advocating independence or self-rule. But as an organization of Malay radical intellectuals, the M.N.P. was not very popular with the aristocratic elite which dominated Malay society, while the M.D.U., as a non-racial party, attracted only a tiny group of idealists. The United Malay National Organization which had been capable of rallying the Malay community under its banner, was not at this stage an anti-colonial party. Neither was the Malayan Indian Congress, like U.M.N.O. a purely racially-orientated organization. The only party which, in principle, might have given expression to any nationalist sentiment was the Malayan Communist Party, but in practice it did not succeed in

identifying itself with Malayan nationalism, because of the, in an important South-East Asian colonial territory, unique circumstance that such sentiment was absent altogether.

As the chief exponent of anti-Japanese resistance during the Second World War, the communist party had acquired great prestige. The guerrilla fighters of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army had been co-operating with the British South-East Asia Command, from which they had been receiving arms and money. Immediately after the Japanese surrender they in fact controlled the entire country, with the exception of the Malay rural areas, and they could have taken over power easily. They did not do so, however, because the secretary-general of the M.C.P., Lai Teck, advised against such a course since he realized that, although it had the military means to be immediately successful, the M.P.A.J.A., as an overwhelmingly Chinese organization, would fail to win the confidence of the entire population, as was vital for achieving its long-term objectives. The party, relying on the British promise of democratic reforms in the administration, neither opposed the military reoccupation of the country by the British, nor, after some hesitation, the disarming and disbandment, in December 1945, of the M.P.A.J.A. Not all communists agreed with this policy, and many guerrilla fighters hid their arms instead of turning them in, but at a meeting of the party's central committee, late in January 1946, Lai Teck's 'moderate line' was officially adopted.

The new programme of the M.C.P. aimed at establishing an independent democratic Malayan republic, and in the pursuance of this objective it attempted to become a broad mass-organization. The bad economic and social conditions seemed to guarantee success: from the war and the Japanese occupation Malaya inherited economic disruption, unemployment, disease, food-scarcity and rising prices and, at the same time, a strong lack of confidence in the authorities. The general mood of discontent among the lower classes, particularly over the cost of living, had manifested itself already in October 1945 when disturbances occurred in Perak and strikes broke out in the Batu Arang coal mines and the Singapore docks, the latter also stimulated by protests against the loading of war material for the Dutch in Indonesia. Shortly after, the Singapore General Labour Union was formed, while similar trade unions were set up in the Malayan mainland early in 1946.

In the first months after the Japanese surrender the British military authorities did not place any great obstacles in the communists' way. The administration rejected their demands to introduce self-rule and a democratic form of government; occasionally it also took action against communist newspapers, but it tacitly recognized the party as a lawful organization. This more or less conciliatory policy changed, however, after the M.P.A.J.A. had been disbanded and the British had fewer reasons to fear any retaliatory activities by a well-organized body of former guerrilla fighters in case they should adopt a less accommodating attitude.

From the British point of view it was necessary to curtail communist influence when towards the end of January 1946 it became evident that the M.C.P. had been penetrating with great success into the trade union movement. After some thirty members of the former M.P.A.J.A. had been arrested the General Labour Union requested their unconditional release, and when this demand was not complied with a general strike broke out in Singapore which spread to Johore, Negri Sembilan and Selangor, involving more than 150,000 labourers. It is true that after two days the M.C.P. called off the strike since it did not want to provoke any great clash that might alienate Chinese business circles, but the party had convincingly demonstrated its power, and as a result many new members joined the labour unions. The control of the trade-union movement by the communist party posed a direct threat to British economic interests and, in a wider sense, British colonial domination in Malaya. To counter this the administration decided to revive a pre-war ordinance on trade unions under which labour organizations of a general, and because of this, uncontrollable nature were declared illegal.

The M.C.P. lent the British a helping hand, though unwittingly, when in a burst of recklessness the communists went too far in provoking the authorities into stern counter-measures. In February 1946 the party called for massive demonstrations, to take place on the 15th, the fourth anniversary of Singapore's surrender to the Japanese. The colonial regime, only recently recovered from that humiliating defeat, was not at all interested in any commemoration of the 'day of humiliation', and it reacted with great vigour, causing the demonstration to fail. As a result the M.C.P. lost some of its prestige, but its control of the labour unions was not in any way weakened; on the contrary. the party structurally reorganized the trade-union movement in such a way that the administration was deprived of all legal grounds of cracking down on it. The new Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, the P.M.F.T.U., which was established in February 1946, was far less vulnerable, legally speaking, than the former General Labour Union had been.

Apart from controlling the labour movement the communist party advocated the setting up of a popular front as a means of uniting all anti-imperialist forces. The golden opportunity to champion such a project came about in mid-1946 when, both among the non-Malay communities and among the small group of more or less radical Malays, feelings of dissatisfaction arose with regard to British constitutional policy. The Pan-Malayan Council of Joint Action, which emerged in December, seemed to be a suitable united front of Chinese and left-wing Malays against the coalition of the British and the Malay conservatives of U.M.N.O. The M.C.P. participated in the council, but in spite of all communist efforts to invigorate it, the P.M.C.J.A. was a short-lived experiment. Racial differences, constituting the chief obstacle on the road towards a genuinely popular front, effectively prevented the realization

of any ideal that was not motivated by limited communal interests. The M.C.P., too, was in practice only capable of gaining support from among the Chinese, and this was not exclusively the result of racial preferences, but also of the fact that the adverse consequences of Malaya's economic situation were not weighing evenly upon all ethnic communities. The Malays, predominantly small peasants, were affected by phenomena such as unemployment and rising prices to a far lesser extent than the Chinese and the Indians, and, being traditionally conservative, they had no particular motive for associating themselves with the communist party. The Indian estate workers, on the other hand, had every reason to consider communism the only way out of their economic and social difficulties, but the intellectuals who guided the Malayan Indian political movement were primarily influenced by developments in India where communism was of little importance. It was only among the Chinese proletariat that the M.C.P. aroused enthusiasm, though, due to the events in China, a considerable part of the Chinese intelligentsia also felt attracted towards communism.

In the end the political commotion resulting from the Malayan Union proved to be detrimental to the interests of the M.C.P. With the setting up of U.M.N.O. a powerful conservative counterweight to social-revolutionary and anti-colonial opinion had emerged. With the break-up of the P.M.C.J.A. the chance was lost to fight the colonial power through a popular front, and the formation of such a front had been precisely the cornerstone of the party's moderate policy. The labour movement was left as the only field where the communists could still operate legally, but this was going to change, too. After the initially rapid growth of the P.M.F.T.U., which controlled some three-quarters of organized labour by the end of 1947, communist influence began to decline. This was partly the result of the diminishing sympathy with communism among the labourers. Communist officials frequently conducted themselves in a rather authoritarian way; they occasionally resorted to extortionary practices and intimidation and they often adopted a most uncompromising attitude in labour conflicts. Indian trade unionists, moreover, resented the penetration of Chinese, whether communist or not, into a field formerly almost exclusively controlled by them. But the major setback of the M.C.P. was that the colonial authorities quickly made capital out of the party's isolated position after the downfall of the P.M.C.J.A., and embarked upon a policy of effectively checking communist influence in the trade-union movement. In April 1948 the Singapore Harbour Board began to recruit labour direct instead of using the communist unions as contracting agents. When the Singapore Federation of Trade Unions protested and prepared for a general strike, to take place on 1 May, the organization was paralysed and, in effect, broken by a wave of arrests. In mainland Malaya the trade union ordinance was amended so as to enable the authorities to take legal action once again. Trade union

officials were required to have at least three years' employment in the branch of labour with which their union was connected; any federation of trade unions was prohibited when the unions were not concerned with similar occupations. The new laws intended to bar communist functionaries from holding office in the trade unions, and to break the neck of the P.M.F.T.U. at the same time. In both respects they served their purpose, but they also led to the almost complete disappearance of organized labour in Malaya; if the desire to achieve this result had not motivated the British it was, at any rate, not considered an unwelcome by-product of their policy.

The M.C.P. retaliated against these measures by resorting to armed violence. In fact the party had already abandoned, in principle, the moderate line as had been advocated by Lai Teck. Doubts arose as to the efficacy of this policy, now that the prospect of success was rapidly dwindling after the failure of the popular front, the reinforcement of British power, the emergence of U.M.N.O and the economic recovery. In its efforts to dominate the trade unions and sponsor a united front the party focused all its attention on the urban proletariat and the intellectuals, and failed to maintain its contacts with the rural population, particularly the 'squatters' who had been its major source of support during the Japanese period. The increasing criticism resulted in the dismissal of Lai Teck, who was replaced as secretary-general of the M.C.P. by Chin Peng in March 1947, by which time it was discovered that Lai Teck had disappeared with the party's funds. In order not to aggravate the crisis within the party this change in leadership was not immediately made public. It was only in March 1948, when the decision was made to intensify the political struggle against the British, that the M.C.P. issued the news of Lai Teck's desertion as well as its suspicion that he, in fact, had been both a Japanese and a British agent. Less than two months later the communists started to make preparations for unleashing a campaign of violence, in order to create an atmosphere of unrest and chaos as a *sine qua non* for weakening British rule and establishing liberated areas by communist fighting groups. The steps which the British authorities were taking against communist influence in the trade-union movement only strengthened the conviction of those advocating a militant course that the M.C.P. had no choice but to fight.

That the communists switched to a new strategy clearly demonstrated the failure of the British attempts to avert the danger which communism posed to colonial domination by either haughtily neglecting communist, and in a wider sense Chinese, aspirations or taking repressive action and restricting the possibilities of operating legally. In fact, the authorities completely underestimated the potentially large influence which the M.C.P. was capable of exercising among the Chinese, and this not primarily because it was a communist party, but because it was an overwhelmingly Chinese party with a proper insight into Chinese grievances and Chinese

demands. The communist revolt was the answer to a British policy which ignored the non-Malay dissatisfaction with the preferential treatment accorded to the Malays; it was also the outcome of the British failure to evaluate correctly the changed mentality of the younger generation. Many of the latter had been fighting with the anti-Japanese guerrillas, but after that they found themselves out of employment, at a period when they were greatly impressed by the victories of the communist armies in China.

But the armed conflict was also the result of communist miscalculations. It was expected that guerrilla attacks on European managers, on estates and mining enterprises and on police posts would produce sufficient economic disruption and political insecurity that the British would be persuaded to leave Malaya much in the same way as they had given up India or Palestine. But this expectation was based on a completely erroneous conception as to the role Malaya was playing in British imperial policy: there was no willingness whatsoever to surrender what was, in fact, economically the richest British territory. The M.C.P. proved to be disastrously wrong in its assessment of the attitude the population would adopt *vis-à-vis* the new communist strategy. Although it pretended to be a non-communal organization with a few Malays and Indians present among its leaders and its adherents, the M.C.P. was almost completely Chinese, and in a racially divided country as Malaya this could only mean that it would be incapable of winning the support of the majority of the people. Because of their customary anti-Chinese views the Malays sided with the colonial regime. The Indians considered the revolt to be a fight between the British and the Chinese which was none of their business: they either refused to commit themselves or they supported the government. Neither did the Chinese community unconditionally join the M.C.P.'s struggle against Britain: many Chinese were profoundly anti-communist and, by way of precaution, the bulk of the Chinese adopted a wait-and-see posture. It was evident that the communists overrated the readiness of the Chinese community as a whole to turn the feelings of dissatisfaction, which were very genuine indeed, into actual resistance against the colonial authorities.

While the prospects of long-term success were rather slight because of these factors, the short-term goals of the communist rebellion could not be achieved either. Primarily responsible for this was the circumstance that the communist offensive was not launched as a well co-ordinated *coup de force*, but as a series of separate attacks and acts of sabotage out of which only slowly and gradually a full-scale revolt developed. By then the British were alarmed already, and while the M.C.P. was still recruiting the former guerrilla fighters of the M.P.A.J.A., the authorities proclaimed a state of emergency on 18 June 1948. The communist party was outlawed, several people were arrested and special police units were raised. At the same time fresh troops were arriving, some of whom, coming from Palestine, were highly experienced in fighting terrorist activities. It is true

that the efficacy of the British counter-offensive was somewhat neutralized by a two months' interregnum at the top, caused by the sudden death of High Commissioner Gent on 2 July and the belated arrival of his successor, Henry Gurney, in September, but in the same period the M.C.P. lost its most capable military organizer, Lau Yew, who was killed in July. The country's economy was not dislocated, neither was the administrative process disrupted in any way; and nowhere were any 'liberated areas' established. The British remained in full control over the highly developed road and railway systems. The communist forces, called the Malayan Racial Liberation Army (M.R.L.A.) since February 1949 and numbering around 3,000 to 5,000 men, had no choice but to retreat into the jungles where, initially, they could move freely. In the populated areas and in the towns the so-called *Min Yuen*, or People's Movement, was operating. It was a civil auxiliary brigade of some 20,000 members, not all of them communists, who had to provision the troops, carry on propaganda among the population, recruit volunteers, collect money, pass intelligence and eliminate traitors.

Yet, in spite of the almost casual and, for an attempt at a revolution, totally inadequately prepared start of the rebellion, the proclamation of the state of emergency marked the beginning of a war which was to last for over ten years and which, in its direct consequences, deeply affected Malayan society, particularly the Chinese community. This was primarily due to the circumstance that the guerrilla forces were able to rely on the Chinese 'squatters' who lived on the jungle-fringe where they grew vegetables and agricultural crops. This squatter population constituted an element in society with which, after the restoration of colonial rule, the British authorities had not made any contacts whatsoever. No special provisions were made for them since they were living in areas regarded as Malay reserves, and although they were considered a nuisance because they fell outside the scope of regular administration, the squatters were left alone. They provided for themselves, moreover, and, as such, did not adversely affect the country's economy. But, situated close to the communist jungle bases, and more susceptible to communist pressure than the Chinese town population, the squatter communities were used by the guerrilla fighters as their major source of supply and recruitment.

From mid-1948 until well into 1950 the British limited their actions to repelling or preventing attacks by the guerrilla forces. They did so by recruiting volunteers and by introducing a tight system of guarding and protecting vital installations. They also adopted a harsh emergency legislation which considerably enlarged the number of capital crimes. In this initial phase of the war military raids against guerrilla bases in the jungle were still rather ineffective, because the troops were insufficiently trained for that type of warfare, but the air force undertook many attacks on rebel concentrations. Collective punishment was also resorted to: huts and houses were burnt down and crops destroyed in actions of which

the squatters were the main victims. These British counter-measures diminished the chances of communist success, but they failed to suppress the resistance movement, while the retaliatory actions often had a boomerang effect. For this reason the authorities adopted a new policy which aimed at systematically interrupting the contacts between the guerrilla fighters in the jungle and the populated districts, on the assumption that a resistance movement would be successful only as long as it could rely on the support of the population. The chief element of this British strategy consisted of a programme of resettling the squatters, by transferring them from the jungle-fringe where the government had no grip of them, to places where they would not be exposed any more to direct contacts with the rebels and where, in fortified settlements, they would be protected against communist attempts at intimidation. In this way the British hoped to cut off the guerrilla bases in the jungle from their sources of supply; so also the jungle-fringe had to be cut off from the rest of the country in order to prevent communist penetration.

The resettlement scheme started on 1 June 1950 and it led to the forced removal of around half a million Chinese from their homes to some 400 so-called new villages. It was evident that such a drastic interference with the lives of so many people could not be justified by considerations of military security alone, and that a programme to improve the living conditions of the squatter population had to go with it. Realizing that the massive removal of one-quarter of the Chinese population, and the subsequent inconveniences and hardships might lead to a wave of discontent which would jeopardize the eventual purpose of the entire operation, the government made provisions for making life in the new villages more attractive than it had been in their former dwelling-places. It was an enormous task, and difficulties inevitably arose. In spite of the efforts to improve living conditions the new villages were in many cases little more than concentration camps, particularly in the initial stage of resettlement. They were often located in places with insufficient opportunities for food production, and this affected the economic situation of the country as a whole, and the acreage planted with food crops fell by one-third between 1948 and 1951.

Politically the programme was not altogether a success either. The argument, used by the government, that the squatters had to be protected against communism since they would not be enjoying democratic liberties under a communist system, sounded rather strange to people who did not have any civic rights. The overbearing manner in which the authorities decided on the fate and interests of the squatter population and the rather high-handed conduct of those responsible for carrying the scheme into effect, could not fail to produce widespread hostility, and it often happened that, out of a new village, the young men suddenly disappeared into the jungle and joined the guerrilla troops. In such circumstances the government was unable to fathom properly the real sentiments of those removed to

the new villages. British doubts in this respect were demonstrated time and again by the continuous rounding up of suspects. In addition to the new villages official internment camps were set up: early in 1951 they housed some 11,000 people.

The general feelings of discontent among the Chinese led to an almost complete unwillingness on the part of the Chinese masses to co-operate with the authorities. The communist revolution in China and the unexpected vigour it displayed, militarily, when Chinese forces intervened in the Korean war in October 1950, made a deep impression which, strengthening the conviction among the Malayan Chinese that they had better not bet on what might after all turn out to be the wrong horse, greatly contributed to this aloofness. Finally, there was the fear that the guerrilla fighters, or the special liquidation squads of the Min Yuen might take reprisals against those who collaborated with the British administration. Under these circumstances the problem of internal security was not entirely solved by the resettling of the squatter population. Attacks on police posts, railroads and rubber estates went on, businessmen continued to be forced to support the M.R.L.A. financially, and traitors, or people considered traitors, were mercilessly killed: in the year 1951 the official records showed 6,100 'incidents' of all types. In addition to this, the psychological war, such as the British air force conducted by dropping leaflets in the jungle, inciting the guerrilla troops to desert or surrender, met with little success. After three years the British were still fighting a tough little war against an elusive adversary, with as yet little prospect of success.

THE HATTA CABINET AND MADIUN

In Vietnam — and after 1950 in Laos — the communists were the most prominent leaders in the war of national liberation; in Malaya they were the exponents of Chinese discontent and were waging a racial war rather than a war of independence as they claimed to be fighting. Yet in both cases their major foe was the colonial regime. Everywhere else in South-East Asia, however, the communists opposed the indigenous national governments whenever they came out in open rebellion or were provoked into a course of armed violence. This was even the case in the Philippines where the Hukbalahap insurrection developed before the country became officially independent, but it was basically directed against the Filipino ruling classes rather than against the United States as a colonial power. In the Philippines, as in Burma and in Indonesia, the communists lived up to the anti-nationalist reputation imputed to them by their adversaries. This seemed particularly true with regard to the Indonesian communists who opposed the republican government with force of arms while the most critical hour of the war of independence was approaching.

In the first few years after its revival as a legal party, late in 1945, the Partai Kommunis Indonesia did not play a significant role in Indonesian politics. It participated in the left-wing combination Sajap Kiri, from which the third Sjahrir cabinet, formed in October 1946, drew its main support. Yet it was only one out of four more or less radical-orientated socialist organizations, and its views, still rather undefined in this period were not particularly influential. A change occurred, however, early in 1948, when leftist opinion began to demonstrate a far stronger interest in the Soviet Union than before. To a large extent the international reactions to the Indonesian revolution were responsible for this: it was realized that, in her struggle against Dutch colonialism, Indonesia was not supported by the United States which, in fact, tended to be more appreciative of the stand adopted by the Netherlands. Since on her own Indonesia was not likely to attain her nationalist objectives, the conviction was rapidly growing that she had no alternative but to align herself more closely with the one great power in the world which had consistently defended her cause.

By this time the political configuration had also changed in that the two organizations making up the Benteng Republik front, the nationalist Partai Nasional Indonesia and the Masjumi, were now dominating the cabinet while Sajap Kiri had gone into the opposition. For some time already the policy to be adopted *vis-à-vis* the Dutch constituted the major bone of contention in Indonesian politics, but the issue was treated as a convenient point of attack in the internal struggle for power rather than as a matter of principle: the views held in this respect coincided with the position of each party in the structure of political responsibility. Thus Sjahrir's policy of negotiating with the Dutch was opposed by the P.N.I. and Masjumi, but supported by Sajap Kiri. Yet the latter, including the premier's own socialist party, abandoned the cabinet when, in June 1947, far-reaching concessions were made in a last-minute attempt to avert the armed conflict the Dutch were evidently provoking. Sjahrir resigned, but the new government, formed by Amir Sjarifuddin on 3 July, followed the same line, and as it consisted of the socialist party, the Partai Buruh and the P.N.I., this meant that both Sajap Kiri and the P.N.I. had reversed their stand. Under Sjarifuddin the war against the Dutch started and after a few months in office his cabinet was joined by Masjumi in an effort to create some kind of national unity. When the republic was forced, however, to sign the highly unfavourable Renville Agreements in January 1948, the P.N.I. and Masjumi immediately withdrew their support, producing the downfall of Sjarifuddin. They decided to take part in the new cabinet, formed by vice-president Hatta on the 29th, and by doing so they assumed responsibility for carrying out the terms of Renville which they had denounced so vigorously. Sajap Kiri, on the other hand, responsible for signing the agreements, strongly repudiated them now that it found itself on the opposition side.

There was more to this change than the fact that, for the first time in the republic's existence, the left wing was excluded from the government. The events of January 1948 were part of a polarization of political forces of quite a different nature than the one characterized so far by the criterion distinguishing, in a parliamentary setting, between parties in office and those in opposition, squabbling over an issue that could not possibly be dealt with in another way than, in practice, it was. Whatever the merits of the policy of not having any dealings with the Dutch, once in a position of responsibility no party could avoid negotiating with them. Since the relations with the Netherlands constituted, on the face of it, the most important problem confronting Indonesia's political parties, it was highly frustrating to realize the basic futility of what they were advocating in this respect. This experience resulted in a more impatient and radical attitude, particularly among those not in power. As the left happened to be in the opposition after the Hatta government took office, and its irritation on this account coincided with the gradually increasing general disillusionment with the policy of the Western colonial powers and the United States, it was not surprising that the most significant changes were taking place in this sphere.

Directly and indirectly the P.K.I. played a prominent part in this. It was still a small party, but having come round to adopting the general communist theory of the world-wide struggle between the 'democratic socialist', i.e. communist, and the 'aggressive capitalist', i.e. Western blocs, it managed, in the existing circumstances, to exercise a far greater influence than its numerical strength seemed to imply. The communist views on seeking the support of the Soviet Union, internationally, and on Indonesia's urban proletariat and rural masses, internally, won a large following, not in the least among the leaders and adherents of the non-communist organizations within the Sajap Kiri front. In the Partai Sosialis it led to a break when Sjahrir, opposing the new orientation, formed a new party, the *Partai Sosialis Indonesia*, on 13 February 1948, which took the majority of the leading politicians away from the old organization but failed to attract the rank-and-file members who remained loyal to Sjarifuddin, the major architect of the swing to the left. The new outlook of the left wing was confirmed at a conference of Sajap Kiri held at Surakarta on 26 February when a Popular Democratic Front, *Front Demokrasi Rakjat*, was set up. It consisted of the same parties but, strongly emphasizing the class-struggle element in social relations, it was definitely more revolutionary in the policies it advocated.

This process of gradual radicalization of the left, accompanied by the closer association of several non-communist socialist groups with the P.K.I., did not fail to alarm the anti-communist leaders. Among the latter were politicians, like Sjahrir, the left wing of Masjumi and the adherents of Tan Malaka, who were more or less socialist in orientation themselves, but out of fear of communism in general or, in the case of the

Tan Malaka faction, out of hatred for the P.K.I.-brand of communism, dubbed Stalinism, they sided with the centre and right-wing forces to fight the F.D.R. jointly. Sjahrir's P.S.I. did not take part in the government, but nevertheless strongly supported it; in fact, Sjahrir had been advocating in January 1948 the making of the Hatta cabinet responsible to the president rather than to parliament — a clear reversal of his earlier policy when he introduced parliamentary democracy. The Tan Malaka-orientated groups, traditionally in the opposition and in favour of a political course which did not essentially differ from the one championed by the F.D.R., also backed the government in its struggle with the front. To strengthen their position they formed a front of their own, the Revolutionary People's Movement or *Gerakan Revolusi Rakjat*, on 6 June 1948, and this policy paid off well when in August several of their top leaders, still in jail for instigating the attempt to topple Sjahrir in 1946, were released. Tan Malaka himself was set free on 16 September. Though the conflict between the F.D.R. and the Hatta government and its supporters was anything but a straight contest between 'left' and 'right', elements of class nonetheless played a highly significant part in it, accounting for the vehement nature which the struggle for power was now assuming.

Anti-communist considerations apart, the Hatta cabinet had good reason to be disturbed by the opposition of the Popular Democratic Front. In the first place it faced tremendous difficulties, political as well as economic, which were bound to create popular discontent that might easily be taken advantage of. There was widespread disappointment over the military debacle and the humiliating terms of the Renville agreements. The republic had been deprived of its richest territories, which had been the major targets of the advancing Dutch troops, while it continued to be exposed to a tight naval blockade. The economic situation became even more desperate when tens of thousands of refugees from the Dutch-occupied areas created serious problems of overpopulation, unemployment and deficiency. The feelings of national frustration and the general dissatisfaction with the deteriorating economic conditions offered the F.D.R. a comfortable platform for its agitation.

This challenge was the more dangerous to the government since the opposition front was quite influential among organized labour and in the armed forces. The largest Indonesian trade union, the communist-sponsored S.O.B.S.I., was closely associated with the F.D.R., and this accounted for the latter's great influence among the urban and estate proletariat. From the government's point of view it was far more alarming, however, that the opposition was strongly entrenched in several semi-military groups as well as in some units of the army. The Pesindo, Indonesian Socialist Youth, led by Wikana, was a member-organization of the F.D.R., which, in addition, could rely on a substantial number of officers in key positions both in the regular army and in the so-called T.N.I. *Masjarakat*, a loosely organized auxiliary corps. As minister of defence in the cabinets headed

by Sjahrir as well as in his own, Sjarifuddin had been responsible for appointments in the army and for the setting up, in August 1947, of irregular armed militia in the villages, with the result that a great many army men felt loyal to him, either on a personal or a political basis, rather than to the government in office.

To counter the threat that might emerge from a military force heavily infiltrated by supporters of the opposition parties, the government embarked upon a scheme to reorganize the army and reduce its strength. This was part of a general rationalization and retrenchment policy drawn up already by the Sjarifuddin cabinet and as such it was not directed against the F.D.R. only. The first group to be demobilized was an irregular organization which was strongly opposed to the F.D.R., but certainly not under the control of the government either. It refused to comply with the demobilization order until it was compelled to give in, late in March 1948 in Surakarta, after some days of fierce fighting with military units backing the Hatta cabinet. It was logical, however, that the implementation of the rationalization programme was intended primarily to jeopardize the powerful position of the F.D.R. within the armed forces. The F.D.R. was fully aware of this, and this conviction became stronger when the government reorganized the auxiliaries in such a way that they were entirely liquidated as a corps. At about the same time the authorities set out to remove pro-F.D.R. officers from their posts, either by dismissing them or by transferring them to other, more reliable, units.

The view that the Hatta cabinet was bent upon destroying the bases of the opposition's strength seemed confirmed when, in connexion with a series of strikes, army units loyal to the government took repressive steps against branches of S.O.B.S.I. in Central Java, a campaign in which they were assisted by the highly effective Students' Army as well as by the Islamic para-military organization, Hizbullah. It was in this atmosphere of growing tension that a Surakarta-based strongly pro-F.D.R. division of the regular army refused to submit to the demobilization order. In mid-July, moreover, the F.D.R. drafted a plan which provided for the use of military force, should the rationalization programme prevent it from attaining its objectives through political means or leave it with no choice but to defend itself against the attempts of the authorities progressively to weaken its power.

Slightly more than a month later the command of the F.D.R. shifted from socialists such as Sjarifuddin and the Labour Party's chairman Setiadjit to the communist Musso. Early in August the latter, one of the leaders of the revolt against the Dutch in 1926, returned to Indonesia after ten years of exile in Moscow. His arrival took place at a moment when the politicians of the opposition front were having serious doubts about the success of their tactics employed so far. Among them the conviction was growing that a new and more vigorous strategy was called for to bring down the Hatta cabinet and have it replaced by the all-party national

government they were advocating. When Musso made his sudden appearance and, within days, captured the leadership of the P.K.I., this event set into motion a comprehensive process of internal reorientation and reorganization in the F.D.R. The entire opposition front was, in fact, swallowed up by the communist party when, between 27 August and 1 September, the Partai Buruh, the socialist party and Pesindo fused with the P.K.I.

Whatever their plans to resort to revolutionary tactics and violent action in the future, for the time being the communists were only interested in using legal political means. They were hardly in a position to act differently since substantial groups in the three organizations which had merged into the P.K.I. strongly resented the decision to abandon their parties' independence, while in the original P.K.I. as well as in the S.O.B.S.I. trade-union federation neither Musso's ascendancy nor his policies were generally accepted. Though voiced in a more aggressive language these policies were, initially, a continuation of the earlier attempts at winning power by advocating a 'national programme'. The government had adopted this programme, in principle, but the result the F.D.R. had been expecting, an all-party cabinet to implement it, had not materialized. On 9 September the P.K.I. made a similar move by inviting the P.N.I. and Masjumi to call a joint conference for the purpose of building up national unity. Now that the left-wing opposition had officially committed itself to communism, the proposal was hardly more acceptable, certainly not at a time when everywhere in the world anti-communists considered a coalition with communist parties a stepping-stone towards a communist take-over. Both parties therefore declined the invitation. The P.K.I. now started to view the internal struggle for power in a different light: all relations with the government and the parties in office had to be cut. At the same time the party intensified its efforts to secure mass support for its demand that the Hatta government be replaced by a parliamentary cabinet, and for this purpose the top leaders went on a grand tour through Central Java in the early weeks of September.

The more vehement nature of the now communist-orientated left-wing opposition highly disturbed the authorities and the anti-communists in general, and fearful of a communist *coup d'état* they stepped up their policy of reducing the P.K.I.'s influence. They applied heavy pressure on the communist-controlled army division in Surakarta to comply with the demobilization order, and presented similar orders to the marines, equally strongly in favour of the P.K.I., as well as to the Pesindo. On 12 and 13 September police troops and loyal army units began clearing-up operations against communist centres in Blitar and Ngandjuk. Of a less official nature were the kidnappings and murders, at Surakarta, of several pro-P.K.I. officers by the *Barisan Benteng*, a Tan Malaka-orientated para-military group. In retaliation against such actions Pesindo detachments abducted and assassinated the commander of this organization. These incidents led to more serious clashes between the various partisans of the two camps,

developing into a full-scale battle in and around Surakarta on 16 and 17 September, which was ultimately won by the anti-communist forces. With Surakarta, its major stronghold, lost, there was no reason why the P.K.I. should launch a rebellion, and the top leaders of the party certainly did not consider embarking upon one. Yet the decision was taken for them by some subordinates, local army and Pesindo commanders who raised the banner of revolt in Madiun, on 18 September, and quickly captured the town. The next day Musso, Sjarifuddin, Setiadjit and Wikana unsuspectingly arrived at Madiun, and when frantic efforts to contact Sukarno and the government in Djokjakarta in order to straighten things out had not been successful, they sided with the rebels.

Thus, partly by its adversaries and partly by its own adherents, the P.K.I. had been manoeuvred into a disastrous predicament. Although the insurrection spread rapidly over a wide area, the communists could not hope to win in the long run. Their initial successes, which brought towns like Kudus, Pati, Blora, Tjepu, Magetan, Wonogiri, Ponorogo and Patjitan into their hands, were the products of *pronunciamento's* by local military commanders rather than of any popular uprising. This proved to be the most serious set-back; the potential support of wavering army units and of the downtrodden sections of the population which they might have obtained, dwindled from the moment Sukarno, decried as a pro-Japanese quisling and a pro-American traitor, unequivocally declared himself against the *coup*. Inadequately prepared, militarily as well as psychologically, and inefficiently carried out, the 'Commune of Madiun' could not result in anything but a dismal failure. The government immediately set out to crush the revolt, and with all the more vigour since she feared that the Dutch might intervene, professedly to help her defy the communist threat. In less than two weeks its troops recaptured most of the rebel-held towns, and Madiun itself on 30 September. The hard-pressed communist forces, who had damaged their cause by brutally murdering numerous adherents of Masjumi and occasionally using civilians to shield their advance, retreated into some mountainous areas, where they hoped to carry on a guerrilla war until an attack by the Dutch, which in their opinion was imminent, would convince the Indonesian public that the P.K.I. rather than the Hatta cabinet had been championing the proper anti-imperialist course. But Musso was killed on 1 November, while Sjarifuddin and several other top leaders of the P.K.I. were captured early in December. A savage retribution followed; a few thousands fell victim to mass executions or wholesale massacres carried out, both officially and unofficially, by the victors. Some 35,000 people were arrested, but they were released in mid-December when the Dutch invaded the republic for a second time. Sjarifuddin was not among them: he and his nearest associates were shot on 19 December.

2 *The Triumph of Indonesian Nationalism*

THE SECOND DUTCH MILITARY ACTION

More than any other single event in post-Second World War Indonesia the suppression of the Madiun rebellion by the republican government jeopardized the Dutch chances of restoring their colonial rule. However unstable the internal political situation might remain, it was evident that, for some time to come at least, the Indonesian revolution would not go in a communist direction. This realization greatly affected the attitude of the United States. In the course of 1948 the government in Washington had occasionally shown some irritation about the Dutch attempts to force the republic into surrendering its sovereign powers. The Americans were also inclined to be more friendly to Hatta's cabinet than to the previous one headed by Sjarifuddin. They feared that the republican government might be unable to maintain itself in the face of the mounting influence of the P.K.I., if it were be compelled to make further concessions to the Dutch, or if the republic were exposed much longer to the Dutch economic blockade. Yet, in spite of the Dutch complaints about American partiality, the United States was not, in general, unfavourably disposed towards the Netherlands. At the time of the Critchley-DuBois proposal, in June, the Americans sympathized with the Dutch opposition to it, and their representatives in the United Nations were instrumental in causing the failure of a Chinese resolution which demanded that the Security Council study the plan. But the suppression of the communist revolt greatly enhanced the republic's prestige in American eyes; in fact, it made it unnecessary for Washington to side with the colonial power against Asian nationalism as it did a year later in Vietnam.

Meanwhile the Dutch authorities had been preparing their plans for Indonesia's future. As to the projected interim period two proposals were submitted, one by the provisional federal government in Batavia, i.e. the Netherlands Indies administration, and the other by the federal consultative council, B.F.O., made up of representatives of the constituent states. On the whole the two concepts corresponded entirely, but there was a wide difference of opinion as to the composition and the responsibilities of the federal interim-government. For the first time a serious conflict arose between the federalist Indonesians and Van Mook. In 1947 and the first half of 1948 Van Mook had been sufficiently powerful to compel obedience in the federalist sphere, and because of this his Malino policy had been considered a success. A change occurred, however, in the second half of 1948 when the phase of searching for Indonesian politicians willing to co-operate within the framework of the Dutch plans was over, and the phase of implementing these plans started. This change was not the outcome of any activities on the part of the pro-republican elements in the constituent states, because these were effectively kept down by the parallel interests of the Netherlands Indies authorities and the political leaders loyal to them. On the contrary, it was these loyalists who embarked upon a different course.

The Indonesian politicians in the Malino territories collaborated with the Dutch, but they were not Dutch puppets. There were opportunists among them, of course, but also many who were in favour of an independent Indonesia. The only difference of opinion between the latter and the Indonesian government was related to the structure of the future state and to the manner in which independence should be won. The federalists were prepared to accept Dutch guidance in the development towards a new constitutional set-up, partly because they had no choice since their territories were occupied by the Dutch, and also because they preferred a gradual transformation, without great shocks and disturbances. They thought that this could be achieved only under Dutch direction or, at least, in close co-operation with the Netherlands. They also accepted the federalist idea, in the first place because they considered it the most suitable solution to Indonesia's problems, but also because they realized that in their own states their prominent position would be better guaranteed by a federal structure than by a Java-centred unitarian governmental system. The federalists were, in fact, the exponents of an aristocratic counter-revolutionary movement against the political leadership of the republic, but although they sought to make use of the colonial power for their own interests, in much the same way as the Dutch accepted their services for the purpose of camouflaging the continuation of their regime, they were, in principle, not anti-nationalist.

At a conference held at Bandung which lasted from May to August 1948, the political leaders of the Malino states had the opportunity, for the first time, to discuss among themselves the problems related to Indo-

nesia's future. It was at this juncture that the federalist element began a new life. Van Mook's enlightened despotism was increasingly resented, and it was also realized that the Malino politicians had been allowed to participate in politics to serve the Dutch interests rather than for the sake of federalism as such. The fear, finally, that the net result might show that they had supported the wrong side induced many among them, particularly in East Indonesia, Pasundan, Madura, Bandjar and South-East and East Borneo, to change their course. They advocated a brief interim-period, contrary to the opinion of Van Mook who preferred a long period of transition in order to ensure a strong Dutch influence after independence.

In this conflict the Dutch government sided with the B.F.O. It did not disagree with Van Mook's views, but for carrying out its plans it had to rely on the federalists in the first place. Secondly, a two-thirds majority was required to have the government's policies adopted by parliament, and since prominent conservative political groups in the Netherlands were still very much opposed to Van Mook who, in their opinion, had prevented a 'hard line' against the republic in 1945 and 1946, Van Mook had to be manoeuvred out of office. Practically behind the backs of the authorities in Batavia, the Dutch government and the B.F.O. carried on negotiations in The Hague in August and again in October 1948, where they reached a general agreement. On this occasion the government pledged to make the interim period operative by 1 January 1949, even if no understanding with the republic had been reached. On 29 October parliament adopted an act empowering the government to establish a federal interim administration by royal decree. All this convinced Van Mook that he had had his day: he resigned, and on 15 November Louis Beel succeeded him as 'high representative of the Crown'.

The plans to set up the projected United States of Indonesia on a fixed date were aimed primarily at putting heavy pressure on the government in Djokjakarta. The republic would have to conform with the schemes worked out by the Netherlands and the political leaders of the constituent states. and any refusal on its part to do so would justify the Dutch intention of carrying on with their own policies. The minister of Overseas Territories, Emmanuel Sassen, was convinced that the Dutch solution had to be imposed at any cost. After the failure of the Critchley-DuBois mediation proposal the official negotiations had broken down, informal talks between Dutch and republican representatives were carried on, but the Dutch only participated in them to show the outside world, the United States in particular, that it was impossible to come to an agreement with the republican government. What the Dutch really intended to achieve was the total liquidation of the republic, as was proved by the note submitted on 14 October to Merle Cochran, the new American member of the Committee of Good Offices. In it they failed to mention the republic, but instead referred to eleven constituent states in relation to the problem of Java's and Sumatra's representation in the future constitutional set-up. This note

was a reply to the mediation proposal made by Cochran as far back as 10 September, which contained quite a few concessions to the Dutch point of view. The Dutch were hardly more accommodating, however, stating that they would resume negotiations only if the republic put an end to the violations of the cease-fire agreement.

Early in November 1948 the Dutch foreign minister, Dirk Stikker, had a talk with Hatta, and although the latter refused to abandon any of the republic's claims, and at the same time Beel was strongly urging the use of armed force, it was suggested that informal discussions be carried on. Later the same month Stikker again travelled to Indonesia, now as member of a Dutch cabinet mission which included Sassen. This time Hatta was willing to make concessions; he yielded to the demand that the republic place its army and its diplomatic services under control of the federal authorities, and he was also prepared to accept the Dutch views on the issue of Indonesia's sovereignty during the transitional period. But he emphatically denied the Netherlands high representative any power to use Dutch troops for preserving law and order; such troops were to be employed only in support of the federal army at the request of the federal government. Initially it was Sassen's intention to persuade the republic to promise not to change the federal structure into a centralized system after independence, but Stikker convinced him to change his mind. After this Sassen lost whatever slight interest in the republic's participation in the interim-government he may have entertained, and in the end he was not inclined to settle for anything less than the complete surrender of the republic.

On 11 December the Netherlands government informed the Committee of Good Offices that there was no prospect whatsoever of reaching an agreement. Two days later the cabinet decided to use armed force, but at the last moment a personal letter of Hatta threatened to thwart the war-like policies of Beel and Sassen. At the instance of the social democrat Prime Minister Willem Drees it was suggested that the republican government be invited to make a binding explanatory statement within seventy-two hours. The relevant note was sabotaged by the adherents of the war party in such a way that it was not received in Djokjakarta before fifty-four hours had passed, so that the reply could not possibly reach The Hague in time. On 18 December the Renville Agreements were revoked and a royal decree on the setting up of an interim administration was proclaimed. To this decree, prepared two months in advance, a supplementary clause was added which liquidated the republic.

The next day, 19 December 1948, Dutch airborne troops occupied Djokjakarta in a swift action: Sukarno, Hatta and most other high-ranking republican politicians were captured. Within two weeks all remaining towns in Java, such as Surakarta, Madiun and Kediri, and most of the major towns in Sumatra, such as Fort de Kock, Sibolga, Djambi, Teluk Betung, Pakanbaru and Benkulen, fell into Dutch hands: Atjeh was the only region that was not invaded.

However successful this second 'police action' appeared to be, militarily, it did not produce the desired elimination of the republic. The Dutch onslaught caused great displeasure, not only in the Asian world, but also among the non-Asian member states of the United Nations, who considered it a violation of an armistice brought about under the auspices of the Security Council. In a special session, called by Australia and the United States, the council almost unanimously disapproved of the military action. It was on this occasion that American policy displayed a slight change: the United States was afraid that the resumption of the war would result in greater political instability in the region, while the government in Washington had also to adapt itself to the general Asian feelings of indignation. But although verbally professing her anti-colonialism in a more vigorous way, the United States did not, in practice, deviate from her essentially neutral posture, because she also had to take account of the West European powers who sympathized with the Netherlands and would have thwarted any sweeping action by the Security Council; hence a tough line against the Dutch was not adopted. A Soviet resolution ordering the Dutch to stop their advance within twenty-four hours was rejected, and so was one presented by the Ukraine and providing for an immediate withdrawal of Dutch troops. An American-supported recommendation to withdraw the troops was not successful either, because six members abstained, resenting the fact that the appeal was made to both parties rather than to the aggressor only. On 24 December a resolution was adopted which called upon the Indonesians and the Dutch to cease hostilities, and upon the Dutch in particular to release the captured republican leaders. Four days later this request was repeated, but the Dutch did not call off their military advance before 5 January 1949.

THE END OF DUTCH RULE

The official termination of the military action did not put an end to the Dutch operations, now directed against the developing guerrilla movement, and as a result the Security Council was forced to take up the issue again. The Asian members of the United Nations were insisting, moreover, that sanctions be applied, and they called upon the United States to suspend all financial assistance given to the Netherlands under the Marshall Plan. Although the American government, apart from withholding aid to Indonesia, i.e. the Netherlands Indies, did not comply with this request, it was compelled to take into consideration the increasingly vehement anti-Dutch sentiments voiced by the special Asian Conference which was held in New Delhi from 20 to 23 January. The resolution adopted by the Security Council on 28 January went further than any of the previous decisions. An appeal was made to the Dutch and the Indonesians to stop their military operations and their guerrilla activities respectively, and

demands were made that the Dutch release the republican prisoners and allow them to return to Djokjakarta and reassume their functions. It was also recommended that negotiations be begun as soon as possible in order to arrive, in various phases, at the establishment of an independent and sovereign 'United States of Indonesia'. The Committee of Good Offices, renamed the United Nations Commission for Indonesia (U.N.C.I.), was empowered to make recommendations to the two parties to the dispute as well as to the Council, and to assist the former in the formation of a federal interim-government and in preparing the elections.

However moderate and lacking any provision guaranteeing its proper enforcement, this resolution put an end to the Dutch attempts to eliminate the republic. Now that the Security Council had given itself the power, through the U.N.C.I., to make its own contribution to the setting up of a federal interim-government, the Netherlands was, in effect, deprived of its sole responsibility to decide on Indonesia's future. Yet the actions of the Security Council were not the only, and certainly not the decisive factor accounting for the failure of Dutch policy. Of far greater importance were the developments in Indonesia itself. The Dutch occupied most of the towns, but in the countryside Indonesian resistance continued, and facing an intensifying guerrilla opposition it became more difficult for the Dutch to protect their lines of communication and their vital economic enterprises. The war also extended into the areas which the republic had been forced to give up under the Renville Agreements, when republican armed units re-entered West and East Java and South Sumatra. In various districts the Dutch had to carry on a bitter fight to maintain their position, while the expenditures for their 140,000-strong military force put a heavy strain on the Netherlands treasury.

Politically the action was a failure also. In the occupied territories there were Indonesians who co-operated with the Dutch, but the example given by the Sultan of Djokjakarta who consistently refused to have any dealings whatsoever with the invaders, reduced collaboration to a minimum. From a Dutch point of view the attitude of several federalist leaders was far more disappointing. The latter realized that the nationalist struggle of the republic accounted, indirectly, for the limited degree of autonomy which their territories enjoyed, and the major goal of their policy had been to maintain themselves beside the republic in the 'United States of Indonesia'; it was never their intention to liquidate the republic or ignore it in the process of constitutional formation. In East Indonesia the cabinet of Anak Agung gde Agung, one of the most prominent federalist politicians, resigned, and in Pasundan the same happened, but here the cabinet also strongly denounced the Dutch military action. It is true that Anak Agung formed a new cabinet; it is also true that by exerting undue pressure the Netherlands Indies authorities were able to prevent a pro-republican government from being set up in Pasundan. It had become clear, however, that a large group of the political leaders in the Malino

states strongly disapproved of the Dutch attempts at destroying the republic, and that they adopted an increasingly reticent attitude.

Facing an imminent collapse of its policy the Netherlands was forced to revise it. Sassen proposed to blackmail the United States into co-operating with her, suggesting that the Dutch would completely relinquish their responsibility and leave behind a chaotic Indonesia, ripe for take-over by the communists. The other ministers shrank from this, and on 11 February Sassen resigned, after which the cabinet adopted a plan drawn up by Beel, which provided for the establishment, as soon as possible, of a federal interim-government to which, at an early date, sovereign rights would be transferred. On 26 February invitations were sent to the republican politicians, the B.F.O. and the U.N.C.I., to attend a Round Table Conference to be held in The Hague as early as March. By shortening the projected interim period this plan was intended primarily to restrict any intervention by the U.N.C.I. and keep the entire constitutional procedure in Dutch hands, but this manoeuvre failed when the republican leaders declined the offer as long as the government in Djokjakarta had not been restored. The B.F.O. also refused to participate, although initially it accepted the Dutch proposal: the federalists were very much impressed by the military strength of the republic when, on 1 March, a large-scale attack was launched against Djokjakarta which the Dutch were able to repel only in the nick of time and with the greatest difficulty. They now insisted that the Security Council's resolution on the release of the republican leaders be properly carried out.

The Security Council itself did not seem to be unduly upset by the non-observance of its resolutions, however. Some dissatisfaction with Dutch behaviour was voiced, but the vague and ambiguous Canadian ruling of 23 March did not even repeat the demand that the republican administration be restored. The U.N.C.I. was requested to assist the two parties to the dispute in their attempts to come to an agreement over the conditions for convening the — Dutch-proposed! — conference in The Hague. This way the Netherlands was offered a way out of the impasse into which she had manoeuvred herself. The informal talks between Dutch and republican delegations, which started on 14 April, and the tactics of the U.N.C.I. in this connexion, also enabled the Netherlands to resign itself to the inevitable without too great a loss of face. When the leader of the Indonesian delegation, Mohammed Roem, refused to commit the republic to any policy requested by the Dutch before the Netherlands had made a binding statement on the restoration of the republican government, the U.N.C.I. chairman Cochran put strong pressure on him to do just that, and he was forced to yield. Only after the republic pledged itself to cease guerrilla warfare, to co-operate with the Netherlands in the maintenance of law and order, and to participate in the Round Table Conference in The Hague, did the leader of the Dutch delegation promise that the republican government be permitted to reassume its functions in Djokjakarta, and that no

new constituent states be established on territory which, prior to 19 December 1948, belonged to the republic. Except for Djokjakarta, no mention was made of the withdrawal of the Dutch-supervised administrations in the areas overrun in the second military action. Neither was there any reference to the plebiscites, provided for in the Renville Agreements, in the territories captured by the Dutch in 1947 and allotted to federalist regimes. Moreover, in the provisional representative body for the United States of Indonesia two-thirds of the seats would go to these regimes. As against such Dutch undertakings, the republic had to promise that it would issue an order to its armed adherents to stop all guerrilla activities, a concession which deprived it of its major weapon.

The so-called Roem-Van Royen statements of 7 May 1949 were, from a republican point of view, the meagre result of the Security Council's interference with Indonesia. Yet this agreement marked the beginning of the final phase of Indonesia's struggle for independence. The mounting pressure of republican guerrilla forces, the international repercussions of the second 'police action' and the attitude of the federalist politicians made the Dutch realize that the republic was not to be left out of the future developments. Consequently, the Netherlands government changed her policy from one of attempting to enforce its own political decision to one of creating an atmosphere which might still lead to a bright future for the Dutch and their business interests in an independent Indonesia. When Beel, an opponent of the Roem-Van Royen statements, resigned his post, the new course could be carried into effect more easily. Among republican leaders, too, the opinion was rapidly gaining ground that a solution had to be achieved soon lest the continuing conflict bring about greater disruption and strengthen the extremist forces. On 22 June an agreement was hammered out on those points which still needed primary attention, and after the withdrawal of Dutch troops from Djokjakarta, on 30 June, Sukarno and the republican government returned to their capital on 6 July. On 1 August an armistice was signed.

The greatest victory of the republic, however, was the Dutch decision to accelerate the procedure and abandon the idea of integrating the republic into the federal structure before the formal transfer of sovereignty. This meant that the Dutch were leaving behind their allies and accomplices, the constituent states, practically without any protection in the face of a republic whose power had not been weakened in any substantial way during any interim period under Dutch control. As soon as this had become clear the republican leaders did everything possible not to cause a postponement of the transfer of sovereignty. During the talks with the federalists, in which the details of the constitutional set-up were discussed, the republic avoided raising any problem at all, since a failure to reach an agreement might delay independence, or rather perpetuate the colonial situation and adversely affect the republic's real power in the United States of Indonesia. On their part the federalists attempted to improve their

position by erecting a wall of constitutional safeguards. After the Roem-Van Royen agreement it was the strategy of the B.F.O. to support the nationalist demands of the republic *vis-à-vis* the Netherlands, provided the republic promised to respect the federal structure of the future independent state. The republic gave the assurances the federalists asked for, both at the inter-Indonesian conference held from 20 July to 2 August and in the discussions on the provisional constitution on which its delegation and the one of the B.F.O. came to an agreement on 29 October. In the United States of Indonesia, the republic was to be a non-sovereign state, with the same rank as the other states; it was to be represented by one-third of the House of Representatives. In addition to this body, moreover, a Senate would be set up as a special council representing the constituent states and having co-legislative powers in any matter concerning the relations between the federal government and the administration of the constituent states.

During the negotiations with the Netherlands, at the Round Table Conference in The Hague, it was also the republic's policy to come to an agreement as quickly as possible. The conference opened on 23 August and soon various disputes arose. The Netherlands refused to include West New Guinea in the transfer of sovereignty. Another conflict was related to the debts which Indonesia was expected to assume, since the Indonesians were patently unwilling to bear the burden of the costs incurred by the Netherlands in its military actions. For both problems compromise solutions were worked out. As to the financial obligations the Dutch were prepared to more than halve the amount they claimed Indonesia should take over from the Netherlands Indies government. West New Guinea would not be transferred, but within a year the status of the territory was to be discussed again; on this issue the federalists adopted a far more implacable position than the republicans, for the latter were in a greater hurry to have the bulk of Indonesia evacuated by the colonial regime. On 2 November the Round Table Agreements on the transfer of sovereignty and the problems related to Indonesia's independence were signed. A special section of this complex of undertakings created a Netherlands-Indonesian Union, a very loose association of two sovereign nations, providing for co-operation in various matters — a far cry from the constitutional link the Dutch originally had in mind.

After the agreements had been approved of by the Indonesian parliament on 13 December, the Netherlands States General did the same on the 21st, without enthusiasm but realizing that non-acceptance would only lead to disaster. On 27 December 1949, finally, and in the presence of Hatta and Sultan Hamid of Pontianak as Indonesian representatives, the instruments of the transfer of sovereignty were signed in Amsterdam by Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, by which act Indonesia obtained its independence. The next day Sukarno, as president of the United States of Indonesia, made his triumphal entry in Djakarta, as Batavia had been renamed.

3 The French Debacle

DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA

At the moment the Indonesian war of independence resulted in the termination of Dutch colonial rule, the Vietnamese war of independence reached its first climax. The sham concessions of the Elysée Agreement, intended to turn the communist-led struggle of Vietnamese nationalism against French colonialism into a communist campaign against a professedly national Vietnamese government supported by France, did not make any impression, and as the setting up of the counter-government failed to be favourably received by the Vietnamese nation, the fight for independence continued. By refusing to comply with Vietnam's nationalist demands France did not make it any easier for Bao Dai to win the confidence of even the anti-Viet Minh orientated nationalists. Whatever expectations Bao Dai and his Prime Minister Nguyen Phan Long may have entertained with regard to the United States, it soon appeared that Washington was not prepared to exert any pressure on France, and the request that American economic and financial aid be given directly to their administration rather than to the French authorities met with such strong French resistance that the United States dropped the idea. When the first American ships carrying military equipment arrived in Saigon on 19 March 1950 a huge popular demonstration took place, and as the Vietnamese police kept aloof, French troops had to restore law and order. The French considered this a sure sign of the administration's incompetence and they forced Bao Dai to dismiss his prime minister; in May a new cabinet was formed under Tran Van Huu. It was this cabinet which represented Vietnam at the Conference of Pau where the details of the constitutional set-up had to be worked out.

Since this conference was related to the whole of Indochina the other governments also participated in it. At about the same time as Vietnam,

Cambodia and Laos had been made 'associated states', a reform due partly to the internal political developments in the two countries, and partly to the desire of France to create opportunities of obtaining American support for her policies. This French step amounted to some slight concessions made to indigenous nationalism in order to bolster up the weak governments *vis-à-vis* the opposition, and as the former relied heavily on France this manoeuvre was intended to guarantee the continuation of colonial rule.

The introduction, in May 1947, of a parliamentary type of government in Cambodia as a device to induce the nationalists to give up their underground activities did not produce the results King Norodom Sihanouk expected. It is true that the political struggle shifted its emphasis from the jungle to parliament — a development which was also caused by the *coup d'état* of Phibun Songkhram in Thailand, in November 1947, and the declining interest of the government in Bangkok in the Khmer Issarak guerrilla movement. But the intensity of the opposition did not diminish, and in the elections of December 1947 the Democrat Party won two-thirds of the seats in the National Assembly. The parliamentary regime displayed many shortcomings, but these were causing the king less anxiety than the prospect that the Democrats might be successful in obtaining the country's independence. To reinforce his position and that of the monarchy Sihanouk's policy aimed at avoiding any such eventuality, both by strongly urging the French to replace the unpopular *modus vivendi* of January 1946 by another, more acceptable, treaty and by engineering the downfall of the Democratic Party cabinet.

The opportunity arose in February 1949 when, availing himself of a quarrel in the Democrat Party, Sihanouk appointed a dissident Democrat, Yem Sambaur, as prime minister, and succeeded, though with quite some difficulty, in having him accepted by parliament. In the next few months, however, the tension between the Democrat-controlled legislative body and Sambaur's cabinet increased, reaching a climax with the crisis of September when the National Assembly adopted a motion censuring the government. Sihanouk dissolved parliament, postponed the elections which, constitutionally, should have been held two months later, and confirmed Sambaur in his position.

Meanwhile the Vietnamese independence movement had become interested in Cambodia, and in the course of 1949 units of the Vietnamese army established a few bases on Khmer territory. But the activities of the Khmer Issarak guerrilla fighters were more dangerous to the position of the King and the Sambaur regime. The Vietnamese infiltrations were not likely to be permanently successful in a country in which strong anti-Vietnamese sentiments prevailed, and being aware of this mood it was not the intention of the Vietnamese forces to dominate Cambodia; they only wanted to protect their lines of communication. The Khmer Issarak, on the other hand, were indigenous nationalists and their actions were clearly directed

at controlling Cambodia, or at least liberating it from French colonialism. They had contacts with the Democratic Party, which pursued the same object, and as, by his steps against the parliamentary opposition, Sihanouk appeared to be co-operating with the colonial power against the nationalists, their guerrilla forces posed a substantial threat to his authority.

Facing the criticism of the nationalists and wishing to allay the growing suspicion that he acquiesced in colonial domination, Sihanouk intensified his pressure on the French. His earlier requests that Cambodia's status be modified France had not bothered to comply with, but in 1949 the situation was different. It was evident that Sihanouk was losing ground and that, in order to maintain himself, he would have to score a success in the nationalist field and thus be able to take the wind out of the opposition's sails. Just as in Vietnam where, for the purpose of obtaining Bao Dai's collaboration, they had been willing to make some apparent concessions to the counter-regime, the French adopted a more conciliatory attitude *vis-à-vis* Cambodia. On the analogy of the Elysée Agreement a new treaty was signed on 8 November 1949. Cambodia was recognized as an 'independent, associated state within the French Union', but its independence was very limited indeed. France had to approve of diplomatic relations with foreign countries; she retained full power over military affairs; in economic and financial matters Cambodia continued to be strongly tied to France as well as to the other associated states; and there were special privileges for French companies and citizens.

Sihanouk and Sambaur presented the treaty as the best that could have been obtained in the circumstances. They were right, but the opposition was not silenced. In view of the widespread discontent the King did not dare convene the National Assembly which had to ratify the treaty. He feared that parliament would reject the agreement and for this reason he considered converting it into a purely advisory body, but since such a constitutional revision was not to be effected without the concurrence of the National Assembly, this road was blocked, too. But the treaty with France had to be ratified, and the way out of the impasse was found by incorporating its clauses into a 'protocol of application' on which the government started fresh negotiations with the French.

During these talks the French attempted to use Sihanouk's weak position *vis-à-vis* the nationalists to tie him down more firmly to their cause Convinced that the King was aware of the threat which the opposition posed to the monarchy, and that he would have no alternative but to side with France and accept her conditions, they revoked some of the concessions made in November 1949. At the same time they refused to supply Cambodia with the military equipment Yem Sambaur had been asking for. They did so partly out of the fear that these arms might find their way into the hands of the Khmer Issarak, but partly also in an effort to perpetuate the government's impotence and make sure of its docility. With such a

policy France did not fail to antagonize Sihanouk and Sambaur, but while the latter was in a position openly to accuse the French of directly playing into the hands of the Khmer Issarak, the King needed French protection against the nationalists and had to fall into line. In May 1950, when Sambaur refused to sign a provisional agreement which maintained French supremacy, the colonial authorities forced Sihanouk to dismiss his prime minister.

Laos, too, underwent a constitutional change, but here the situation was different. Nationalist sentiments were as strong among the elite as in Cambodia, but instead of being voiced by a parliamentary opposition they were represented either by the underground movement or by the Lao Issara government-in-exile in Bangkok. The prominent members of the royal dynasty, moreover, the authority of which was traditionally far weaker than that of the Cambodian monarchy, were fervently pro-French so that it was not necessary for France to play them against the nationalists as she was doing in Cambodia.

The Franco-Laotian treaty of 19 July 1949 which replaced the *modus vivendi* of August 1946 caused a rift in nationalist circles and it eventually led to the dissolution of the Lao Issara government. In this government there was a group, with Prince Souvanna Phouma as its major exponent, which considered the treaty, though not satisfactory on all points, to be a significant step towards an independent Laos. In spite of the opposition of Prince Phetsarath and the more radical-orientated nationalists like Prince Souphanouvong, who advocated non-cooperation with the French until complete independence had been achieved, this faction was victorious, and on 24 October the Lao Issara government was dissolved. Souvanna Phouma and his adherents returned to Laos in a special French plane where they were rapidly admitted into the government. This reconciliation of a part of the opposition with the French and the disappearance of the counter-government-in-exile constituted a tremendous political triumph for France.

But resistance continued, since not all followers of the Lao Issara government were so easily pacified with the French bogus concessions or. after three years of exile, so eager to reassume their functions in the administration in Vientiane, as the repatriating politicians were. Prince Phetsarath stayed behind in Bangkok, while Souphanouvong refused to surrender the Lao Issara armed forces. He carried on the fight with the assistance of the Viet Minh. Although harassing the French, this guerrilla movement did not initially constitute a great danger. Inspired, moreover, by the Vietnamese struggle for independence, Souphanouvong's resistance organization was more purposeful and efficient than the Khmer Issarak, but it was also more easily regarded as just the communist affair the French wanted it to be considered. Such a representation suited France extremely well, both in its efforts to frighten the less radical nationalists and in its policy of obtaining the support of the United States.

This support the Americans readily extended, and on 7 February 1950 they officially recognized the government of Laos, together with the one in Cambodia and Bao Dai's regime. Financial and economic aid were also given, as in the case of Vietnam not directly to the indigenous authorities but to the French administration.

THE PAU CONFERENCE AND THE BATTLE OF CAO BANG

The new treaties of 1949 did not change in any fundamental way the situation in which France was predominant in Indochina. This became clear during the Conference of Pau which began on 27 July 1950 for the purpose of discussing the common interests of France and the three associated states. The agreements had put an end, officially, to the colonial status of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, and also to the Indochinese Federation; at the conference it was stated by Jean Letourneau, the newly-appointed minister for the associated states, that it was not the intention of France to revive the federation. Although the new constitutional situation was defined, on paper, in terms of 'association' and '*quadri-partisme*', France continued to retain full control of the relations between the Indochinese states as well as matters concerning all three of them. That France was able to do so was the result of her military presence in the French-occupied areas, but also of the fact that she could avail herself of the existing contrasts between Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Foreign trade of Laos and Cambodia was conducted through Saigon, a situation which was bound to stir up feelings of distrust *vis-à-vis* Vietnam in both countries; Cambodia, for example, urged that shipping on the Mekhong river and a section of the port of Saigon be internationalized. By playing off the three states against each other France was able to keep much power in her own hands. This French attitude was not, of course, devoid of a substantial portion of self-interest. Though not officially represented at Pau, French business found a means of clamouring for formal guarantees for the protection of its commercial interests, and the introduction of a quota-system for French imports so as to be in a better position to obstruct any future Vietnamese legislation against French competition.

The conference was held in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion. The Indochinese politicians were perfectly aware that it was France's aim to continue to control the situation, and they were dissatisfied with the many infringements of their freedom. They also realized that French policy was not likely to put an end to the struggle for liberation conducted by the Vietnamese government, the Khmer Issarak, and the guerrilla movement of Souphanouvong, which was re-organized on 13 August 1950 into the so-called *Pathet Lao*. The French, on their part, were irritated by what they considered to be the arrogance on the part of the Indochinese regimes

in interfering with French economic interests and privileges. They had the means to assert their will, however, and on 29 November a few conventions were concluded at Pau, and were signed in Saigon on 24 December.

It was decided in principle that the authorities of the three associated states would administer such services for which the federal Indochinese administration, i.e. France, had been responsible so far: immigration, foreign trade, customs, post and telegraph, monetary affairs and development plans. Any necessary co-ordination was to be achieved by periodical conferences. The port of Saigon would be placed under Vietnamese sovereignty, but Laos and Cambodia were to be given the use of certain facilities, while the port would be administered by a board consisting of representatives of the associated states and France. As to the Mekhong an advisory committee was to be established. The associated states were to enjoy fiscal autonomy, but they had to consult each other as well as France on this matter. In reality nothing changed, however; when it came to putting into practice what had been decided upon at Pau the French authorities proved unwilling to do so. France continued to supervise shipping on the Mekhong and to control Vietnam's foreign trade. Financial autonomy came to nothing and in economic affairs the voice of France tipped the balance. The Indochinese states remained what they had been since 1946 — satellites of France — though under a different name, and with their regimes officially recognized by France's Western allies.

In order to weaken the opposition of the Indochinese politicians at Pau, the French had made use of the terror which, in October 1950, the Vietnamese military victory at Cao Bang struck into the hearts of the Vietnamese collaborators and the ruling groups in Cambodia and Laos. Already in February 1950 General Vo Nguyen Giap announced the end of guerrilla activities and the beginning of open regular warfare. In the territories under control of the Vietnamese government all available manpower was mobilized for launching full-scale offensive actions, and the first such attack took place in May when the garrison of Dong Khe was overrun. The French recaptured the town but refrained from taking any countermeasures. With their traditional contempt of the Vietnamese the military authorities failed to realize both that the Vietnamese army was very well capable of fighting a war in the classic way and that the France forces had lost the initiative. In September the Vietnamese forces attacked again. Dong Khe was conquered a second time, followed, on 3 October, by Cao Bang. While on the retreat from the latter town the French troops were assaulted and, together with another column which was rushed in to help, they were routed on 6–7 October in a pitched battle which cost the French 3,000 men. This victory opened up the entire Tonkinese border region to the Vietnamese forces: a series of fortresses was captured, and evacuating Long San on 18 October the French withdrew so rapidly that the greater part of their military equipment fell into Vietnamese hands.

On 2 November the Vietnamese army conquered the border town of Lao Kay.

The battle of Cao Bang and the elimination of French military power in the border area caused a panic in the French community in Hanoi. But this defeat came at a very auspicious moment, providing the French with the argument they needed so badly for convincing the United States that France had to remain primarily responsible for Indochina. The Americans were fully aware that the nations of Indochina did not wish a continuation of French rule, that aiding France amounted to supporting her in a brutal war of colonial oppression and that, as was proved by the simultaneous deposition of two prime ministers, Nguyen Phan Long and Yem Sambaur, the French were not just fighting communism but any trace, however timid, of nationalism. Officially, however, the United States was not particularly distressed by this. After the Vietnamese victory in Tonkin, which happened to coincide with the Chinese military intervention in Korea and the defeat of American troops advancing upon the Yalu river, the anti-communist witch-hunt led by Senator Joseph McCarthy effectively silenced all protests against a policy of supporting France. The Vietnamese war, the war in Korea and the cold war in Europe were reduced to the same denominator: the struggle of the 'free world' against aggressive communism. When in December 1950 a defensive pact was signed between the United States on the one side and France and the associated states on the other, Washington agreed to the French condition that all aid be given to the French and that there would be no direct contacts between the American military advisers and representatives of the Indochinese regimes. There was no question of American pressure to grant a more genuine independence to the associated states. French policy might have been a dismal failure in its relations with the Vietnamese nation, but it had been instrumental in enabling France to internationalize her colonial war in such a skilful way that she did not have to be afraid of any adverse consequences as the Dutch had encountered. For Vietnam, however, this identification of French colonial interests with American strategic and political concepts ushered in a new period — the Franco-American phase — of her war of independence.

THE DE LATTRE PERIOD

After Cao Bang the French changed their strategy. Contempt of the Vietnamese soldier was no longer justifiable and the war itself could no longer be considered as a simple pacification campaign of a rather long duration. To adapt her efforts to this realization France appointed, on 6 December 1950, General Jean de Lattre de Tassigny as commander-in-chief of the expeditionary force and high commissioner for Indochina. That the supreme military and civil powers were combined in the hands of a soldier clearly demonstrated that, whatever the innovations produced by

the shock of Cao Bang, a change of French policy or a revaluation of the background of the fight were not among them. For France the war remained primarily a military affair.

De Lattre took on his job energetically. He had a ring of some 1,200 military posts and fortresses built around the Red River delta, the threatened centre of French power in Tonkin, in order to check Vietnamese armed infiltrations into the area and prevent rice from being transported to the territories under Vietnamese control. The French efforts concentrated upon defence, and this demonstrated, once again, the changed military situation; having started an offensive war France was now compelled to fight a defensive one. Only limited operations were carried out, but these did not affect the course of the war as a whole: French mobile troops had to follow the roads and they were easily ambushed. The protection of the delta region was quite difficult, moreover, because small Vietnamese guerrilla units were active behind the French lines. The French also had to distribute their forces all over the area since they never knew where the Vietnamese would be attacking next. By carrying out a reorganization of his army, increasing its efficiency and improving its morale, De Lattre succeeded in preventing the Vietnamese troops from overrunning Tonkin, but he was unable to change fundamentally the military position in which the French found themselves.

In the first half of 1951 the Vietnamese launched three major offensive actions against the delta, hoping to enforce a decision before the programme of American military assistance to the French came into full operation. The first attack developed at Vinh Yen, to the north-west of Hanoi, the second at Dong Trieu and Mao Khe, in the north-eastern sector of the delta, and the last one along the Day river between Phu Ly and Phat Diem. These offensives demonstrated that the Vietnamese were able to move and supply their forces at considerable distances from the Vietbac base. They also proved capable of overcoming the tremendous logistic problems facing them in the course of the preparations for their attacks: for the last operation, at Day river, in which some 60 to 70,000 Vietnamese were involved, the troops had to march around the entire delta area.

The French hurried reinforcements by air to the threatened sectors of the front. They employed their entire air force and they made liberal use of napalm, a hideous American invention which a year earlier had been tested for the first time on other Asians, in Korea. At Vinh Yen (13–18 January), Dong Trieu (23–28 March) and the Day river (29 May – 18 June) the most savage battles, so far, of an increasingly ferocious war were fought. The French were able to repel the assaults of the Vietnamese army which came wave after wave. It appeared that Giap's plans had been too ambitious; a break-through towards Hanoi and Haiphong could not be effected, and for a conventional battle against the better equipped French forces the strength of the Vietnamese was still insufficient. Giap gave up the attempt to conquer the Tonkin delta in a massive offensive and directed

his attention to the mountainous areas, while Vietnamese warfare in the delta region reassumed its character of a guerrilla campaign behind the French lines.

It was only with the greatest effort and in the very nick of time that the French had been able to keep the Vietnamese army outside the delta, and this success was partly due to the physical conditions of the battlefield, which enabled them to deploy their entire military might. As to the future course of the war these battles did not give any clue, and this was particularly the case after Giap had returned to the one fighting method which still offered the Vietnamese the best prospects of success. In these battles the Vietnamese had suffered terrible losses — around 7,000 killed at Vinh Yen only — but they were far from being defeated and it was evident that a hard and bitter struggle was still awaiting the French.

This realization inevitably forced the French authorities to increase the number of troops fighting on their side. In France itself the war, already dubbed '*la sale guerre*' in 1950, became increasingly unpopular, and because of this no cabinet was prepared to send enlisted men to Vietnam. Vietnamese conscripts were used, however. This was one of the reasons why the Vietnamese counter-regime had been set up, but it was only under De Lattre that conscription started in earnest: he thought it only logical that the Vietnamese should assist in defending the French-occupied territories. By decree of 15 July 1951 the counter-government was empowered to employ all the means at its disposal for the mobilization of manpower. Seen from the French point of view the results were rather disconcerting. The leading personalities in Bao Dai's government might well consider the threat posed by the Vietnamese army a sound argument to voice their dissatisfaction with the colonial situation less openly and side more closely with France, but for the majority of the population there was hardly any incentive to follow them in this. The mobilization decrees caused great discontent, and they were constantly sabotaged, both by the people directly affected — the enlisted men who deserted by the thousands — and by those political groups which feared that an armed force at the disposal of the Bao Dai regime would impede their freedom of action. Among these groups were the politico-religious sects which followed their own, often obscure and changeable, but in general anti-Viet Minh though not pro-French policies. In the areas they controlled they refused to have a census taken, the necessary condition for any conscription. Young men who had been called up for service in the Bao Dai army were easily accepted into the sects' private militias, particularly into the fighting group of a dissident Cao Dai leader, Trinh Minh The. In June 1951 the latter set up his headquarters in the jungle area close to the Cambodian border, but in spite of his isolated position he succeeded in extending his influence among nationalist political leaders in Saigon who regarded his organization as an instrument for thwarting the French attempts at forcing the people into fighting France's war with the Vietnamese republic. When the

authorities tried to cut down the growing power of The's movement, he retaliated by assassinating several high-ranking civil servants, among them, on 31 July, the French commissioner for Southern Vietnam and Bao Dai's governor for the area. These murders created a nervous mood among the French which often led them to resort to wild and uncontrolled reprisals against the civilian population.

The unwillingness of the majority of the Vietnamese population to co-operate with the French-imposed regime and the increasing insecurity in the occupied territories clearly demonstrated that the French military approach was not conducive to solving the fundamental problem underlying this war. This problem was that of French supremacy. Although De Lattre stated that French policy was not in any way a colonial policy and that France did not have economic interests in Vietnam, the French still owned, by 1951, almost all rubber estates, mining and manufacturing industries, shipping companies and banks. Politically Vietnam continued to be completely subordinated to France, as became evident in September 1951 when Bao Dai's Prime Minister, Tran Van Huu, while in the United States to sign the peace treaty with Japan, visited President Truman. The French were extremely angry, and as a result the American authorities hurriedly broke off all official contacts with the head of government of a state they had recognized as independent.

The fact that France did not take Vietnam's independence seriously accounted for the total lack of respect the Vietnamese people displayed with regard to the counter-regime. The collaborating politicians were well aware of this and in a meeting of the Supreme Council of the French Union in November 1951 the delegation of Bao Dai's government urged that the Union be reorganized after the model of the Commonwealth of Nations and that the associated states be given complete responsibility for foreign and military affairs. This insistence sprang, among other things, from the realization that only a course of complying with the nationalist demands would make it easier for the Vietnamese, at any rate for the non-communists and anti-communists, to opt for the counter-government which, in the prevailing circumstances, was bound to be looked down upon as a bunch of French puppets. The opinion that a course of granting genuine independence was the primary condition for winning the war was also held by the Americans, but in spite of their objections to French colonialism, the United States government continued to act in sympathy with France since she started from the premise that Vietnam had to be protected against communism and that France played an important part in this. This accommodating attitude, however, did not prevent the French from viewing the United States' actions with great distrust. They were familiar with the traditional anti-colonial American sentiments, they were afraid of American economic penetration and they noticed with dismay that American aid to Vietnam was accompanied by a tremendous publicity campaign which, they feared, might produce stronger pro-American feelings in Vietnam

than might be beneficial to the French cause. This fear was completely unfounded though, because by their military assistance to French colonialism the Americans lost all the sympathy and esteem they might have won through their economic aid. Yet, when rumours went around that the American secret service, the Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.), was searching for a 'third power' between Ho Chi Minh and Bao Dai and that it was bolstering the position of Trinh Minh The, the French were sufficiently alarmed to send De Lattre to Washington, in September 1951, to try to convince the American government that the associated states were really independent, and that more military assistance was needed to build up their military effectiveness. De Lattre's visit more or less coincided with the Tran Van Huu incident; nevertheless the United States officially swallowed the French version of Vietnam's independence. She was in fact in no position to do otherwise since she had to have a justification for increasing her military aid to the French.

In contravention of his own tactical recommendations half a year earlier Giap launched a new offensive in September 1951, this time, however, on a less massive scale and not directed against the delta region; his target was Nghia Lo in North-West Tonkin on the fringe of the Thai area. The attack began on the 22nd, but the French defenders maintained themselves until paratroops were flown in, after which the Vietnamese forces lifted the siege and withdrew on 5 October. The outcome of this battle deluded the French military command into believing that isolated garrisons might be held as long as there were sufficient facilities for sending reinforcements by air. In an optimistic mood De Lattre decided to take the initiative again. He wanted to forestall new Vietnamese attacks, but he also intended to create a favourable impression on the United States as well as on the National Assembly in Paris. If he could report a victory the French parliament might accept the war budget more readily, while he might also silence American scepticism as to French military capabilities. These considerations led to the battle of Hoa Binh, one of the war's grimmest, which lasted from November 1951 to February 1952.

It was De Lattre's aim to conquer Hoa Binh, an important town on the road between the Vietnamese-controlled areas in Northern Annam and the Vietbac base, in an effort to stop the transport of rice to Tonkin and the flow of arms and equipment to the south. The possession of this town would also broaden the narrow north-western salient of the French-held delta region. The attack was carried out by ground forces and airborne troops. It started on 14 November and as the Vietnamese offered hardly any resistance Hoa Binh was soon captured. But it was a Pyrrhic victory. The French built strong points, they dug themselves in and dispersed their troops over different positions, but they had to rely on two long and difficult supply routes where traffic was constantly harassed by Vietnamese guerrilla fighters. The Vietnamese fought a

battle of attrition. In December they began to overrun French posts which they evacuated immediately — a strategy which absorbed French manpower and substantially reduced French morale. In January they succeeded in cutting off Hoa Binh from the French base in the delta, while supplies by air were increasingly interfered with by Vietnamese anti-aircraft guns. De Lattre did not live to see the failure of his strategy: he died of cancer in Paris on 11 January 1952. His successor as commander-in-chief, Raoul Salan, decided not to wait for the final onslaught of Giap's army, but to call off the whole campaign. On 22 February the withdrawal began and three days later the French were back behind the lines from which they had started their advance four months earlier.

THE CRUMBLING OF FRENCH POWER

In addition to these military reverses the political situation in the French-occupied zones did not cease to deteriorate rapidly. The Bao Dai army proved completely unreliable: it was a fighting force without enthusiasm, without a purpose, lacking popular support as well as responsible leadership. A Vietnamese chief-of-staff was appointed early in 1952, but French officers continued to be in full charge. Vietnamese discontent was also caused by several other aspects of French policy. As successor of De Lattre, Jean Letourneau became high commissioner of Indochina in April, but he retained his post of minister for the associated states in the French cabinet — a rather unusual constitutional structure, even for states which were independent on paper only. The decisive role of the French authorities was evident once again a few months later when Prime Minister Tran Van Huu was sacked and replaced, in June, by the former Cochin Chinese separatist Nguyen Van Tam, nick-named 'the French patriot'. It was he who made the counter-government more unpopular than ever. Bao Dai, offended because the French refused to allow him, the head of state, to reside in Saigon's Norodom Palace, left his capital and withdrew to Dalat.

This regime, steadily drifting into a morass, militarily, politically and morally, continued to be supported by the United States. After Letourneau's visit to Washington in mid-1952 American aid accounted for 40 per cent of France's expenditures in Indochina. As a *quid pro quo* France promised to raise more Vietnamese divisions, to step up the training of Bao Dai's army and to treat it as a separate entity rather than as part of the French expeditionary force — this in order to comply with the American desire that the war be presented as an internal Vietnamese affair. As to the French considerations, the military build-up of the counter-government was intended to enable them to reduce their own armed forces, and thus to propitiate public opinion in the home country. After this reduction France still had some 190,000 troops in Indochina, some 60,000 of which

were French. Together with the 100,000-strong Bao Dai army, this expeditionary force controlled less than one-quarter of Vietnam's territory, and in the occupied zones there were many large areas which were ruled by the French in the day-time and by the Vietnamese army at night.

French power crumbled further, militarily, when after a long period of relative quiet the Vietnamese forces launched an offensive against the Thai territories to the west of the Red River. For the French it was of extreme importance to maintain their positions in these mountainous areas, both out of political considerations — to play the Thai minority off against the Vietnamese — and for strategic reasons, because with airfields at Son La and Dien Bien Phu at their disposal their presence constituted a constant threat to the Vietbac base. For exactly the same reason, and for opening up the road towards Laos, the Vietnamese government was bent upon chasing the French out of North-West Tonkin. The preparations for the offensive, the movements of the Vietnamese army and the infiltrations into the territories to be attacked took place in such a way that the French hardly noticed anything, and they were completely surprised when on 11 October 1952 the Vietnamese forces crossed the Red River. Initially the French regarded it as a diversion, intended to lure their troops away from the delta region, but when on the 17th Nghia Lo was stormed, it was evident that the mountain range between the Red River and the Black River was the major target of the Vietnamese offensive. Nghia Lo fell in one day and within a week all French posts in the area had been captured or had become untenable. To cover the French retreat towards the Black River paratroops were flown in. They defended the post of Tu Le against the Vietnamese onslaught without, however, halting the advance and towards the end of October Vietnamese forces reached the Black River.

To weaken the power of the Vietnamese drive the French command decided upon a diversion: by occupying Vietnamese military camps at Thai Nguyen and Yen Bay, by destroying their workshops and interrupting their communications it might be possible to cut off the Vietnamese forces from their supply base. On 29 October the operation started. The local Vietnamese units offered heavy resistance which slowed down the French advance, but on 9 November the important military base of Phu Doan was conquered. All stocks and equipment had been removed already by the retreating inhabitants. Shortly after this, the offensive came to a halt. Its aim had been rightly guessed by Giap who did not rush into withdrawing his troops from North-West Tonkin for the protection of the Vietbac base, and when it dawned upon the French that their operation, the largest single one of the entire war and a costly and difficult one at that, had failed to serve any purpose, they broke it off. On 14 November they began their retreat, in the course of which one of their brigades was ambushed with severe casualties. By the end of November

the last French troops had returned to the relative safety of the delta base.

Immediately after the failure of the French counter-attack the Vietnamese resumed their advance. Son La fell on 22 November and a week later Dien Bien Phu was captured by troops who, by-passing Lai Chau in the north, overran the areas to the west of this stronghold. Lai Chau remained in French hands, and so did Na San, where three Vietnamese assaults were repelled. Towards the end of 1952 the entire Thai territory had been conquered by the Vietnamese forces, with the exception of Lai Chau and Na San which were under close siege.

THE PATHET LAO AND THE LAO DONG

The gradual erosion, militarily as well as politically, of French colonial power in Vietnam and of the Bao Dai regime inevitably led to the decline of the authority of the French as well as of the allied governments in the two other Indochinese states. But while the Vietnamese war of independence affected events in Cambodia only indirectly, it directly influenced Laotian developments. In Cambodia the cause of independence was advocated primarily by a parliamentary group and fought for by a guerrilla movement which, although encouraged by the troubles France encountered in Vietnam, neither asked for nor received any Vietnamese assistance. A different situation existed in Laos where the national liberation movement co-operated closely with the Vietnamese.

The resistance organization in Laos originated with the minority faction of the former Lao Issara movement which had refused to acquiesce in the ceremony of reconciliation with the royal court and the pro-French government of Prince Boun Oum. The leader of the radical nationalists, Souphanouvong, travelled to Vietnam where he was inspired to resume his armed resistance against French domination. For the military and political authorities of the Vietnamese republic he was, potentially, an important ally since a guerrilla organization in Laos might considerably reduce that country's value as a French base in their rear. Thus Souphanouvong was given arms and, in particular, advice as to the tactics to be used.

The contacts of Souphanouvong and his adherents with the Vietnamese government and with Vietnamese army officers present in Laos for the purpose of securing their lines of communication, resulted in a reorganization of the Laotian guerrilla movement after the model of the Viet Minh. On 13 August 1950 a 'resistance congress' was convened in the neighbourhood of Sam Neua, when the people of Laos were called upon to fight French colonial domination as well as international imperialist, i.e. American, intervention. It was decided to establish a government of national resistance which, headed by Souphanouvong, would direct the

struggle against the French and the United States in the pursuance of an independent Laos.

Initially the Pathet Lao, as the organization was called, was mainly engaged in making preparations for an open resistance, particularly in the remote north-eastern provinces where the power of the government had never been very strong, and many local chiefs joined the movement. It also issued propaganda among intellectual and semi-intellectual urban groups, emphasizing the continuation of French political and economic control. Like the Viet Minh the Pathet Lao had a basic programme which went beyond merely advocating national independence and suggesting the means to obtain it. It also promised to grant democratic liberties and equal rights for all ethnic groups, to develop industries and to improve agriculture and trade, to lower taxation and to fight illiteracy. In its relations with the outside world the Pathet Lao co-operated with the Vietnamese government, advocating, as the latter did, that a united front of the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos was necessary to fight the oppressor jointly and thwart the French attempts to sow dissension by stirring up anti-Vietnamese sentiments in the two other Indochinese states, as had been French policy during the Pau Conference. Early in 1951 Souphanouvong travelled to Vietnam where, among other things, he attended the first congress of the newly-founded Lao Dong party.

The establishment of this party was the outcome of a process of internal political reorganization in Vietnam; it also pointed to the increasing influence of the communists in Vietnamese affairs. This development was indirectly caused by the aggressive French policy aimed at reinstalling the colonial situation, as well as by the support France obtained from the United States. Abandoned by the Western world and consequently forced to seek exclusively the help of the communist bloc the Vietnamese republic changed from a communist-orientated into a communist state. It is true that the government of Ho Chi Minh retained its character of a cabinet of national unity and that, apart from the communists and the nationalists of the Viet Minh, Catholics, socialists and liberals continued to participate in the political process, but the function of spearheading the revolution was carried over from the Viet Minh to another organization, this time purely communist. The Vietnamese Workers' Party or *Viet Nam Lao Dong Dang*, *Lao Dong* for short, was set up at a national congress held from 11 to 19 February 1951. Truong Chinh became its first secretary-general and neither its programme nor its manifesto left any doubts as to its communist nature. The foundation of this party deprived the Viet Minh of quite a few prominent communist leaders who went over to the Lao Dong and this, in fact, made the former lose its *raison d'être*. On 3 March the old organization merged with the Lien Viet national front into a new front. Onthe face of it, there was hardly any difference between the former coalition and this one: the member parties were the same, for example. But the communists had greatly strengthened their position,

and although they did not prevent the non-communists from playing any role in public life, their virtual take-over did not fail to cause alarm in non-communist circles. Quite a few among the latter group deserted, but they did not join the counter-government; instead they swelled the ranks of those who were sitting on the fence. Yet the masses remained loyal to the Ho Chi Minh government and it was they who counted.

It was the aim of this reorganization to promote, once again, Vietnamese national unity and solidarity in the interest of defending the nation's independence. For the same reason close contacts were established with the nationalist movements in Cambodia and Laos, and in March a conference of the leaders of these organizations was held. Because of its association with the Vietnamese government the French simply considered the Pathet Lao a communist organization and, as such, a tool of the Vietnamese. This view, also prevalent in official American circles, was based on the Western belief that anyone co-operating with a communist movement was a communist himself, or, at least, a crypto-communist. In reality, however, the Pathet Lao was primarily a nationalist organization. To achieve its goals it accepted the advice of the Vietnamese leaders who were quite experienced in fighting the French; it also relied on the Vietnamese government and military authorities for material support. It had to do so in order to stand any chance of success, but this did not make the Pathet Lao an extension-piece, in Laotian garb, of the Vietnamese communist party. Its leaders were politicians who primarily served Laotian, not Vietnamese and certainly not Chinese or Soviet interests. It was an indigenous organization, based on nationalist dissatisfaction with the subordinate status of the country, but also on the traditional distrust among non-Laotian minorities *vis-à-vis* the royal court in Luang Prabang and the government in Vientiane. During the first few years the support which the Laotian resistance movement received from the Vietnamese was very limited, moreover, and it was only in December 1952, when Giap's forces overran North-West Tonkin and reached the Laotian border, that Vietnam was able to give more substantial military aid and provide the Pathet Lao with a safe operational base.

In French-controlled Laos little changed, politically, after the leaders who opted for co-operation with France under the treaty of July 1949 fraternized with the politicians who had been collaborating with the colonial authorities before that date. Among the adherents of the former Lao Issara movement there was some disappointment over the continuation of French rule, but they kept clear of the Pathet Lao, partly out of fear for the Vietnamese revolution, partly out of the consideration that American aid might eventually offer the opportunity to bring greater pressure to bear upon France. Nothing of the sort happened, however, because for Laos the French had made the same arrangements with the United States as for Vietnam: all aid had to be given to the colonial

administration, not to the indigenous authorities. In the defensive treaty of December 1950 this point was clearly stipulated; in the economic agreement, signed on 9 September 1951, it was not, but since France retained full control over financial affairs she also continued to supervise the entry of American goods which, on paper, were allowed to be imported without French interference. The view that the French were fighting communism effectively prevented the United States from taking any other course. The nationalist-orientated elite in Laos, moreover, had to rely heavily on French protection to maintain its position, and for this reason it could hardly oppose the colonial situation too strongly. So the collaborating nationalists had to reconcile themselves to this situation and for the rest they could only advocate 'national unity'. This was done particularly after Prince Souvanna Phouma had become prime minister in November 1951: it was his intention to bridge the gap and bring Souphanouvong and the other radicals of the Pathet Lao back into the fold.

NATIONALISM IN CAMBODIA

In Cambodia, as in Laos, Vietnamese officers were actively trying to establish a united front with the anti-French guerrilla forces, but unlike the situation in Laos, the traditional Cambodian distrust of the Vietnamese prevented the establishment of any close co-operation. For propaganda purposes the French called the Khmer Issarak communists, but this was an even less justifiable description than in the case of the Pathet Lao. The Cambodian guerrilla movement was anti-communist; it was not prepared to enter into any alliance with any communist-inspired organization and militarily it did not need any assistance from the Vietnamese. The Khmer Issarak did not participate in the united front of Indochinese peoples which the Vietnamese government and the Lao Dong were advocating and to which the Pathet Lao adhered; at the founding conference of this front, in March 1951, Cambodia was represented by a tiny communist group, the Khmer Liberation Movement, which recruited its followers mainly from among the Vietnamese and Chinese minorities.

Due to this situation the nationalist politicians and the intellectuals who were dissatisfied with French rule and with the policies of Sihanouk's government were offered an alternative course of action to that of merely joining an organization which co-operated with a communist-led movement. In Laos the political leaders who, out of whatever consideration, were unwilling to take such a step, had no choice since the dissolution of the Lao Issara movement but to acquiesce in French domination. In Cambodia, however, the presence of the Democrat Party in the parliamentary field and of the Khmer Issarak in the underground presented the opportunity of participating in the nationalist opposition without

having to side, one way or another, with either the communists or the Vietnamese.

After Yem Sambaur had been dismissed as prime minister in March 1950 the political situation had become more confused. That French pressure was responsible for Sambaur's dismissal illustrated once again the subordinate position of King Sihanouk, and this convinced the nationalists that they had to further their cause with greater tenacity. Since after the dissolution of the National Assembly in September 1949 there was no possibility of a parliamentary opposition, the burden of the nationalist struggle fell on the guerrilla movement. The attempts by Sihanouk to come to an agreement with the Democrat politicians failed as dismally as his offer to grant an amnesty to those Khmer Issarak who were willing to surrender. The offer was accepted by one of the guerrilla leaders, Dap Chhuon, but only on the condition that his forces be incorporated into the Cambodian army as a separate unit, and that he be kept in command. The government complied with his demand so that Dap Chhuon continued to rule the Siem Reap area, formally as a vassal of the King but actually as an independent war-lord. His 'surrender' was the only positive reaction to Sihanouk's offer; the redoubtable Keo Tak, who controlled Battambang province, was not prepared to consider such an arrangement. Periodical French military actions were not successful either, and the resistance movement was all-powerful in large areas of the country.

In view of the deteriorating general situation, which was also demonstrated by an increasing banditry and a growing occurrence of corrupt practices, Sihanouk realized that drastic steps had to be taken to improve conditions. He decided to return to the parliamentary system, also in an attempt to refute the allegation of the nationalist opposition that his attitude towards the Democrat Party proved that he was serving the interests of the colonial regime. In September 1951 elections were held, in which the Democrats won 54 out of 78 seats, and a Democrat cabinet, headed by Huy Kanthoul, took office in October. The election results confirmed Sihanouk's view that the nationalist sentiments were too strong to be successfully suppressed, and although he was highly suspicious of the ulterior motives of the political leaders who voiced these sentiments, he wanted to utilize the opposition as a lever to induce the French to adopt a more conciliatory attitude. For the same reason he did not oppose the general popular desire that Son Ngoc Thanh, the grand old man of Khmer nationalism, be allowed to return from exile; in fact it was he who submitted the relevant request to the French authorities. The latter consented, sensing that any real co-operation between Son and Sihanouk was not likely to be achieved and that in due time the King would turn to them again in order to be protected against the nationalists. Son Ngoc Thanh's return led to an outburst of nationalist excitement. The day before his arrival in Phnom Penh the French commissioner for Cambodia was assassinated and on the day itself, 30 October, a crowd of about 100,000

came out into the streets to welcome him in a demonstration which clearly showed that, in the eyes of the people, it was Son rather than the King who was the national symbol.

Son Ngoc Thanh was willing to co-operate with the monarchy, but he also wanted to achieve complete independence. His return provided Cambodian nationalism with a generally revered leader and encouraged it to display greater activity. This alarmed both Sihanouk and the French and the latter embarked on steps to counter the threat to their position. When they came to arrest Son, he had already been warned by a follower in the government, and on 9 March 1952 he escaped to the guerrilla-held area where he joined the Khmer Issarak.

Sihanouk found himself in a nasty predicament; now that he was forced to disavow Son he incurred even more the odium of being a collaborator with the colonial regime. From his hiding-place Son did not leave anyone in doubt, moreover, as to what he thought of the King: a puppet of the French. Son's decision to side with the guerrilla forces tended to affect adversely the authority of the French as well as of Sihanouk, since it added prestige to the Khmer Issarak. The ranks of the resistance movement swelled, and while the number of attacks on French patrols and of political murders rose, it spread rapidly over several provinces. So also the influence of the small communist organization was growing among Cambodians, and this was not only the result of its anti-French activities but also the almost automatic reaction against the French habit of depicting all resistance fighters as communists.

While in large parts of the country the power of the French and of the monarchy was rapidly dwindling, tension in the capital city was also mounting. There was great excitement among the younger generation, coming into the open at a student's demonstration in Phnom Penh in May 1952. From the point of view of the French, the loyalty of the armed forces was also doubtful, while neither the colonial authorities nor the Cambodian circles collaborating with them were under any illusion as to the reliability of the National Assembly and of Huy Kanthoul's government. It is true that Sihanouk had not really expected any fruitful co-operation to be possible between himself and the Democrat-controlled parliament and cabinet, but his calculation that a show of nationalist enthusiasm would make the French aware of the need to comply with the basic Cambodian demands had not been realized either. In Phnom Penh the French remained in full control, and High Commissioner Letourneau made it known that if France were ever to make concessions to Cambodian nationalism she would certainly not do so as long as the Democrat government was in office.

This was a clear hint that Sihanouk should get rid of the cabinet and on 15 June the *coup d'état* was carried out. Accused of demagogy the government of Huy Kanthoul was dismissed, after which the King formed a new cabinet himself. When asking parliament to confer full powers upon him

for a period of three years, he was rebuffed, however, and the National Assembly was as adamant in its reaction to Sihanouk's insistence that, at long last, the Franco-Cambodian treaty of November 1949 should be ratified. The impasse lasted for half a year, before the King decided to round off his *coup d'état* by cracking down upon parliament and the Democrat Party. On 13 January 1953 a state of emergency was proclaimed, the National Assembly dissolved, and several Democrat representatives were arrested. With this the second parliamentary interlude ended in failure. Cambodia returned to the system of royal cabinets, but compared with mid-1951 the military situation had become infinitely worse and the position of the monarchy considerably more unstable.

THE EVENTS OF 1953

The year 1953 witnessed the final efforts of France to maintain its colonial rule over Indochina. The battle of Dien Bien Phu and the Geneva Conference took place in the next year, but these events did nothing more than bring to a conclusion a course of action which for several years already had been heading for complete failure. It was in fact in 1953 that developments in the three associated states confirmed this failure, politically as well as militarily. In 1953, moreover, France was definitely replaced by the United States as the predominant Western power in Indochina.

The colonial regime suffered a serious set-back when, in April, Vietnamese forces penetrated into Laos. According to French and Western views, this attack amounted to communist aggression against what was represented as an independent state, but it was actually a Vietnamese offensive in an Indochinese territory under the control of the French to whose political and military activities the Laotian-Vietnamese border-line had never constituted any obstacle in the past. In a few weeks the Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao occupied Sam Neua, defeated French troops which were retreating towards the Plain of Jars on the 16th, forced them to evacuate Xieng Khouang and advanced upon Luang Prabang towards the end of April. Hurriedly the French command sent in reinforcements and, doubtful as to the next Vietnamese move, adopted a waiting attitude, but early in May Giap, in an unexpected manoeuvre, withdrew the bulk of his troops. Apart from reconnoitring purposes the attack was primarily intended to assist the Pathet Lao which secured large areas and considerably intensified its activities. In spite of their supremacy in the air the French were unable to prevent the resistance movement from extending its authority in the north-eastern border territories.

Far more sensational than the crumbling of French military power in Laos was Sihanouk's sudden *volte-face* in Cambodia. The dismissal of Huy Kanthoul's cabinet in June 1952 and the dissolution of parliament in January 1953 averted the threat which any possible French compliance

with Cambodia's nationalist desires might pose to the King's position, at a moment when the Democrat Party would be the prime beneficiary of such a move. But now that it was evident that in Vietnam France was fighting a losing battle, a far greater danger loomed over him; that of being left behind without protection against the nationalist politicians and guerrilla fighters. Early in 1953 Sihanouk was fully aware that French domination was drawing to a close and that he and the monarchy would be swept aside if he failed to revise his attitude drastically. He decided not to join Son Ngoc Thanh and his followers, because he realized that in the future his position would be very shaky compared to that of the nationalist politicians whom he had thwarted for years and who would be popular as the real liberators. Since there would be no room for both Sihanouk and Son in an independent Cambodia, the future of his throne as well as of the monarchy in general would be best guaranteed by a course of action designed at actively supporting the national cause but also at undermining the prestige which the nationalist leaders were enjoying. These considerations induced the King to adopt an extremely adroit policy of transforming himself into the spokesman of nationalism, taking the wind out of the sails of the Khmer Issarak and the Democrat Party and becoming, in their place, the symbol of Cambodia's struggle for independence. From his point of view it was high time, since three-fifths of the country was controlled by either the Khmer Issarak or the communist resistance movement.

What has been called the 'Crusade for Independence' started with an attempt to persuade France to adopt a more conciliatory stand. In February Sihanouk went to Europe and sent a memorandum to President Auriol in which he pointed out that the majority of the population sympathized with the Khmer Issarak, and that this was due to the fact that the country was not independent. He hinted that some agreement between himself and the Khmer Issarak might not be impossible, if Cambodia did not receive any satisfaction on this point. In Paris Sihanouk's remonstrance fell upon deaf ears, although Auriol invited him for a talk. After this disconcerting experience the King changed his tactics of gentle persuasion into one of subtle blackmail by referring to the Viet Minh rather than the Khmer Issarak as a possible alternative. To the French this did not make any essential difference, but to the United States it did, and it was here that Sihanouk appeared next. In New York he explicitly stated that in the eyes of the Cambodian population the Viet Minh was the only organization fighting for freedom and he expressed his opinion that the people would not hesitate to make common cause with the communists should France fail to grant independence soon.

Sihanouk's action heightened his popularity and reinforced his position. Already in May a few Khmer Issarak leaders laid down their arms now that the King was apparently converted to the policy they had been advocating for years, and in June Sihanouk was enthusiastically welcomed

upon his return in Phnom Penh. The French were also impressed, but not to the extent of making any concessions beyond those designed to soothe the nationalist-orientated politicians and win, through them, the support of the population in the French war against the Vietnamese republic. The new agreement of 9 May 1953 between the French government and Cambodia was a clear example of the way France dragged her feet. The nationalist desires were not taken seriously; instead 'ways and means' were to be found to 'improve the Franco-Cambodian Convention of November 1949' — a meaningless formula which offered France all the opportunities of avoiding the real problem and which continued to link Cambodia to a treaty that had been rejected by the majority of the population. Another French move was the abolition of the post of high commissioner for Indochina and the appointment of separate high commissioners for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, but this was only meant to create the impression that the associated states were genuinely independent. What this independence was really worth was proved in exactly the same week when, on 10th May, the French government devaluated the Indochinese piaster. Apart from producing a series of adverse economic consequences, this unilateral step was contrary to the Pau Conventions and incompatible with the sovereignty of the Indochinese states.

A step like this was not conducive to allaying the widespread nationalist suspicion of France. In the occupied territories of Vietnam the utter failure of French policy came to light more convincingly than before when even the tiny group of loyal Vietnamese whom France had been able to mobilize for her own sake were suddenly showing an intense interest in nationalist activities. In the elections for the municipal councils, held in January, in the one-quarter of the country's area which was under the control of the counter-government — and then only in such villages, roughly one out of three, which were considered sufficiently 'safe' — a few politicians stood on the platform of 'independence'. They collected many votes and in Hanoi they even won a significant victory. Since the voters, by having their names officially registered for census and election purposes, were people who, in principle, had acquiesced in the 'State of Vietnam' as such, this election result amounted to a clear rejection of the regime of Nguyen Van Tam as well as of Letourneau's policies.

That politicians who had been collaborating with the French began to orientate themselves towards nationalist objectives was the result partly of Sihanouk's example, and partly also of the same considerations which had propelled the latter into embarking upon his 'crusade'. It dawned upon them that, in view of military developments, their position was in serious jeopardy and that they ran the risk of being excluded from any possible negotiations France and the Vietnamese republic might hold in the future. But in order to be admitted to such discussions they had to be representative of more than the, in terms of actual authority and esteem, negligible element in Vietnamese politics they had been so far as a result

of their impotence or their subservience to French colonial interests. They realized that it was vital to obtain a greater following from among the population.

The developments in the Vietnamese republic happened to be of much potential assistance to the politicians of the counter-regime in their efforts to produce a more widely accepted alternative to Ho Chi Minh's government. It was at exactly this moment that, more or less on the analogy of China, the Vietnamese revolution entered a more radical phase. This was the outcome of the ascendancy of the communist party in the Vietnamese political set-up, but also of the need to find a solution for the bad economic conditions as well as of the fact that, after six years of war and a successful campaign against illiteracy, the rural population had become more politically self-conscious and less resigned to accepting their fate. After the announcement, in December 1952, that the masses had to be mobilized for the purpose of liquidating the feudal system, a new agrarian decree was issued on 12 April 1953. In a sense it was a mere confirmation of the regulations of 1945 and 1949, related to the distribution of communal land and land owned by French *colons* and Vietnamese collaborators, and to the reduction of the rates of interest on loans and of rents. This decree and the earlier ones differed, however, in the manner in which they were to be carried into effect. In lieu of the local administrative bodies in which the notables and landlords were still quite influential, and which had been responsible so far, the peasants' associations were now charged with ensuring the proper enforcement of the reforms.

As far as it was related to solving actual agrarian problems this decree still belonged to the experimental phase of the Vietnamese revolution. In a political sense, however, it introduced a new period in which the emphasis was on the principle that the traditional power and privileges of the propertied classes had to be brought to an end and that, as elements of society, these classes had to be eliminated. On this social revolutionary premiss the agrarian law of 4 December 1953 was based; it stipulated that all land owned by 'landlords' had to be confiscated and distributed among poor peasants or tenant farmers. For the purpose of deciding whether or not compensation should be given the 'landlords' were classified according to the degree of loyalty demonstrated towards the Vietnamese republic. These reforms by no means constituted an agrarian revolution along orthodox communist lines, since economic considerations still counselled the government to proceed cautiously. In its directives on the matter, in September, the Lao Dong party had been quite specific: too drastic a policy might adversely affect Vietnam's productive capacity. Thus, the rural population which did not belong to the category of landlords was divided into poor, middle and rich peasants, and none of these, not even the latter group, fell under any of the restrictive provisions of the new law.

Quite a few land-owners who were directly hit by the reforms, and many intellectuals who were alarmed at the radical turn the revolution was taking

escaped to French-occupied territory. To the Vietnamese politicians of the counter-regime this exodus presented a heaven-sent propaganda argument against the Vietnamese republic, but they were, in general, neither successful in inducing the refugees to join them, nor in making the population believe that Ho Chi Minh's government was the worst of two alternatives. On the contrary, the agrarian decree of April did not fail to create a favourable impression on the rural masses in the territories under French control. To neutralize this impression, Nguyen Van Tam issued an agrarian law of his own, on 9 June, which stipulated that landlordism was to be restricted, and that rice-lands, not cultivated by the owners, were to be given to the peasants who for a period of three years had been actually farming them. Announced as a social revolutionary step, but emanating from a government which was essentially representing the Vietnamese counter-revolution, this law was doomed from the start. The landlords obstructed its implementation and they were successful in this since they wielded great political power. Consequently the counter-government failed to obtain the popular support it needed so badly. The only opportunity left to the Vietnamese collaborators to secure their future position was to identify themselves more forcefully with Vietnamese nationalism.

It was not in the occupied zones of Vietnam but in Cambodia, however, that the political struggle for national independence assumed its most spectacular form. On 14 June Sihanouk left Phnom Penh again to begin the second stage of his 'crusade'. He appeared in Bangkok, in the hope that he could draw the world's attention to Cambodia's wishes and to France's chicaneries. The Thai government, however, felt rather embarrassed by Sihanouk's presence and while permitting him to stay in Thailand it forbade him to make political statements, thus depriving him of the opportunity to dramatize his cause further. Within a week Sihanouk was back in Cambodia, but he settled down in Battambang and announced that he would not return to Phnom Penh before independence had been achieved. Meanwhile tension was building up in the capital with adherents of the King busily engaged in working out a plan to fight the French with force of arms.

The crisis in Cambodia, the military pressure of the Pathet Lao and the increasing demoralization of the Vietnamese counter-government made the French cabinet realize that something had to be done to accommodate nationalist feelings in the Indochinese countries. The result was the statement by Prime Minister Joseph Laniel, on 3 July, that France was prepared to start bilateral talks in order to 'bring the independence and the sovereign status of the associated states to full perfection', i.e. to transfer such administrative functions which France was still discharging to the governments concerned. This announcement was aimed primarily at raising the prestige of the Bao Dai regime and the Laotian government among the Vietnamese and Laotian peoples, and at strengthening their position

vis-à-vis the appeal of the Vietnamese government and the Pathet Lao. This consideration was also valid with regard to Sihanouk, because although he had become a obstructionist he was preferred to Son Ngoc Thanh. It was of primary importance, to France and particularly to the United States, that the Indochinese nations would range themselves on the side of the associated governments and give them the support which was vital for carrying on the 'war against communism'.

But the anti-communist politicians were now mainly interested in ending French domination. Most explicit in this was Sihanouk who stipulated that he would only take part in any negotiations if France would transfer unconditionally all her powers to the Cambodian government. The Laotian prime minister, Souvanna Phouma, was less outspoken, but in his memorandum of 24 August he made, in effect, the same demand. This time, however, the greatest consternation was caused by French-occupied Vietnam. Bao Dai was not responsible for this: although he resented French domination and clearly saw the dangers threatening his position, he failed to reach the same conclusions as Sihanouk had done. Abused by the French and disappointed in his hope of becoming his country's leader, he had become a disinterested cynic, living most of the time on the French Riviera where he earned his reputation of '*l'empereur des nightclubs*'. The surprise which 'loyal' Vietnam gave France originated with the nationalist politicians who were sceptical of the Laniel statement and who feared that in the negotiations between the French government and Nguyen Van Tam the nationalist demands — and they themselves — would not be taken into consideration.

To demonstrate the force of nationalism Ngo Dinh Diem's brother Nhu organized a National Congress which met on 5 September in the Cholon headquarters of the Binh Xuyen gang. It was a semi-illegal assembly of the religious sects and of those political groups or leaders who were opposed to Bao Dai and the Tam cabinet and who wanted to be involved in any arrangement regarding the future status of the country. The policies of the French and the counter-government were vehemently attacked, any compromise with France was rejected out of hand and demands were made that the future relations with France be limited to cultural and economic affairs. This fierce nationalist opposition induced Bao Dai, who was at Cannes, to order his prime minister, who happened to be in Paris, to return to Vietnam and to convene a new congress which would be charged with informing him of the people's wishes with regard to the relations between France and Vietnam within the French Union. It was Bao Dai's intention to neutralize the unfavourable impression of the first congress by an officially sponsored second one that would behave in a less recalcitrant manner.

But at this National Congress, which was convened in Saigon on 12 October, nationalist sentiments were also running high. A resolution was adopted which demanded complete independence and stipulated that

Vietnam would not participate in the French Union since this would be incompatible with the principle of national sovereignty. Bao Dai was highly shocked, because a statement like that was bound to strengthen the position of those political circles in France which advocated direct negotiations with the Vietnamese republic, in which case the counter-government would be side-tracked. He brought strong pressure to bear upon the representatives to modify the resolution, with the result that the clause providing for non-participation in the French Union was changed into one of non-participation in 'the French Union in its present form'.

Although Bao Dai's intervention succeeded in refining the congress's decisions, France was deeply disturbed. It was evident that the changing attitude of the erstwhile pro-French Vietnamese was due mainly to uneasiness about their future position, caused by the proven inadequacy of French protection. The fear of communism which in 1949 and 1950 had been instrumental in rallying the political leaders of the associated states under the banner of France, had now turned into the major argument against French presence in Indochina. This meant that it would be impossible for France to treat the Laniel statement as a starting-point for just another series of negotiations in which, by an alternate application of either patient indulgence or unrestrained intimidation, she would again be successful in prolonging her rule. This time the talks had to end in nothing but real independence.

Under the Treaty of 22 October 1953 Laos was indeed recognized as a fully independent and sovereign state within the French Union. In this case France was able to maintain supreme control over military affairs since this was still considered by Laotian politicians to be the best protection against the Pathet Lao and its Vietnamese allies. In Cambodia, however, such an arrangement was impossible because Sihanouk regarded French military presence as the only factor which kept the Khmer Issarak in the field. Consequently, the talks between the two countries developed in a rather strained atmosphere and although on 29 August France already transferred to the Cambodian authorities several powers hitherto reserved to her, it was not before 17 October that the final agreement on military affairs was reached. On 9 November this agreement took effect and Sihanouk stated that Cambodia's national desires had been fulfilled at last; he thus returned to Phnom Penh where he was hailed as a liberator. In neither case was independence complete, however, because the economic and financial provisions of the Pau Conventions were still in force, but in view of the changed attitude of the political leaders in Cambodia and Laos it was not to be expected that France would stand any chance of maintaining her hegemony. After the experience with the two National Congresses in Vietnam it was also clear that developments in this country could only result in the total winding-up of colonial domination.

Such a prospect immediately caused the economic power groups and the political organizations that had so far shaped or supported French colonial

policy to lose much of their interest in Indochina. In addition to the heavy financial burdens of the endless war this switch in the attitude of the colonial groups strengthened the position of those who for some time already had been advocating a peaceful settlement. There were also many people who had begun to realize that the real issue of the war had been obscured by the setting up of a counter-government. Now that a military victory was more remote than ever, an agreement with Ho Chi Minh seemed to be the only opportunity for France to extricate itself from the awkward position into which she had been manoeuvred. Impressed by the recent events in Saigon the French call for negotiations with the Vietnamese republic became stronger, even among those parties which made up the French cabinet.

The greatest difficulty was, however, that the war with the Vietnamese republic was no longer an exclusively French affair. The actual fighting was still done under French responsibility, but to a large extent the war was financed by the United States and this was likely to put the French government under certain obligations when the military situation was deteriorating. During the first years of this joint venture France had been able to repel successfully all attacks on what she considered her sole right to deal with Indochina. The United States confined herself to assistance enabling France to proceed with the war, and she had been blackmailed into adopting this course by the threat that France would torpedo the much-desired European Defence Community should her war in Indochina not be considered of the same importance as the American war in Korea or, in general, the struggle of the West against communism. Thus, in December 1952, France elicited the statement from the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that her fight against communism in Indochina deserved the full admiration and the support of the allied governments. It was a clear attempt to give the war an international character, and in 1953 this internationalization was indeed effected, though in quite a different way than France had envisaged. Responsible for this miscalculation were the increasing difficulties which were confronting the French in Indochina as well as the growing war-weariness in France itself.

The United States continued to support France, to an even greater degree than before, but the general direction of the war against Vietnam slipped from French into American hands. The Eisenhower government, in office from January 1953, was as resolute in its approach to the communist world as the Truman administration had been, and in its notions on communism it was even more dogmatic. According to the dominating Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, the struggle with communism was a crusade of the forces of Light against those of Darkness, in the interest of which no compromise would be possible or even morally acceptable. It was the American view that, in spite of all her efforts to subdue the Vietnamese republic, France had primarily been pursuing her own colonial interests, by which conduct she had incurred the disgust of the Vietnamese

anti-communist nationalists to such an extent that the total mobilization of the Vietnamese nation against communism had failed. Because of this the Americans strongly resented French policy, but although their notions seemed to acknowledge the primacy of the nationalist and political aspects of the war, the United States, too, focussed its attention mainly on the battlefield: that is, her interference was primarily military in nature.

At the disposal of the Vietnamese government were a regular army of 125,000 troops, territorial units of 75,000 and between 200,000 and 350,000 village militias. These forces controlled the whole of Tonkin and Annam, with the exception of the towns and one-third of the villages in the delta area inside the De Lattre line, and a few French enclaves along the coast, like Hue, Tourane and Nha Trang. In Cochin China large guerrilla areas were maintained. The French were completely on the defensive and for this reason the new commander-in-chief, Henri Navarre, drew up a scheme, in May 1953, to build up a mobile force that would launch the final offensive planned for 1955. For this, however, the United States would have to supply the money and the military equipment. The American government was not very enthusiastic, and to create a favourable impression in Washington the French embarked upon a series of attacks against the Vietnamese republic. On 17 July paratroops landed near Lang Son, destroyed a military base and withdrew to the coast where they were picked up by naval craft. Early in August the French evacuated the isolated post of Na San, in a surprise move which prevented Giap from setting his forces upon the retreating garrison. In the same period French troops operated in the coastal swamps between Quang Tri and Hue, in Annam, as well as in the delta region, searching for Vietnamese guerrilla forces. On the whole these actions were not very successful, and they failed to impress the Americans, who were still willing to support the French war effort, but this time on their own conditions. By an agreement of 9 September the United States undertook to give financial aid amounting to some 70 per cent of French expenditure in Indochina, in exchange for which France had to step up the recruitment and training of Bao Dai's troops, to take American strategic plans into consideration, and to destroy the Vietnamese army.

It was rather hurtful to French national pride that, when the war with Vietnam was finally subordinated to American global strategy, France was not included in this set-up in the glorious role of a highly-esteemed allied power. Instead, she was merely a supplier of troops, finding herself in the same position *vis-à-vis* the United States as, in the past, she had planned the relationship between the 'State of Vietnam' and herself. It was also a humiliating experience that France was losing its influence in the non-military field, since American criticism of France was also strongly related to its political approach to the war. Now that, in 1953, the rebellion of the loyal politicians seemed to confirm the American fear that the Vietnamese people did not consider the counter-government sufficiently national in

nature to help in the fight against Ho Chi Minh, the United States began to seek an opportunity to change the character of the Bao Dai regime. It had to part with pro-French collaborators. The unbecoming alliance of the French authorities and the Binh Xuyen general Le Van Vien, by which the latter was provided with arms and money for his bandit army in return for his promise to keep down the guerrilla fighters in Baria province, had to be brought to an end. With the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao sects similar arrangements had been made. It was fatal to the reputation of the 'State of Vietnam' that its potential enemies were bought off in such a way, with rather dubious results, moreover, since Le Van Vien, Pham Cong Tac and Tran Van Soai, the last mentioned the leaders of the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao respectively, had given their blessing to the sensational National Congress of September 1953. The Americans were, in fact, not greatly interested in considering Vietnamese national susceptibilities as such, nor in improving the country's morals; their major aim was to neutralize the influence of the Vietnamese republic by setting up an independent, anti-communist and, in particular, effective and reliable nationalist regime. For the French this American interference added a new argument to those in favour of abandoning Indochina altogether. But exactly at this moment, and due to her obligations to the United States, France lost her right to negotiate with the Vietnamese republic on an armistice; on 29 September Foreign Minister Bidault had had to promise the American ambassador in Paris that France would renounce such a course.

DIEN BIEN PHU

In an interview with a Swedish newspaper in late November 1953, Ho Chi Minh stated his willingness to study any proposal should the French government wish to arrive at a negotiated settlement. By this he created a panic among the politicians of the counter-government. Now that the French 'struggle against communism' could not be used any longer to justify the continuation of colonial rule, the Vietnamese collaborators had no guarantee whatsoever that France would not abandon them. They left the sinking ship in a hurry and when on 17 December Nguyen Van Tam resigned, it took nearly a month before a new cabinet, led by Prince Buu Loc, was formed. For the record it demanded immediate independence.

Militarily French power was further undermined by a Vietnamese strategy which forced the French command to move its troops around almost constantly to such places where the danger was, or seemed, most imminent, and which prevented it from building up the planned mobile reserve forces. In October 1953 reinforcements were sent in a hurry to the north-western sector of the delta where Vietnamese troop movements seemed to usher in a large-scale offensive against Hanoi. Meanwhile, however, Vietnamese units infiltrated into the southern part of the delta, where they entrenched

themselves along the River Day, and when the French noticed that they had been tricked it was too late: in the battle of Phu Ly, early in November, they failed to drive the Vietnamese back. Navarre decided not to leave it again to Giap to choose the battlefield but to do it himself, and his choice fell on the Thai country in North-West Tonkin, in the rear of the Vietbac base and astride the Vietnamese route to Laos. The only place still in French hands in the area was Lai Chau, but because of its large air-strip Dien Bien Phu seemed a better stronghold, and on 20 November 1953, in a swift airborne strike, the town was occupied.

Immediately the French set out to build fortifications and to turn the place into a formidable jungle-fortress. Although Dien Bien Phu was an unfortunate choice, since it was too far away from any base for a properly functioning supply system, the French command decided to focus its attention exclusively on this point, and with this in mind Lai Chau was evacuated when five Vietnamese divisions started to close in on Dien Bien Phu. Yet this French move did not prevent the Vietnamese from launching new attacks on Laos. Between 20 and 25 December their forces, starting in North Annam, crossed the mountain range into Laos and reached the Mekhong river near Thakhek. Another offensive, in January 1954, posed a direct threat to Luang Prabang: for two weeks advance Vietnamese troops were in the neighbourhood of the royal residence before they withdrew on 23 February. Dien Bien Phu itself, finally, was completely encircled in the course of January. To the utmost surprise of the French command the Vietnamese army proved capable of transporting their food supplies, their ammunition and even their pieces of heavy artillery over huge distances through these wild mountainous areas. In other regions of Indochina, too, the French military position deteriorated rapidly. In January Vietnamese units advanced upon Seno, in Southern Laos, where they practically annihilated a French column. In February they surrounded Pleiku, in the Annam Highlands, and constantly harrassed the garrisons at Kontum and An Khe.

The events of 1953 brought the Vietnamese war of independence to a climax which greatly endangered world peace. The United States was directly involved now that she had been replacing France as the major adversary of the Vietnamese revolution. On the other side China was showing greater interest, which was still confined to verbal expressions of her solidarity with the Vietnamese republic, giving strategic advice and, since the armistice in Korea in July 1953, supplying the Vietnamese with arms. The most dangerous aspect of the situation was, however, that in American eyes the war was merely the result of Chinese aggressiveness, a view which tended to ascribe to China a far greater influence than, in fact, she exercised. In such a circumstance the war might develop into a straight confrontation between the United States and China, should the West be unable to achieve its aims in Indochina in a different way. But in all probability the alternative would be a total victory of the Vietnamese

revolution, and according to Western opinion this could only mean that Vietnam would become a vassal state of China. Forced to choose between these alternatives, political circles in the Western world became increasingly convinced that negotiations offered the only solution. In this way an open Chinese-American contest might be avoided, while a skilful manoeuvring at the conference table might also prevent the Vietnamese government from availing itself fully of its military victory over France and its political preponderance over the Bao Dai counter-regime. At a meeting in Washington in July 1953 it was still the opinion of the foreign ministers of the United States, Great Britain and France, that the struggle to defend the independence of the three Indochinese states against communist aggression was of vital importance to the free world. At a conference with the Soviet foreign minister at Berlin, from 25 January to 18 February 1954, they were more interested in reaching a peaceful settlement, and although Dulles tended to equate negotiations with surrender he was induced to comply with his colleagues' wishes. It was decided that a conference, meeting in Geneva on 26 April for the purpose of working out a political solution for Korea, would also deal with Indochina, and that invitations to attend this meeting would be sent to China and other states with interests in the area.

Informed of this development the Vietnamese government feared that during the negotiations it would be exposed to diplomatic pressure in order to settle for less than it might be able justifiably to claim on the grounds of its military preponderance. To strengthen her position at the conference table she decided to gain a sensational victory, and on 14 March 1954 the Vietnamese army, which was in full control of the hills around Dien Bien Phu, launched a massive attack on the fortress. Within a week it was evident that the 16,000 strong French garrison was in a desperate position; it could be provisioned only by air and this proved extremely difficult now that the Vietnamese had anti-aircraft guns at their disposal. Moreover, by the loss of the outposts the French-held territory was reduced to such a tiny area, that considerable amounts of dropped supplies fell outside their lines into Vietnamese hands. On 20 March the French chief of staff, Paul Ely, travelled to Washington to inform the American government that Indochina was lost unless the United States intervened militarily. This statement set off a grave international crisis which, although its seriousness was not immediately evident to the general public, constituted the most dangerous threat to world peace since 1945. At a meeting of the National Security Council, the inner core of the United States executive establishment, it was suggested that the United States was not prepared to tolerate the loss of Indochina and that she had to intervene with armed force, provided, however, that the undertaking be an allied rather than an exclusively American affair and, also, that France grant full independence to the associated states. These conditions were considered vital in order to prevent the United

States from being accused of taking matters in its own hands and of supporting a colonial system.

This reference to independence was, in fact, related to the 'State of Vietnam' only. With Cambodia and Laos France had to come to terms on minor affairs only, such as the transfer of economic or technical services, but it was only on 3 March that negotiations started with the Vietnamese counter-government over a basic treaty guaranteeing complete independence. Bao Dai was pressing for speed, both to strengthen his own position in Vietnam, and to show the Americans that he was fully prepared to make a 'national contribution' to the common efforts at keeping communism out. With a view to this he set up a war-cabinet, proclaimed total mobilization and forced the private militias to join the army. But he was not successful: the sects sabotaged his orders, and the regime degenerated morally even further when the Binh Xuyen bandit leader Le Van Vien was appointed director-general of the Saigon police. Whatever enthusiasm the population was demonstrating was mainly related to their delight over the French misfortunes at Dien Bien Phu.

A second argument of Bao Dai to bring the negotiations on independence to a rapid conclusion was his wish to reinforce the international status of his 'State of Vietnam', since he feared that, on the analogy of Korea, a partition of Vietnam might be considered. In this, too, he was disappointed, because it was not before 28 April that an agreement was reached over the recognition, in principle, of Vietnam's independence. As this treaty still had to be ratified, and new discussions were necessary to work out the details, there was not much hope left that the 'State of Vietnam' could be presented to the Geneva Conference as a genuinely independent state.

In the weeks immediately preceding the date set for its inaugural meeting the conference was considerably jeopardized by the policies of the United States government. On 29 March Dulles charged China with promoting and supporting aggression in Indochina for the purpose of dominating the whole of South-East Asia, and he suggested that this challenge to the 'free world' be met by 'united action'. In reply to this the disturbed British government announced that it considered a partition of Vietnam the best solution and that it opposed any action, moreover, before the Geneva Conference had had the opportunity of negotiating an armistice. But Dulles was bent upon preventing such an armistice, and he stated that after a partition of Vietnam the communists would not give up their efforts to win control over the entire country. Meanwhile American and French military experts worked out what they called 'Operation Vulture', a plan for a massive air-strike against the Vietnamese forces at Dien Bien Phu, to be carried out by planes from American navy carriers in the South China Sea and American bases in the Philippines. On 3 April, in a secret conference, Dulles and Admiral Arthur Radford, chairman of the joint chiefs-of-staff, submitted this scheme to a few prominent Congressional leaders, insisting that a resolution be adopted

by Congress to permit President Eisenhower to use air and naval power in Indochina. The congressmen were unwilling to commit themselves, however, before they were satisfied that such a step would have the full backing of other Western governments. For this purpose Dulles arranged meetings with the diplomatic representatives of the prospective allied nations in Washington, and when he met with British hesitation he travelled to London where, on 10 April, he attempted to persuade Prime Minister Churchill and Foreign Minister Anthony Eden into accepting his views. Great Britain was not prepared to consider any immediate intervention but, convinced that the British government had agreed to his alternative proposal for setting up some kind of a South-East Asian defence organization, Dulles returned to Washington and called an ambassadors' conference for the 20th to study the possibilities of establishing such an alliance. In the meantime the public was given to understand that, unless it was stopped by force of arms, communism would relentlessly advance in the area. On 7 April President Eisenhower had declared that the loss of Indochina would result in the loss of South-East Asia, like a 'row-of-dominoes'. Ten days later Vice-President Richard Nixon stated that, in view of the wavering attitude of France and Great Britain the Geneva Conference was not likely to serve any purpose and that the United States might well be compelled to intervene in Indochina, possibly by dispatching troops. Informed of Nixon's remarks the British ambassador cabled his government for instructions upon which he was told not to attend the ambassadors' meeting.

Angry with Eden, whom he accused of backing out of a promise to support his 'collective defence' project, Dulles flew to Paris for a N.A.T.O. meeting. On 23 April he was approached by Bidault who, in a panic, pleaded for the carrying out of the proposed air attack on the Vietnamese besiegers of Dien Bien Phu. Talking to Eden, the next day, Dulles made it clear that the British were, in fact, under an obligation to participate in a military action. The British foreign minister was not convinced, however, and when his French colleague informed him that France was indeed calling desperately for such help but that a formal request to that effect had not yet been put forward in writing, he persisted in his opposition to Dulles' plans. To make certain of this Eden went to London and in a special meeting on 25 April the British cabinet decided not to agree to any scheme of armed intervention in Indochina before all possibilities to come to a peaceful settlement had been properly tested. The wavering attitude of the French and, in particular, Churchill's resoluteness on this point effectively prevented American attempts at united action. The road towards a negotiated peace was now open.

On 7 May 1954, the day before the beginning of the Indochina talks at Geneva, the Vietnamese army conquered Dien Bien Phu in a twenty-hours mass assault. This battle, which cost the French expeditionary force over 7,000 dead and 10,000 prisoners and in which an estimated 20,000 to 25,000

Vietnamese had been killed, marked the end of French military presence in South-East Asia. Preparations were made to withdraw French troops in Tonkin behind the heavily defended Hanoi-Haiphong salient, and towards the end of June the operation was carried out, resulting in the abandonment of the southern zone of the Red River delta. Politically the utter failure of the efforts to maintain French colonial domination in Indochina was confirmed by the ratification, on 4 June 1954, of the treaty which acknowledged the independence of the 'State of Vietnam'. This development finally provided the Americans with the opportunity to implement their plans aimed at eliminating the collaborators and other pro-French elements in order to transform the tottering counter-regime into a genuinely strong anti-communist bulwark. On 19 June Buu Loc resigned and under heavy American pressure Bao Dai appointed the anti-French nationalist Ngo Dinh Diem as prime minister. A month later Diem's dreams of representing the whole of Vietnam evaporated as a result of the Geneva armistice, but the territory effectively under his control was more than doubled by the same agreement.

THE GENEVA ARMISTICE

France, Great Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, China, the Vietnamese republic, the Vietnamese counter-regime, Cambodia and Laos took part in the negotiations on Indochina which started on 8 May. Being a meeting of the great powers to work out a solution for the international crisis into which a local war of national independence had been manoeuvred, the conference could only end in utter disappointment for the one nation most directly involved. The Vietnamese were, in fact, standing alone, facing not only the pretensions of the counter-regime but also the efforts of the West to ruin as much as possible the military victory Vietnam had won in her anti-colonial struggle. As to the tactics to be used in this respect the three Western powers did not agree however. According to Eden, diplomacy was to be the means by which the West should try to escape the full consequences of France's lost war. This idea appealed to Bidault, but he also tended to side with the Americans in their view that armed force should be used to convert the French debacle into a Western triumph. Dulles had left Geneva, in a pique, before the Indochinese talks began; the United States were represented by the Under-Secretary of State Walter Bedell Smith. For the American delegation the conference was only a diplomatic diversion, an alibi to convince public opinion in the world that there was no alternative to the course advocated by Dulles in April but thwarted by Churchill. Dulles had not, in effect, given up his plans and it would certainly not upset him if the conference should fail to be successful. A week after the talks started it transpired that a joint American-French plan had been worked out for American

military intervention in case an agreement could not be reached in Geneva, or perhaps earlier, and when the British showed alarm they were soothed with the explanation that this scheme was merely intended to force China into adopting a 'reasonable attitude'.

The absence of a Western united front and, in particular, the fact that the West allowed its disagreements to come into the open, aroused the suspicions of the other camp. In the communist views on the West, as doctrinaire as American opinions concerning the Soviet Union and China. it was hardly conceivable that the capitalist world would ever fail to formulate a uniform policy *vis-à-vis* any problem related to communism. Consequently they tended to regard the lack of Western unity as a façade behind which preparations were being made for a joint attack. Both the Soviet Union and China were unwilling to risk a general conflict for the sake of interests which were not immediately theirs, and because of the uncompromising attitude of the American government and its obvious aim of wrecking the conference, they were eager not to create a situation that would make it more difficult for the British and French governments to persist in their opposition, whether real or pretended, to the policies of the United States. What Western observers in those days explained as Molotov's reasonableness and Chou En-lai's moderate conduct was seen by the Vietnamese, however, as a betrayal, as the surrender of their potential allies to American blackmail, with the result that they were, in fact, let down. It is true that the communist distrust of the real intentions of France changed to confidence due to the honesty of the new French Prime Minister, Pierre Mendès-France, and that the danger of a united action seemed over after he took office, but there was no change in the situation in which the Vietnamese government was standing alone in its confrontation with parties who, in the words of Bidault, considered it 'an organization which was fighting with force of arms against the lawful Vietnamese government'. As a result nothing came of the proposals made by the leader of the Vietnamese delegation, Pham Van Dong, at the start of the conference. The independence of Vietnam was recognized, but because of the contradictory views as to the legality of the Vietnamese republic and the counter-regime, it was left undecided to which of the two this recognition was to be accorded. The demand of the Vietnamese that representatives of the Pathet Lao and the communist-orientated Cambodian liberation front be admitted to the conference was rejected, and although Pham Van Dong returned to the subject on several occasions he did not get Molotov's support. It was Chou En-lai finally who, by making the proposition that the problem of withdrawing all foreign troops from Laos and Cambodia be arranged in talks between the Vietnamese government and the governments of the countries concerned, killed all prospects of the Pathet Lao and the communist liberation movement of Cambodia being accepted as participants in the talks.

Similarly. the demand of the Vietnamese delegation to make the

cessation of hostilities conditional on a political solution met with strong Western opposition. In the process of working out a political arrangement it would not be possible to avoid making provisions for free and general elections, and considering the mood of the Vietnamese population it was evident that such elections would result in a complete disaster for the supporters of the 'State of Vietnam'. The United States was quite alarmed at this prospect, particularly when on 17 June the dynamic Mendès-France became prime minister. He had been criticizing French policy in Indochina for years, and he began by announcing that he would resign if he failed to arrange an armistice within a month. On the 24th, in a meeting with Chou En-lai, he agreed with the latter that the Geneva Conference had to arrive at both a cease-fire and a political solution. This further aroused American misgivings. Fearful that Mendès-France would make concessions on this point the United States persuaded Great Britain into sending a joint note to the French government which stated that no political agreement would lead to the transfer to the communists of any territory still under its own authorities, which meant French-controlled territory.

No Western pressure was capable, however, of persuading the Vietnamese to stop their military advance as long as nothing was offered in return; furthermore, the elections were the only political trump-card Vietnam was able to play. On this matter the Vietnamese government was backed by the Russians, but although not inclined to accept an armistice before a date for the elections had been set, she was, nevertheless, induced to drop her initial demand of immediate elections. According to the Western powers who used to insist strongly on elections in the reversed cases, Germany and Korea, this willingness to agree to elections in Vietnam, or even fix a date for them, constituted a considerable concession. They did not do so, however, before the Vietnamese had consented to a far more formidable concession with regard to the demarcation-line. To separate militarily the two parties to the conflict and effect a cease-fire, a partition of the country into two military regrouping zones had from the start been considered the best solution. The representatives of the 'State of Vietnam' flatly rejected this suggestion as contrary to the principle of Vietnam's national unity, but the Vietnamese government accepted it, be it on a provisional basis, since it was the only way to end a war without proper front-lines. In conformity with the military situation of the moment the Vietnamese republic proposed that the 13th parallel be taken as the demarcation-line between the regrouping zones. This the Western powers rejected out of hand, and tying the Vietnamese down to their own demand that political and military affairs be settled in one and the same agreement they consented to setting a date for the elections conditional on a Vietnamese territorial retreat. Under heavy pressure from Molotov and Chou En-lai, Pham Van Dong finally gave in.

The armistice which was signed at Geneva on 20 July 1954 was a clear

victory of the West in all respects. The demarcation-line was drawn at the 17th parallel. In exchange for the evacuation of the Hanoi-Haiphong corridor by the French, the Vietnamese forces had to abandon almost the whole of Central Annam, the Plain of Junks, the Ca Mau peninsula and large guerrilla territories scattered over Cochin China, an area totalling half the surface of Vietnam south of the demarcation-line. The essential Western *quid pro quo*, the election date, was not mentioned in the agreement itself, but referred to in the final declaration of the conference. Under the supervision of an international commission free general elections were to be held in July 1956, while consultations on the matter between the competent representative authorities of the two zones were to begin on 20 July 1955. It was also in this document only that it was specifically stated that the military demarcation-line was to be provisional only and that it should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary. This final declaration was not submitted to the signature of the governments taking part in the conference; the participants could only express their association with it, which two out of the nine refused to do: the United States and the Vietnamese counter-regime.

Pending the general elections the conduct of civil administration in each regrouping zone was to be placed into the hands of the party whose forces were to be regrouped there; i.e. for the territory to the north of the demarcation-line the Vietnamese republic, and for the south France, not the 'State of Vietnam' which was not yet an independent and sovereign state. No military base under the control of a foreign state was to be established in either regrouping zone, and neither of the two was to adhere to any military alliance; military reinforcements were also prohibited. Furthermore, provisions were made to ensure that prisoners of war be freed, that civilians be allowed to travel from the one zone to the other, and that no reprisals be taken against persons who belonged to the opposing party during the war. Finally, an International Commission, composed of representatives of India, Canada and Poland, was set up: the American attempts to have the United Nations control and supervise the execution of the agreement were foiled by China and the Vietnamese republic which tended to regard the United Nations as an extension-piece of the United States.

The Vietnamese counter-government benefited most from the Geneva armistice, which saved it from immediate extinction and allowed it to enlarge considerably the area under its control. Ngo Dinh Diem did not acknowledge this advantage, however: he considered his regime primarily a victim of the agreements. After all, the guarantee that the 'State of Vietnam' would survive was only temporary, and because of this prospect Diem strongly opposed the fixing of a date for the elections. On the other hand he was fully aware of the national sentiments of the Vietnamese people and with this in mind he declared himself in favour of preserving

the territorial integrity of the country. This way he insinuated that the Geneva Conference, instead of explicitly recognizing this territorial integrity, had divided Vietnam into two states and that the Vietnamese republic had acquiesced in this. Afraid, and rightly so, of the elections scheduled for 1956, and at the same time expressing a concern for the unity of Vietnam which seemed rather insincere, in the light of his fears, Diem ordered his delegation at the conference not to join in the final declaration.

The Vietnamese government signed the agreement and associated itself with the final declaration. It was not certain whether it would receive the full support of its allies in case it refused, and it was under no illusion, moreover, as to the war-like attitude the United States might adopt should the conference end in a failure. Peace was a necessary condition to end the terrible privations and the horrors the Vietnamese people had been enduring for nearly a decade, and to start rebuilding the ravaged and devastated country. Finally there was the conviction that the elections of 1956 would result in a great triumph and that Vietnam would be re-united under the banner of Ho Chi Minh. The French and Vietnamese signatures under the agreement of 20 July put an end to a war in which the colonial expeditionary force had lost 94,000 men, of which 21,000 troops were French. On the Vietnamese side, civilian as well as military, an estimated 500,000 to 700,000 people had been killed, among them some 45,000 troops of the counter-regime.

On 21 July, finally, armistice agreements were signed for Laos and Cambodia, providing for the withdrawal of French and Vietnamese troops from both countries within a fixed time. In Cambodia, where the nationalist Khmer Issarak guerrilla movement was reconciling itself with Sihanouk and the communist resistance organization was hardly influential, the departure of foreign troops was sufficient to put an end to the fighting. In Laos the situation was different, since the Pathet Lao controlled large areas in the north-eastern part of the country. Although not allowed to participate in the talks at Geneva, Souphanouvong's guerrilla forces could not be overlooked. For this reason a special arrangement, on a temporary basis, was called for. Pending an agreement to be worked out by the Laotian government and the Pathet Lao on the latter's incorporation into the political and military structure of the kingdom, the provinces of Phong Saly and Sam Neua, already under the rule of the Pathet Lao since April 1953, were allotted to the guerrilla forces as regrouping zones.

At the conference the international position of the two countries was discussed at some length. With a view to the American efforts at establishing an anti-communist South-East Asian alliance, the Chinese and Soviet delegates demanded that Laos and Cambodia be excluded from any such treaty organization. The relevant guarantees contained similar provisions as those related to the regrouping zones in Vietnam: no adherence to any military alliance, and no foreign, i.e. American, bases or military assistance.

At the last moment Cambodia showed an unexpected stubborn opposition to these clauses, not because she intended militarily to join the West, but on the fundamental consideration that they were contrary to her independent status and national dignity. She won: the prohibition orders were to be enforced only when the security of the country was not in jeopardy. This stipulation was also included in the agreement with Laos which obtained the right, moreover, to allow a French military mission and two French bases on her territory.

4 *The British Withdrawal*

THE TEMPLER PERIOD AND THE FAILURE OF THE COMMUNIST REBELLION IN MALAYA

WHILE French colonial domination in Indochina succumbed to the force of Asian nationalism, Great Britain's war against communism in Malaya though of a different nature, also reached a conclusion. Towards the end of 1951 British strategy, although not yet successful in breaking the back of the resistance movement, was clearly affecting the course of the revolt. At the beginning of the war the British had been able to prevent the insurgency from developing beyond its first, terrorist, phase, and at a later stage the resettlement of the squatter communities effectively isolated the communist forces. It became increasingly difficult for the rebels to secure provisions, and this forced them to set up food dumps in the jungle in an effort to hold out until a time when they were able to restore the contacts with their former helpers, now living in the 'new villages'. On their part the British authorities intensified their inspection of rice transports in July 1951, as part of what was officially called 'Operation Starvation' which aimed at preventing food from being smuggled to the communist bases. On the communist side morale was weakening due to the losses sustained and the poor results gained. In this situation the leaders of the M.C.P. decided to change the party's strategy. In its directive of 1 October 1951 it was stated that the primary goal of the resistance movement was now to strengthen its authority among the masses and to set up a united front of all racial communities and social classes. This could be achieved only by emphasizing the use of persuasion and political education, by establishing 'cells' in the trade unions and, if possible, by infiltrating into the administration and the police. Terrorism, sabotage and intimidation were to be abandoned as fighting methods since these might alienate the resistance organization from the people

Before this new directive had been brought to the notice of all guerrilla units, an event took place which more than any other induced the British to step up the military campaign against the rebels. On 5 October, and probably by mistake, the High Commissioner, Gurney, was ambushed and murdered in the neighbourhood of Fraser's Hill. In retaliation the authorities took revenge by having the near-by town of Tras razed to the ground.

Two months later the British Colonial Secretary Oliver Lyttleton announced that control of military and civil affairs was to be combined under one head, and on 5 February 1952 General Gerald Templer assumed his functions as high commissioner and commander-in-chief. His nomination made clear that the views of the British government did not in any way differ from those France adopted more than a year earlier when De Lattre was appointed: the communist rebellion was primarily regarded as a soldiers' business. With the arrival of Templer, who could rely on a 40,000 strong army, a police force of 70,000 and a home guard of 225,000, British warfare became more purposeful. Its emphasis was on the strategy, adopted earlier, of starving the rebels, not only by checking all transport and imposing a strict system of food-rationing, but also by having the air force search and destroy open patches in the jungle where food was grown. Due to this rigorous attitude the guerrilla fighters were forced to withdraw deeper into the jungle where they could be less easily tracked down. Another result was that the authorities were left with fewer opportunities to collect the information which, previously, they used to get from the captured civilian helpers of the communist fighting units.

In addition to this strategy the British intensified their psychological warfare, partly by distributing leaflets over the jungle, partly by improving the social conditions in the 'new villages', but the results were unsatisfactory. Although the number of those escaping from the insurgent forces tended to increase, its total manpower hardly declined in the first year of Templer's proconsulate: until June 1952 the M.C.P. armed forces lost an estimated 3,200 followers, but in April 1953 Templer stated that there were still as many rebels in the jungle as there had been two years earlier. Neither was there any perceptible change in the attitude of the Chinese population, and this was due partly to fear of the Min Yuen squads operating in the towns, partly also to the tacit sympathy with an overwhelmingly Chinese resistance organization. The failure of the Chinese community to co-operate sufficiently with the British led Templer to reintroduce the system of collective punishments. Thus, for fourteen days in March and April 1952 the town of Tanjong Malim was cut off from the outside world, exposed to a tight curfew and put on reduced rations when the inhabitants failed to give information on a rebel attack carried out in the neighbourhood. Steps like these were not conducive to producing a favourable change in the general mood of the Chinese population, especially at a time when this community was beginning to be adversely

affected, economically, by the reduction of the tin and rubber prices which caused financial hardships and increasing unemployment.

Yet Templer's regime considerably weakened the guerrilla movement. Isolated and facing an increasingly deteriorating food situation the communist forces were slowly driven to the wall, and forced on the defensive they were practically besieged in their jungle hide-outs. From the start the prospects of a communist victory had been slight in this racially divided and, for the British, militarily easily controllable country. The chances of success were, in fact, completely lost when in 1950 the resettlement scheme was first carried out. The definite confirmation of the failure of the their movement the communists were informed of, indirectly, in September 1953 when Templer began to declare districts 'white', meaning that the emergency regulations could be lifted there. The guerrilla forces were slowly starving, their enthusiasm was undermined by the realization that their cause was virtually lost and their ranks were depleted by disease and, since mid-1953, a growing number of desertions.

To quell the rebellion more was needed, however, than merely stepping up the military campaign. In the years of Templer's rule the number of attacks decreased, but this was not only the result of British harshness but also of the communist change of tactics as recommended in the M.C.P.'s directive of October 1951. Late in 1953 there were still an estimated 4,000 guerrilla fighters in the jungle, with their main concentrations in Pahang, Johore and Perak. In the towns the Min Yuen was still active and in October 1953 the British carried out large-scale house-to-house raids in Kuala Lumpur to round up communist guerrilla fighters 'on leave' in the city and to destroy the urban contacts of the resistance organization. When Templer's tenure of office ended, on 30 May 1954, the rebellion was past its high-water mark, but it was far from over. It was only in the next few years that a decisive defeat was inflicted upon the guerrilla movement, and this was the result of the general improvement of the economic situation as well as, particularly, the political reforms rather than of any military activity.

MALAYA TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

Taken by itself the revolt of the M.C.P. was a dismal failure, certainly so as a communist venture but also as the nationalist movement its leaders claimed it to be. When the emergency started British colonialism was firmly in the saddle, while Malayan nationalism and inter-racial harmony, the major prerequisites for the country's development towards independence, were almost totally absent. The general pattern of Malayan society, characterized by communalism and racial controversy which effectively prevented the emergence of a genuine national consciousness and a self-confident nationalist movement, was not in any essential way modified

during the years the war lasted. But precisely in this decade Malaya completed the full course of a political and constitutional evolution which eventually led to independence.

To a large extent this outcome was the result of compromise solutions in which the communists did not play any direct role at all, but to which their struggle against the British regime made a considerable contribution in an indirect way. It is true that, on the one hand, the communist rebellion was primarily an expression of Chinese dissatisfaction and, as such, hardly served the cause of Malayan nationalism. Moreover by providing the British with a convenient excuse to prolong the colonial situation, it slowed down the country's advance towards independence. On the other hand it is also true that at the moment when it was entering its final stage, the revolt figured highly in the arguments of Malayan politicians that independence should be granted, since this might effectively deprive the M.C.P. of its claim to be the only organization fighting colonial rule. It may remain open to speculation whether or not the communist decision to embark upon a course of armed violence really contributed to the achievement of Malaya's independence, but it cannot be denied that it sparked off the chain of events which, in a round-about way, resulted in the termination of British colonial domination.

One important direct result of the communist action was the inevitable deterioration of racial relations. Although the rebellion was an overwhelmingly Chinese affair, the adversaries of the M.C.P. were, of course, not to be found exclusively among non-Chinese; its communism was disliked by the well-to-do Chinese as strongly as its Chinese character was frightening the Malays, while the great mass of Chinese adopted a wait-and-see attitude. The fact that the Chinese did not turn *en masse* against the government was of tremendous advantage to the British regime, but the other fact, namely that the rebels could obtain assistance only from among the Chinese and that the Chinese community as a whole was not particularly anxious to help defend a pro-Malay administration, easily led the Malays into identifying the Chinese with the communist revolt. Sensing that ideas like these, when acted upon and accordingly responded to, might lead to a full-scale inter-racial conflict with disastrous consequences for all ethnic communities, the more far-sighted politicians began to realize that the communal differences had to be bridged.

On the Chinese side Tan Cheng Lock was an advocate of co-operation of the different races in one political community. But, although in principle adhering to his views, the majority of the anti- and non-communist Chinese leadership evinced a strong desire to set up an organization of their own, and on 27 February 1949 the Malayan Chinese Association was formed. It was the outcome of the realization that the communist victory in China forced the Malayan Chinese to focus their loyalty upon Malaya and that a political structure was needed to take care of them. By demonstrating their devotion to Malaya as their home country and aiding the

government, the M.C.A. aimed at winning the confidence of the British regime as well as of the Malays, in order both to divert the unwelcome attention caused by the Chinese character of the guerrilla movement away from the Chinese community, and to improve relations with the other races. But it also revealed the wish of the Chinese to strengthen their position, as a community, *vis-à-vis* the more extremist claims of the Malays and to give substance to their demands that citizenship legislation be revised and non-Malays be given better opportunities to enter the civil service.

The setting up of the M.C.A. confirmed the general trend of Malayan politics. For one thing, the development since 1946 had been characterized by the almost total eclipse of what might be considered the left wing. Under the state of emergency in June 1948 communism was declared illegal, but all other more or less radical and social revolutionary groups, whether or not actually related to the M.C.P., had also been banned, with the result that the political parties which either survived the first month of the communist rebellion or were formed later, were representing conservative opinion. More significant was the fact that the only non-racial organization, the Malayan Democratic Union, proved unable to maintain itself. This was a clear indication that communalism remained the basic criterion of political activity, a fact substantiated by the reorganization of Malaya's party structure along racial lines. With the emergence of the M.C.A. each ethnic community had its own party which, although in principle not unwilling to take at heart the well-being of Malaya as a whole, was in fact primarily concerned with promoting the interests of the one particular communal group it represented.

In these circumstances a general Malayan policy could be successfully pursued only through a close co-operation of U.M.N.O., M.C.A. and M.I.C. This was demonstrated by the failure of yet another effort to further the cause of racial harmony by advocating the setting up of a non-racial political party. The author of this attempt was Onn bin Ja'afar, the U.M.N.O. president. Like Tan Cheng Lock he felt that communal rivalries should be eliminated as much as possible and it was he who had taken the initiative, in December 1948, to hold a meeting between Malay, Chinese and Indian leaders, as a result of which on 10 January 1949 the so-called Communities Liaison Committee was established. A few months later he made the first move in a campaign to reorganize U.M.N.O. into a genuinely Malayan, non-racial political party, by advocating that non-Malays be admitted to it, as associate rather than full members.

It may seem rather paradoxical that, of all people, the spokesman of Malay communal opinion in 1946 and the founder of U.M.N.O., became the advocate of a non-communal organization in 1949, but it may be observed that the wish to arrive at racial harmony was not the sole motive for his policy. Whatever views he expressed on this point he continued to be a Malay nationalist, inspired by the desire to reinforce the position of

the Malay community which tended to relax its vigilance since it won its resounding victory over the Malayan Union plan. In addition to this, there was the consideration that with the M.C.A. a potential competitor to U.M.N.O. had emerged in the political arena. Onn's proposal to open the doors of U.M.N.O. to non-Malays did not intend to transform the party into anything different from what it was, namely a predominantly Malay and communalist-orientated organization, and in the prevailing circumstances it was also highly unlikely that any such change could be effected. But advertising a non-communal policy might well serve the interests of U.M.N.O. and the Malays. It might encourage the Malays to display greater political activity and this might be useful in case the British regime should decide, one day, to grant more autonomy and organize elections. It might also remove the blot on the image of the Malays, and of U.M.N.O., that they were not adjusting themselves to the modern era. Finally, it might prompt those Chinese who were genuinely loyal *vis-à-vis* Malaya to leave the M.C.A. which was only looking after sectional interests.

Whatever Onn's considerations and side-reflections, the non-communalist aspect of his policy was not greatly welcomed by his Malay followers. They were persuaded to accept non-Malays as associate members of U.M.N.O., in May 1949, but when, a year later, he suggested that the party should advocate a liberalization of the citizenship qualifications, he met with strong opposition. It was feared that granting citizenship to a great number of non-Malays, while probably failing to turn the latter into loyal Malayans, as Onn expected, would certainly result in the gradual disappearance of Malay privileges. Only by threatening to resign was Onn able to muster sufficient support for his proposal and in August 1950 it was adopted, but it cost him a good deal of his popularity. The majority of the U.M.N.O. leadership, both from among the aristocracy which, as a group, had great prestige among the peasant masses, and from among the intellectual middle class, were, in principle, interested in Onn's vision that racial harmony was a prerequisite for any development towards self-rule or independence, although they occasionally entertained doubts as to the future of the Malays if there would not be a British regime any longer to protect them. But they were definitely not inclined to give up their own communal organization, guaranteeing them the opportunity to assert themselves, in exchange for a non-communal party which, from their point of view, offered them only some vague and dubious profits as well as some distinct disadvantages. In December 1950 the Peninsular Malay Union was founded as an expression of the more extremist opinions among the Malays. In the same month Onn's reputation as the defender of Malay rights eroded further because of his stand in the Bertha Hertogh case. This affair was related to a Dutch Catholic girl who, educated by a Malay woman servant while her parents were in a Japanese internment camp during the Second World War, had married a Malay schoolteacher, but

who after the war was traced by her family. The verdict of the Singapore High Court that the girl be sent back to Holland stirred up Malay, and Muslim, emotions and led to serious riots in Singapore in which 16 people were killed and over 150 injured.

By his disapproval of the Malay actions in this affair, Onn incurred the unfavourable comments of those who considered Islam insulted. He met with far greater criticism when, in January 1951, he proposed to admit non-Malays to U.M.N.O. with the same rights as Malay members. This time the resistance against his policy was too strong, and in August Onn resigned his post as U.M.N.O.-leader and left the party. On 16 September 1951 he founded the Independence of Malaya Party in an attempt to bring about, at last, the non-communal organization he had been advocating, partly as a move directed at weakening the M.C.A., and thus strengthening the position of the Malays in Malayan politics, partly also to pave the way for eventual self-government. The name of the new party was already a strong indication of what it intended, and so was its preamble: to unite the people in common loyalty, irrespective of creed, class or race and 'to work together towards the goal of an independent state of Malaya'.

The new party was not a great success. The same considerations which induced the U.M.N.O. to oppose Onn's attempts at a reorganization along non-communal lines, now urged it to declare against the I.M.P. and even to introduce party discipline to prevent U.M.N.O.-members from becoming I.M.P.-members at the same time. As a result the bulk of the Malays stayed away, apart from a few individuals. This might have been expected, because the I.M.P. advocated precisely those things — a common citizenship for example — which the Malays had opposed in the Malayan Union project and against which Onn had been organizing their resistance. But the Chinese community did not support it either, so that the desired split of the M.C.A. did not materialize, and this was really a set-back from Onn's point of view. It was only from among the Indians that the I.M.P. drew most of its adherents: the Malayan Indian Congress, indeed, decided to co-operate. But this, of course, was a patently inadequate basis for a non-racial organization, even if its non-communalism was no more than a pretence. Whatever his real or concealed aims, Onn's efforts to achieve them through a non-communal party broke completely against the wall of racial divisions and rivalries.

Although the I.M.P. was a failure, as a party, it had one surprising and unexpected result, in that, indirectly, it led to the co-operation between U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A. This was the obvious alternative to the non-racial tactics of Onn, and more within reach as a means of solving Malaya's problems. Yet, in addition to any desire to promote general Malayan interests, opportunist party-political considerations were also responsible for bringing about this result. Afraid of the influence which a non-racial party might exercise upon the Chinese in the M.C.A. and fearing the potential appeal of Onn's prestige to certain groups within U.M.N.O.,

both parties decided jointly to oppose the I.M.P. Thus the paradoxical situation developed that the two largest communal organizations in the country, which were bent upon defending their position as such and eager to check the influence of a party operating on a non-communalist platform, embarked upon a course which could only lead to a close co-operation between the two and, in the interests of this, to considerable compromise and concessions on original points of view.

Another reason why the necessity of co-operation between U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A. presented itself more forcefully was related to the gradual democratization of the political structure and the slow development towards self-government which were set into motion at precisely that moment. In the preamble of the Federal Agreement of 1948, it was stated that self-government was to be the eventual goal of the political development, but the constitution itself had been a clear step backwards compared to the opportunities offered under the Malayan Union scheme. The state of emergency, moreover, with its regulations which gave the administration virtually dictatorial authority, effectively reduced political activity to a minimum. Independence was hardly talked about during the early years of the communist rebellion, except by the communists, and after September 1951, by the I.M.P. The M.C.A. had no interest in general Malayan politics, since the commercial and industrial tycoons who made up its leadership were paying attention primarily to the material well-being of their own group or, in a somewhat wider sense, the Chinese community. The major activities of the M.C.A. were focused upon welfare work in the 'new villages', in the interest of which the party was running lotteries among its members. On the Malay side, the prospect of self-government did not strike U.M.N.O. as very attractive, although some of its leaders and particularly Onn when he started his campaign to make the party give up its purely Malay character, were making allowances for a future evolution in this direction. But in general they did not press the matter because they wanted to make very sure that the Malay privileges were safeguarded, and they were also aware that the non-Malays were not likely to conform to the Malay tendency of equating Malayan with Malay when referring to items like nation or loyalty. Both the Malay and Chinese as well as the leading Indian politicians realized, moreover, that Britain's presence would still be necessary for some time in order to suppress the communist rebellion.

This lack of interest in the attainment of independence changed, however, when some minor constitutional reforms were introduced which, in fact, were long overdue in view of the turbulent developments taking place in the countries bordering upon Malaya. In January 1951 the federal Legislative Council adopted a scheme under which nine of the official members were made responsible for various departments of government and given a semi-ministerial status. Later the same year a system of local administration through elected bodies was decided upon. As steps toward

parliamentary democracy both reforms were of a very limited nature, but the latter one of them was of great importance, though in a symbolic way, for the change in the party-political configuration. Under the new system municipal elections were held in Kuala Lumpur, in February 1952, and these provided U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A. with the opportunity of joining forces against the I.M.P. In this election their candidates won nine out of the twelve seats contested.

The alliance between U.M.N.O. and M.C.A. in Kuala Lumpur did not amount to anything more substantial than a limited election front, decided upon by motives of expediency. It did not immediately result in a large-scale co-operation of the two racial organizations. The M.C.A. was not yet evincing sufficient interest in political problems, and when it did, issues were involved which were not conducive to endearing the Malays to the Chinese. Among these issues were the new citizenship regulations of June 1952 which considerably improved the position of the non-Malays, but which also contained a few clauses highly disliked by the Chinese. There were the discriminatory provisions of the new immigration law of November 1952, the controversial proposals on educational matters, and the slow admission of non-Malays to the bureaucracy. On the other hand the Malays, who tended to consider the liberalization of the conditions for citizenship and the clause that non-Malays be permitted to enter the civil service in the ratio of one to every four Malays important concessions on their part, were annoyed at the meager results of the efforts to improve their economic position *vis-à-vis* the Chinese and Indians. Malay agriculture was somewhat affected by the mobilization of Malays for the struggle against the communist rebellion, while the Korean War-boom proved to be mainly to the advantage of the non-Malays. Doubts were often expressed whether the government-sponsored Rural and Industrial Development Authority, established in 1950 for the purpose of strengthening the economic position of the Malay peasants, was sufficiently assisting the Malays.

These and similar bones of contention clearly demonstrated that the relations between the Malay and the Chinese communities were still rather tense. But they also pointed to a growing disappointment with the policy of the colonial regime, as became particularly evident among the Malays. There was considerable resentment, for example, early in 1952 at the time when General Templer became high commissioner, that the proposal of U.M.N.O. to appoint a Malay as deputy high commissioner was rejected in the federal Legislative Council with the help of the nominated Malay members. Slowly the idea crept into the minds of the Malays that both the racial differences and the communist rebellion provided the British with a convenient excuse to continue their rule. The U.M.N.O., more or less in a state of apathy after the victory over the Malayan Union scheme and Onn's resignation, needed a new slogan to hold the interest of the Malays and to prevent the Malay community as well as the party itself from be-

coming politically stagnant. That slogan provided was that of self-government, inspired too by the wish of the U.M.N.O. politicians to disprove the claim of the communist rebels, and the I.M.P., that they were the only advocates of Malaya's independence.

More self-rule — and independence — were to be achieved only, however, if the British could be given the assurance that a stable government would be created to take over from them. Such had been the condition for the withdrawal of colonial power in all territories of the former British Empire where the development had not got out of hand as in India or Palestine, and since the situation was not likely to get out of hand this condition was also valid for Malaya. This was made perfectly clear to all concerned by a statement of the colonial secretary, Lyttleton, early in 1952, that Malaya was to be given independence only when the various races of the country were united. It urged the leading politicians to take the problem of overcoming their communal differences more seriously, and it eventually led to the 'alliance of convenience' between U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A.

The example had already been set, locally, by the elections in Kuala Lumpur. Now it was planned to achieve greater political co-operation with a view to possible general elections, and in March 1952 Tengku Abdul Rahman, Onn's successor as president of U.M.N.O., started to work on the project. His policy was no less devoid of party-political motives than Onn's had been a few years earlier; co-operation with the M.C.A. also aimed at checking the influence of the I.M.P. This became the more urgent when Onn, sensing that his non-communalism was a total failure, attempted to attract more Malays by restricting his party's membership to federal citizens, that is to a group of people who were in overwhelming majority Malay. By doing so, in October 1952, he adopted a racialist course which, in fact, constituted a far more dangerous challenge to U.M.N.O. than his non-communal tactics had been in the past.

After various conferences between Tengku Abdul Rahman and Tan Cheng Lock it was announced on 17 March 1953 that an agreement had been reached: U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A. were to co-operate in the pursuance of independence and immediate elections for a federal council. This was the beginning of the so-called 'Alliance'. The coalition as such took the authorities as much by surprise as did the programme which it presented and which was elaborated on by an U.M.N.O. resolution on 6 April calling for federal elections in 1954 and for the resignation of U.M.N.O. and M.C.A. members from the Legislative Council should the proposal be rejected by the government. It is true that Britain had promised to support a development towards self-government and democracy, but the colonial secretary was in favour of moving slowly, using as arguments the communist rebellion and the communal differences. Neither was Templer an advocate of transferring administrative responsibility to the Malayans. With his customary arbitrariness, usually reserved for his

dealings with guerrilla fighters and non-cooperative Chinese townsfolk, he set out to punish the M.C.A. for its participation in the Alliance and its insistence on immediate elections by forbidding political parties to run lotteries. He also supported, if not inspired, a counteraction by the most conservative elements of Malay society — the rulers and the *mentris besar* — who, for obvious reasons, were not greatly interested in a democratic type of government. They convened a 'National Congress' in Kuala Lumpur which met on 27 April, but in which neither U.M.N.O. nor M.C.A took part; the ultra-racialist Peninsular Malay Union, and the Pan Malayan Labour Party, founded on 26 June 1952 by Narayanan as a first sign of the cautious revival of the left wing, also failed to attend. At this congress Onn launched a sensational attack on the M.C.A.; accusing the party of trying to turn Malaya into a Chinese province, he made it clear that he had definitely returned to Malay communalism as the basis of his political activities.

The attempts to check the development initiated by the formation of the Alliance failed to be successful. In 1952 and 1953 the U.M.N.O.-M.C.A. combination won 94 out of 124 seats contested in various municipal and town council elections. The agitation for self-rule became stronger and on 23 August 1953 a convention of the Alliance parties in Kuala Lumpur adopted a resolution which reiterated the demand that elections for the federal Legislative Council be held in 1954. The next day the anti-Alliance politicians tabled a counter-resolution which, although not openly declaring against self-rule as such, proposed a different timetable: an enlarged but still nominated federal Legislative Council by February 1954, and elections not later than 1956. Out of this meeting, the Malayan National Conference, a new political party emerged — the Party Negara. Founded by Onn on 28 February 1954, it was an ultra-conservative organization, entertaining close relations with the feudal elements and advocating a transformation towards self-rule in a period of five years. Although claiming to be a non-communal party, it was purely Malay.

Meanwhile, in May 1953, Templer had been appointing an election committee which published its report in February 1954. Its recommendations were, on the whole, rather conservative. U.M.N.O., the M.C.A., the Pan Malayan Labour Party and the Malayan Indian Congress rejected the report and started considering joint action. As to the nature of their action the M.I.C. had set the example already. Representing a numerically small ethnic group, this party was less communally-orientated and more open to non-communal experiments than U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A., and initially it was, indeed, quite critical of the Alliance. It had been co-operating with the I.M.P., but it abandoned Onn when he joined in with the Malay rulers in recommending that the federal elections be postponed. In October 1953 five out of the six Indian members of the Legislative Council resigned in protest against the fact that none of them had been given governmental responsibility as provided for by the relevant consti-

tutional reform of early 1951. This strategy, which proved successful in the case of the Indians, was adopted by the Alliance when in May 1954 its delegation to London failed to obtain an appreciative hearing with Lyttleton. Representatives of U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A. in the federal, state and local councils resigned their posts.

It was a sign on the wall, in a sense comparable to the change of front of the Malino politicians in Indonesia in 1949. The Alliance was certainly not revolutionary or anti-British; it was very moderate, politically, and conservative, socially, and in its heart not disloyal to the colonial authorities. In the development towards self-rule, which could not be checked and which, in principle, the British did not wish to curb anyway but only to slow down, this party represented the only group of Malayan political leaders who, in the prevailing circumstances, counted. This was not only so in the Malayan context, but also from the British point of view: belonging to the right wing the Alliance was the best guarantee that in the future Malaya would not embark upon any unwelcome radical socialist or revolutionary nationalist course, and that Britain would be allowed to maintain its influence after independence. This made it impossible for the authorities to disregard its demands and as a result the colonial government had to give in. The new policy of the British was facilitated by the departure, in June 1954, of Templer who was succeeded by the far more accommodating Donald MacGillivray. Over the head of the election committee's report a compromise was worked out by the government and the Alliance. An agreement was reached, a relevant White Paper was published on 27 April 1955, and the Alliance members took up their seats again in the various representative bodies. The agreement provided for a federal Legislative Council of 46 nominated and 52 elected members, and for the holding of elections in three months' time.

The Alliance, which was joined at this juncture by the Malayan Indian Congress, easily won the elections of 27 July. It had great prestige as the organization which wrested a new constitutional set-up from the British regime against the opposition of the rulers and their conservative followers; it could rely on the financial resources of the Chinese in the M.C.A. and on the mass support of U.M.N.O. among the Malays. With nearly 80 per cent of the votes it captured 51 out of the 52 seats contested; the remaining seat going to Burhanuddin's Pan-Malayan Islamic Party into which the Peninsular Malay Union as the expression of Malay communal extremism had been reorganized. On the strength of the election results Tengku Abdul Rahman formed a cabinet, of which he became 'chief minister'

The emergence of the U.M.N.O.-M.C.A.-M.I.C. coalition and the elections of 1955 did not solve any of the outstanding communal problems. None of these was, in fact, referred to in the agreement which was at the base of the Alliance. The election victory was an overwhelmingly Malay affair and it did not in any way reflect Chinese opinion: of the registered voters 84 per cent were Malay, and it was they who had come to the polls,

while 34 out of the 51 Alliance seats were occupied by Malay candidates as against 11 Chinese, 1 Indian and 1 Ceylonese. Yet, taken by itself, the formation of the Alliance was an important landmark in Malaya's political development in that it was a clear indication of the manner in which, in the future, the racial differences were to be bridged — by compromise. It also was the beginning of what, with reserve, might be called a Malayan nationalist movement.

THE FINAL PHASE OF COLONIAL RULE IN MALAYA AND SINGAPORE

In the same year that Malaya, while still under British supervision, gained internal self-government, Singapore gained hers. Because of the island's overwhelmingly Chinese population, racial problems, although occasionally a matter of concern, were not as predominant as in Malaya. Another difference from Malaya was the more radical nature of Singaporean politics, for which the city's large urban proletariat was responsible. As long as the working classes, including labourers as well as shopkeepers and small traders, were lacking a proper organization and a programme, the leading politicians had been able to neglect them, but as soon as they were aroused to self-consciousness, their numerical strength turned them into a decisive force. In addition to the proletariat the younger generation, often of school-going age and strongly endowed with Chinese nationalist ideals, presented itself as a reservoir of political activity. The communist party was banned since, in Singapore, too, a state of emergency had been declared in June 1948, but other radicals continued to carry on propaganda for their ideals, particularly in the Chinese secondary schools and the trade unions. In this they were quite successful, and they contributed to increasing the radicalism, naturally inherent in these groups, to such a degree that both were transformed into a formidable power factor which the moderate political parties were patently incapable of coping with.

The administrative set-up was still thoroughly autocratic, with all departments of government headed by British officials. A minor constitutional amendment in 1950 raised the number of elected members in the Legislative Council to nine, out of a total of 25, but this did not essentially change the situation. Consequently the electorate showed a minimum of interest when the elections of 1951 were held. Neither the Progressive Party, which advocated a gradual development towards self-rule, nor the moderately socialist Labour Party was in a position to influence the course of events; occupying six of the elected seats the former had some authority, but it identified itself rather closely with the British regime and the capitalist structure of society, while the latter, with two seats, was completely powerless. But behind this background of parliamentary impotence and electoral apathy, the process of radicalization of the masses was taking

place which might have dangerous consequences in a city in which the majority of the population was living in overcrowded slums and unbelievable squalor while a tiny minority led a most luxurious existence. To adjust Singapore's political structure officially to this reality, Governor John Nicoll in July 1953 appointed a commission, headed by George Rendel, to work out proposals for a new constitution.

The Rendel Commission published its report early in 1954 and in February 1955 the new constitution became effective. It provided for a Legislative Assembly of 32 members, out of which 25 were to be elected. The Executive Council was replaced by a Council of Ministers, consisting of the governor and nine members, six of whom would represent the majority party and be charged with all administrative affairs except defence, internal security and foreign affairs which fell to the responsibility of three official members. The elections were held on 2 April. The Labour Front, a coalition of several small socialist groups, captured ten seats, in addition to which the radical left-wing People's Action Party obtained three. Yet it was not with this P.A.P. but with the U.M.N.O.-M.C.A.-M.I.C. Alliance, which also won three seats, that the leader of the Labour Front, David Marshall, arrived at an agreement to form a cabinet. A government right-of-the-centre was the answer to a clear electoral swing to the left, based not only on the personal preferences of the political leaders involved but also on the fact that the economy of Singapore and its dependence on foreign trade did not leave any margin for a left-wing policy, irrespective of whether or not such a policy was demanded at the polls.

This factor accounted for the weak position of the cabinet, since his responsibilities forced Marshall to follow a course of moderation, while the opposition was free to voice the most revolutionary suggestions, and thus obtain greater popularity. It was the People's Action Party, founded late in 1954 by Lee Kuan Yew and Lim Chin Siong, which embarked upon such a policy. It aimed at making the Chinese-educated Chinese politically self-conscious, it was vehemently anti-colonial and it advocated immediate independence outside the Commonwealth. Although not a communist organization itself, the P.A.P. had an extremely radical left wing, into which a few communists, as well as communist-orientated leaders had penetrated, the people who used to carry on agitation among the students of Chinese middle schools as well as in the labour movement. From late April to mid-June 1955 Singapore went through a period of labour unrest and student demonstrations, climaxing in serious riots, in May, on the occasion of a labour dispute at a bus company, and in a five days' general strike in June in protest against the arrests of several people accused of being communists. With the help of the more conservative elements in the trade unions, the government was able to weather the crisis, but the situation remained potentially very explosive.

In Malaya, at the same time, the cause of the communist rebellion was further weakened by the constitutional changes; now that Britain was

obviously leading the country to independence doubts arose in communist ranks whether there was any motive left for fighting British colonialism and imperialism. Eager to avail himself of this confusion Tengku Abdul Rahman offered an amnesty, in September 1955, for a limited period, to all communists who surrendered. The treatment that would be given to them after their surrender proved to be such, however, that not many communists accepted the offer at this stage. Yet on 28 and 29 December a meeting was arranged in Baling between the communist leader Chin Peng on the one hand, and on the other Tengku Abdul Rahman, Tan Cheng Lock and Marshall. The talks ended in a deadlock since the communists were only willing to stop fighting if the M.C.P. was legalized and accorded complete freedom of action, while the Tengku insisted that surrendered communists be screened to test their loyalty. Furthermore he was not prepared to recognize the party as a legal organization. Consequently the war continued, with some 3,000 guerrilla fighters still in the jungle, mainly in the northern part of the country.

The co-operation between U.M.N.O. and the M.C.A. within the Alliance deprived the British of one motive for slowing down Malaya's development towards independence, but the necessity for suppressing the communist rebellion still remained valid. The turn the war had taken clearly pointed to a defeat of the communists, however, and this made the British adopt a more conciliatory attitude, while Tengku Abdul Rahman, on his part, used the failure of the Baling talks as an argument to insist on stepping up the constitutional process and to put pressure on the colonial power to grant independence at an early date. From 18 January 1956 onwards a conference on the matter was held in London, where Malaya was represented by Tengku Abdul Rahman and the Malay princes, and Britain by Colonial Secretary Alan Lennox-Boyd and the high commissioner. On 8 February an agreement was reached. Independence within the Commonwealth was to be proclaimed by 31 August 1957. In the period of transition the Malayan chief minister was to be accorded greater powers, while his government would also be charged with internal security, finance, and trade and industry, so that Britain would remain responsible only for foreign affairs and external defence. Britain would continue to assist, militarily and economically, in fighting the communist rebellion. Finally a commission was to be appointed to draft the details of a constitution for independent Malaya.

A few months later another conference was held in London, this time between the British government and a Singaporean delegation. In August 1955 the partial refusal of Governor Robert Black to comply with Marshall's recommendation to appoint assistant ministers led to a constitutional dispute whether or not the governor was entitled to reject any advice given to him by the chief minister. The matter was referred to the colonial secretary when he visited Singapore. Lennox-Boyd decided in favour of Marshall's point of view; he also suggested that within a year after having

become effective the constitution was to be revised. For the purpose of discussing the constitutional situation Marshall was invited to London. Before he left, as head of an all-party delegation, the Legislative Assembly instructed him to insist that Singapore be given the status of an independent territory, within the Commonwealth, and that Britain would retain responsibility only for defence and foreign affairs.

This proposal was made by the Singaporean delegation at the conference which met in London on 23 April. The British were, in principle, prepared to consider self-government and an enlarged and fully elected Legislative Assembly. But internal security proved to be a controversial point, since the British government doubted the Singapore government's ability to keep law and order in the event of strikes and riots, and to defend itself properly against what was referred to as communist subversion. For this reason Lennox-Boyd wished to retain a decisive voice in the proposed defence and security council on which Britain and Singapore would both be represented. Marshall was not willing to accept this, stating, on the analogy of Tengku Abdul Rahman's reasoning, that the best way to fight communism would be to grant full independence by April 1957. On this issue the talks broke down on 13 May and after his return to Singapore Marshall resigned as chief minister on 7 July.

He was succeeded by a right-wing Labour Front leader, Lim Yew Hock, whose major concern it was to show the British that his government was perfectly capable of preserving law and order. Immediately he adopted a tough attitude *vis-à-vis* the radical opposition, dissolved various organizations and trade unions which were under the influence of communists or other radicals, and ordered the arrest and detention of a number of people charged with subversive activity. The opposition retaliated by organizing a wave of strikes and riots and for the second time within a year-and-a-half Singapore was the scene of serious disorders in September 1956. It was proved that Lim Yew Hock's cabinet was indeed able to take a firm stand against the opposition, but also that it was totally incapable of coping with the situation thus created. In the end police forces and troops from Malaya had to be called in to put down the disturbances. In spite of his sorry performance in this field Lim Yew Hock was invited to London for a new round of talks on constitutional matters.

Meanwhile the federation of Malaya completed its development towards independence. The constitutional commission, provided for by the London Conference of early 1956, was appointed under the chairmanship of Lord Reid, and between May and October it held several meetings. On 20 February 1957 it published its report which, with a few modifications, was accepted by the British and Malayan governments and the Malay rulers. According to the new constitution there was to be a federal head of state, elected for a period of five years by the Malay rulers from among their own number, a federal government and a bicameral legislature. Elections for the proposed House of Representatives were to be postponed

for about two years, so that until that moment the existing Legislative Council would continue to perform its duties. The powers of the federal and the state governments were scrupulously delimited, with the emphasis on the former. The existing special rights for Malays were to be maintained, subject to a revision after a period of fifteen years. Citizenship was to be extended to all people born in the federation after independence, while for others the conditions for qualifying were made easier. Although Malaya would be a secular state, Islam was to be treated as a state religion.

As to military affairs an agreement had already been reached in January 1957. Britain would continue to contribute, financially, to the campaign against the communist guerrillas; she would also assist in the training of a Malayan army. Malaya allowed the stationing on her territory of British, Australian and New Zealand troops, provided that they be used only in case of an armed attack on Malaya itself, Singapore, British Borneo or Hong Kong; for their use elsewhere in the region the consent of the Malayan government had to be obtained.

The bill authorizing Malaya's independence was approved by the British parliament and, on 31 July, signed by Queen Elizabeth II. On 31 August 1957 it took effect, together with the new constitution, and on that date Britain ceded its colonial territories, Malacca and Penang, and relinquished its position of protector of the Malay states. Two days later the ruler of Negri Sembilan was inaugurated as the first head of state, or *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*, of the independent federation of Malaya.

With the independence of Malaya, Singapore and the territories in Borneo were the only British colonies left in South-East Asia, and of these Singapore was well on the road towards self-government. At the second constitutional conference, held in London from 11 March to 11 April 1957, the main point at issue during the first one — that of internal security — was solved by a compromise. Singapore would be formally responsible, but under the supervision of an 'internal security council', consisting of three members from Britain, three from Singapore itself, and one representative from Malaya. One issue remained; although the British had more confidence in Lim Yew Hock than in Marshall, they insisted that persons known to have been engaged in subversive action would not be eligible for election in the Legislative Assembly. The Singapore delegation accepted this condition, under feigned protest. For the rest Singapore was to become an almost fully self-governing state, with Britain responsible for foreign affairs and external defence matters, keeping its military bases and retaining the right to suspend the constitution in case of an emergency. There was to be a Malayan-born head of state, and an elected Legislative Assembly of 51 members to which the council of ministers would be responsible. The new set-up was to take effect the moment the Rendel constitution, which had always been intended as a provisional one, expired in April 1959. On 30 April 1957 the Legislative Assembly accepted the

constitutional proposals, though under protest against the exclusion of the 'subversives'.

In the next two years, however, internal developments in Singapore were not conducive to setting the British at ease. In August 1957 the Lim Yew Hock administration launched a new campaign against political agitation in the middle schools and trade unions, in the course of which 39 members of the extremist wing of the P.A.P. were arrested. But in the elections of the Singapore City Council in December, the P.A.P. won 13 of the 32 seats, after which Ong Eng Guan, a radical whose first action in office was to remove all British regalia and symbols from public buildings, became mayor. With a view to the impending elections for the Legislative Assembly, the party intensified its propaganda against the government and the political parties which supported it and stepped up its activities among the Chinese masses. It expounded strong anti-Western views, advocated that non-indigenous, particularly European, influences in the administration and in business be wiped out, and stated that, once in power, it would introduce a progressive tax system, reform the civil service and turn Singapore into a welfare state. The party was extremely well-organized and although non-communal in outlook — it urged the adoption of Malay as national language — it was basically Chinese-orientated. It claimed to be non-communist, and certainly it was not a communist organization; it was a socialist party with a radical wing which was setting the tone which, for obvious reasons of expediency, was not counteracted by Lee Kuan Yew and his more moderate supporters. The left-wing's extremism won the P.A.P. its tremendous popularity among the younger generation and the unruly proletariat of the great city.

Now that the Labour Front was thoroughly discredited in the public mind by the activities of Lim Yew Hock's cabinet, and the other parties were hardly in a position either to oppose the P.A.P., it seemed very likely that the latter was going to win the elections. The local British were deeply concerned, and several business companies started to transfer their headquarters from Singapore to Malaya. The question began to be asked what Singapore, with its essentially hostile and anti-Western population, would be worth as a military base. It was suggested that the British government discontinue the development towards internal autonomy, as she had done in Guyana a few years earlier. But this advice was not heeded by the responsible authorities. Any slowing down of the political process might provoke a head-on collision with public opinion of which the left wing, if not the communists, would be the only beneficiaries. The British government was well aware, moreover, that there were several factors operating against a total swing to the extreme left. She had provided for one herself — Malaya's decisive voice in the internal security council — with the help of which Britain would have her way in case of a tie, and in such a manner that she could not be accused of colonialism. Britain also felt that the economic situation of the state and its dependence on inter-

national trade as well as on international goodwill would prevent Singapore's government, even if led by the P.A.P., from embarking on too wild a policy, and that the powerful Chinese business circles would effectively dissuade it if it should fail to come to such a conclusion. Sensing that the extremist behaviour and propaganda of the P.A.P. leaders was aimed at attracting voters in the first place, that the moderates in the party, like Lee Kuan Yew, were using the radicals to capture power and that, once in office, they would have to take Singapore's world position into account, the British authorities decided to take the risk.

In May 1958 final talks were held in London to discuss the details of the new constitution and on 1 August the State of Singapore Bill was signed by the Queen. The elections of 30 May 1959 resulted in a sweeping victory for the P.A.P. which won 43 out of the 51 seats — a landslide which was all the more convincing since new citizenship laws had extended the electorate to over half a million. Lee Kuan Yew was duly asked by Governor William Goode to form a government. He did not immediately take up his new assignment. During the election campaign the leaders of the P.A.P. had announced that, if elected, they would refuse to take office until eight party members, six of whom were detained since October 1956 and two since August 1957, were released. Lee Kuan Yew formally made the same request, and only after it was granted, on 2 July, he stated his willingness to become prime minister. The next day Singapore became a self-governing city state.

It did not mean complete independence yet, but the outcome of the development could not be doubted any more. In spite the continuing existence of colonial regimes in British Borneo, Dutch New Guinea and Portuguese Timor, 3 July 1959 marked the end of traditional colonial rule in South-East Asia.

Bibliography

GENERAL

ALLEN, G. C., and DONNITHORNE, A. G., *Western Enterprise in Indonesia and Malaya*, London, 1962.

BAUER, P. T., *The Rubber Industry: A Study in Competition and Monopoly*, Cambridge, Mass., 1948.

BELLAH, ROBERT N., *Religion and Progress in Modern Asia*, N.Y., 1965.

BONE, ROBERT C., *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, N.Y., 1962.

BRECHER, M., *The New States of Asia: A Political Analysis*, London, 1964.

BRIMMELL, J. H., *Communism in South-East Asia: A Political Analysis*, London, 1959.

BUSS, CLAUDE A., *War and Diplomacy in East Asia*, N.Y., *1941*.

——— *Southeast Asia and the World Today*, N.Y., 1958.

BUTWELL, RICHARD, *Southeast Asia Today — and Tomorrow: A Political Analysis*, N.Y., 1964.

CADY, JOHN F., *et. al. The Development of Self-rule and Independence in Burma, Malaya and the Philippines*, N.Y., 1948.

——— *Southeast Asia: Its Historical Development*, N.Y., *1964*.

——— *Thailand, Burma, Laos and Cambodia*, Englewood Cliffs. 1966.

CALLIS, HELMUTH G., *Foreign Capital in Southeast Asia*, N.Y., 1942.

COLLIER, B., *The War in the Far East 1941–1945: A Military History*, London, 1966.

COWAN, C. D. (ed.), *Economic Development of South-East Asia: Studies in Economic History and Political Economy*, London, 1964.

CROZIER, BRIAN, *Southeast Asia in Turmoil*, Harmondsworth, 1965.

DOBBY, E. H. G., *Southeast Asia*, London, 1960.

DU BOIS, CORA, *Social Forces in Southeast Asia*, Camb., Mass., 1962.

ELSBREE, WILLARD H., *Japan's Role in Southeast Asian Nationalist Movements 1940–1945*, Camb., Mass., 1953.

EMERSON, RUPERT., *Malaysia: A Study in Direct and Indirect Rule*. N.Y., 1937, repr. K.L., 1964.

——— *Representative Government in Southeast Asia*, Camb., Mass., 1955.

——— (ed.), *Government and Nationalism in Southeast Asia*, N.Y., 1942.

FEIS, HERBERT, *The Road to Pearl Harbor: The Coming of the War between the United States and Japan*, Princeton, 1950.

FIFIELD, RUSSELL H., *The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia 1945–1958*, N.Y., 1958.

——— *Southeast Asia in United States Policy*, N.Y., 1963.

FISHER, C. A., *South-East Asia: A Social, Economic and Political Geography* N.Y., 1964.

FURNIVALL, JOHN S., *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*, N.Y., 1948.

HALL, D. G. E., *A History of Southeast Asia*, N.Y., 1964.

HANNA, WILLARD A., *Eight Nation Makers: Southeast Asia's Charismatic Statesmen*, N.Y., 1964.

HARRISON, BRIAN, *South-East Asia: A Short History*, N.Y., 1966.

HOLLAND, W. L. (ed.), *Asian Nationalism and the West*, N.Y., 1953.

HORLEMANN, JÜRGEN, *Modelle der kolonialen Konterrevolution: Beschreibung und Dokumente* (*Models of the Colonial Counter-revolution: Description and Documents*), Frankfurt/Main, 1968.

IKE, NOBUTAKA (ed.), *Japan's Decision for War: Records of the 1941 Policy Conferences*, Palo Alto (Cal.), 1967.

ISAACS, HAROLD R., *No Peace for Asia*, N.Y., 1947.

——— (ed.), *New Cycle in Asia: Selected Documents on Major International Developments in the Far East 1943–1947*, N.Y., 1947.

JACOBY, ERICH H., *Agrarian Unrest in Southeast Asia*, N.Y., 1949.

JONES, F. C., *Japan's New Order in East Asia: Its Rise and Fall 1937–1945*, London, 1954.

JONES, F. C., BURTON, HUGH and PEARN, B. R., *The Far East 1942–1946* London, 1955.

KAHIN, GEORGE MCT. (ed.), *Governments and Politics of Southeast Asia*, Ithaca, 1964.

KING, JOHN K., *Southeast Asia in Perspective*, N.Y., 1956.

KIRBY, S. WOODBURN., *The War against Japan*, vols. 2, 3 and 4, London, 1958–1965.

LANDON, KENNETH P., *Southeast Asia: Crossroads of Religions*, Chicago, 1949.

LASKER, BRUNO., *Human Bondage in Southeast Asia*, Chapel Hill, 1950.

——— (ed.), *New Forces in Asia*, N.Y., 1950.

LE THANH KHOI, *l'Economie de l'Asie du Sud-Est* (*The Economy of South-East Asia*), Paris, 1958.

MCVEY, RUTH T., *The Calcutta Conference and the Southeast Asian Uprisings*, Ithaca, 1958.

MAHAJANI, USHA, *The Role of Indian Minorities in Burma and Malaya*, Bombay, 1960.

MEDHEN, FRED R. VAN DER, *Religion and Nationalism in Southeast Asia*, Wisconsin, 1963.

MENDE, TIBOR, *l'Asie du Sud-Est entre deux mondes*, Paris, 1954. trans. *South-East Asia between Two Worlds*, London, 1955.

MILLS, LENNOX A., and associates., *The New World of Southeast Asia*, Minneapolis, 1949.

——— *Southeast Asia: Illusion and Reality in Politics*, Minneapolis, 1964.

MITCHELL, K., *Industrialization of the Western Pacific*, N.Y., 1942.

MORISON, SAMUEL ELIOT, *History of US Naval Operations in World War II*, vol. 2, Boston, 1948.

MORTON, LOUIS, *The History of the War in the Pacific*, vol. 4, Washington, 1953.

PURCELL, VICTOR, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, London, 1965.

——— *The Revolution in Southeast Asia*, London, 1962.

QUIGLEY, HAROLD S., *Far Eastern War 1937–41*, Boston, 1943.

ROBEQUAIN, CHARLES, *Monde malais* (*Malay World*), Paris, 1946. trans. *Malaya, Indonesia, Borneo and the Philippines*, London, 1958.

ROMEIN, JAN, *De Eeuw van Azië*, Leyden, 1956. In English: *The Asian Century: A History of Modern Nationalism in Asia*, Berkeley, 1962.

ROSE, SAUL, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, London, 1959.

——— *Britain and South-East Asia*, Baltimore, 1962.

——— (ed.), *Politics in Southern Asia*, London, 1963.

SCALAPINO, ROBERT A. (ed.), *The Communist Revolution in Asia*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1965.

SHIGEMITSU, MAMORU, *Die Schicksalsjahre Japans* (*Japan's Fateful Years*), Frankfurt/Main, 1959.

SILVERSTEIN, JOSEPH (ed.), *Southeast Asia in World War II*, New Haven, 1966.

TALBOT, P., *South Asia in the World Today*, Chicago, 1951.

THAYER, PHILIP W. (ed.), *Southeast Asia in the Coming World*, Baltimore, 1953.

THAYER, P. W., and PHILIPS, W. T. (ed.), *Nationalism and Progress in Free Asia*, Baltimore, 1956.

THOMPSON, *Sir* ROBERT, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam*, London, 1966.

THOMPSON, VIRGINIA, *Labor Problem in Southeast Asia*, N.Y., 1947.

THOMPSON, VIRGINIA, and ADLOFF, RICHARD, *The Left Wing in Southeast Asia*, N.Y., 1950.

——— *Minority Problems in Southeast Asia*, Stanford, 1955.

TOGO, SHIGENORI, *Japan im Zweiten Weltkrieg (Japan during the Second World War)*, Bonn. 1958.

TRAGER, FRANK N. (ed.), *Marxism in Southeast Asia*, Stanford, 1960.

VANDENBOSCH, AMRY and BUTWELL, RICHARD, *The Changing Face of Southeast Asia*, Lexington, 1966.

VELDEN, DOETJE VAN, *De Japanese interneringskampen voor burgers gedurende de Tweede Wereldoorlog (The Japanese Internment Camps for Civilians during the Second World War)*, Groningen, 1963.

WARD, ROBERT E., and MACRIDIS, ROY C., *Modern Political Systems: Asia*, Englewood Cliffs, 1963.

WILLIAMS, LEA, *The Future of the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia*, N.Y., 1966.
ZINKIN, MAURICE, *Asia and the West*, London, 1957.

BRITISH BORNEO

BAKER, M. H., *Sabah: The First Ten Years as a Colony*, Singapore, 1965.
IRWIN, G., *Nineteenth Century Borneo: A Study in Diplomatic Rivalry*, Singapore, 1965.
LONGHURST, H., *The Borneo Story*, London, 1956.
RUNCIMAN, S., *The White Rajahs: A History of Sarawak from 1841 to 1946*, Camb., U.K., 1960.
TREGONNING, K. G., *Under Chartered Company Rule: North Borneo 1881–1946*, S'pore, 1958; revised: *A History of Modern Sabah 1881–1963*, S'pore, 1965.

BURMA

ANDREW, E. J. L., *Indian Labor in Rangoon*, London, 1934.
ANDRUS, JAMES RUSSELL, *Burmese Economic Life*, Stanford, 1948.
BA MAW, *Breakthrough in Burma: Memoirs of a Revolution 1939–1946*, New Haven, 1968.
BA U., *My Burma: The Autobiography of a President*, N.Y., 1958.
BUTWELL, R., *U Nu of Burma*, Stanford, 1963.
CADY, JOHN F., *A History of Modern Burma*, Ithaca, 1958.
CHRISTIAN, JOHN L., *Modern Burma: A Survey of Political and Economic Development*, Berkeley, 1942; revised: *Burma and the Japanese Invader*, Bombay, 1945.
COLLIS, MAURICE, *Trials in Burma*, London, 1938.
——— *Last and First in Burma*, London, 1956.
CROSTHWAITE, *Sir* CHARLES, *The Pacification of Burma*, London, 1912.
DESAI, WALTER S., *India and Burma*, Calcutta, 1954.
DONNISON, F. S. V., *Public Administration in Burma: A Study of Development during the British Connection*, London, 1953.
——— *British Military Administration in the Far East 1943–1946*, London, 1956.
FURNIVALL, JOHN S., *An Introduction to the Political Economy of Burma*, Rangoon, 1931.
——— *The Governance of Modern Burma*, N.Y., 1958.
HALL, D. G. E., *Europe and Burma*, London, 1945.
——— *Burma*, London, 1950.
HARVEY, G. W., *British Rule in Burma 1824–1942*, London, 1946.
HTIN AUNG, MAUNG, *The Stricken Peacock: Anglo-Burmese Relations 1752–1948*, The Hague, 1965.

KHIN, U., *U Hla Pe's Narrative of the Japanese Occupation of Burma*, Ithaca, 1961.
MASTERS, JOHN, *The Road Past Mandalay*, London, 1961.
MAUNG MAUNG, *Burma in the Family of Nations*, Amsterdam, 1957.
——— *Burma's Constitution*, The Hague, 1961.
——— *Aung San of Burma*, The Hague, 1962.
——— *A Trial in Burma: the Assassination of Aung San*, The Hague, 1962.
MAUNG MAUNG PYE, *Burma in the Crucible*, Rangoon, 1951.
MCKELVIE, ROY, *The War in Burma*, London, 1948.
MYA SEIN, DAW, *Administration of Burma: Sir Charles Crosthwaite and the Consolidation of Burma*, Rangoon, 1938. (reprinted Kuala Lumpur, 1972.)
NU, THAKIN, *Burma under the Japanese: Pictures and Portraits*, N.Y., 1954.
SENS, NIRMAL C., *A Peep into Burma Politics, 1917–1932*, Allahabad, 1945.
SLIM, *Sir* WILLIAM, *Defeat into Victory*, London, 1956.
SMITH, D. E., *Religion and Politics in Burma*, Princeton, 1965.
TRAGER, FRANK N., *et al. Burma*, 3 vols., New Haven, 1956.
———*Burma From Kingdom to Republic: A Historical and Political Analysis*, N.Y., 1966.
TUN WAI, *Economic Development of Burma from 1800 to 1940*, Rangoon, 1961.
WHITE, *Sir* HERBERT TH., *A Civil Servant in Burma*, London, 1913.
WOODMAN, DOROTHY, *The Making of Burma*, London, 1962.

INDOCHINA

BERNARD, PAUL, *Le problème économique indochinois (The Economic Problem of Indochina)*, Paris, 1934.
BETTS, RAYMOND F., *Assimilation and Association in French Colonial Theory: 1890–1914*, N.Y., 1961.
BLET, HENRI, *l'Histoire de la colonisation française (History of French Colonization)*, 3 vols., Grenoble, 1946–50.
BODARD, LUCIEN, *La guerre d'Indochine (The Indochina War)*, 3 vols., Paris, 1963–67.
BURCHETT, WILFRED G., *North of the 17th Parallel*, Delhi, 1956.
——— *Mekong Upstream*, Berlin, 1959.
BUTTINGER, JOSEPH, *The Smaller Dragon: A Political History of Vietnam*, N.Y., 1958.
——— *A Dragon Embattled: A History of Colonial and Post-colonial Vietnam*, 2 vols., N.Y., 1967.
CADY, JOHN F., *The Roots of French Imperialism in Eastern Asia*, Ithaca, 1954.
CATROUX, GEORGES, *Deux actes du drame indochinois (Two Acts of the Indochina Tragedy)*, Paris, 1959.

CELERIER, PIERRE, *Menaces sur le Viet-Nam (Threats Against Vietnam)*, Saigon, 1950.

CHESNEAUX, JEAN, *Contribution à l'histoire de la nation vietnamienne (Contribution to the history of the Vietnamese Nation)*, Paris, 1955.

COLE, ALLAN B. (ed.), *Conflict in Indochina and International Repercussions: A Documentary History 1945–1955*, Ithaca, 1956.

DARCOURT, PIERRE, *De Lattre au Viet-Nam: Une année de victoire (De Lattre in Vietnam: a Year of Victory)*, Paris, 1965.

DECOUX, JEAN, *A la barre de l'Indochine: Histoire de mon gouvernement-général 1940–1945 (On the Breach for Indochina: A History of my Term as Governor General)*, Paris, 1952.

DEVILLERS, PHILIPPE, *Histoire du Viet-Nam de 1940 à 1952 (A History of Vietnam from 1940 to 1952)*, Paris, 1952.

DOMMEN, ARTHUR J., *Conflict in Laos: The Politics of Neutralization*, N.Y., 1964.

DORGÈLES, ROLAND, *Sur la route mandarine (On the Mandarin Road)*, Paris, 1929.

DUNCANSON, DENNIS J., *Government and Revolution in Vietnam*, 1968.

ELY, PAUL, *l'Indochine dans la tourmente (Indochina in Turmoil)*, Paris, 1964.

ENNIS, THOMAS E., *French Policy and Developments in Indochina*, Chicago, 1936.

FALL, BERNARD B., *Le Viet Minh: La République Démocratique du Viet-Nam 1945–1960 (The Viet Minh: The Democratic Republic of Vietnam)*, Paris, 1960; in English: *The Viet Minh Regime*, Ithaca, 1956.

——— *Street Without Joy: Insurgency in Indochina, 1946–1963*, Harrisburg 1963.

GAUDEL, ANDRE, *l'Indochine française en face du Japon (French Indochina vis-à-vis Japan)*, Paris, 1947.

GETTLEMAN, MARVIN E., *Vietnam: History, Documents and Opinions on a Major World Crisis*, N.Y., 1965.

GOUROU, PIERRE, *l'Avenir de l'Indochine (The Future of Indochina)*, Paris, 1947.

HAAS, E., *Frans Indo-China en de Japanse expansiepolitiek 1939–1945 (French Indochina and Japanese Expansionist Policy)*, Leyden, 1956.

HALPERN, JOEL M., *Government, Politics and Social Structure in Laos: A Study of Tradition and Innovation*, New Haven, 1964.

HAMMER, ELLEN, *The Struggle for Indochina*, Stanford, 1954.

HARDY, G., *Histoire de la colonisation française (History of French Colonization)*, Paris, 1928.

HORLEMANN, JÜRGEN and GÄNG, PETER, *Vietnam: Genesis eines Konflikts (Vietnam: Origins of a Conflict)*, Frankfurt/Main, 1966.

ISOART, PAUL, *Le phénomène national vietnamien: De l'indépendance unitaire à l'indépendance fractionée (The Vietnamese National Phenomenon: From a Unitary to à Fractured Independence)*, Paris, 1961.

LACOUTURE, JEAN, *Ho Chi Minh*, Paris, 1967. Trans. in English: *Ho Chi Minh, A Political Biography*, N.Y., 1968.

LACOUTURE, JEAN and DEVILLERS, PHILIPPE, *La fin d'une guerre: Indochine 1954*, Paris, 1960. In English: *The End of A War: Indochina 1954*, N.Y., 1969.

LANCASTER, DONALD, *The Emancipation of French Indochina*, London, 1961.

LANESSAN, JEAN-M-A DE, *La colonisation française en Indochine (French Colonization in Indochina)*, Paris, 1895.

LEBAR, FRANK, *et. al. Laos: Its Peoples, Its Society, Its Culture*, New Haven, 1960.

LE BOULANGER, PAUL, *Histoire du Laos français (A History of French Laos)*, Paris, 1931.

LE CHAU, *Le Viet Nam socialiste: une économie de transition (Socialist Vietnam: An Economy in Transition)*, Paris, 1966.

LEGRAND, J., *l'Indochine à l'heure japonaise (Indochina at the Japanese Hour)*, n.p., n.d.

LE THANH KHOI, *Le Viet-Nam: Histoire et Civilisation (Vietnam: History and Civilization)*, Paris, 1955.

LEVY, ROGER, LACAM, GUY, and ROTH, ANDREW, *French Interests and Policies in the Far East*, N.Y., 1941.

MACALLISTER, ROBERT J., *Vietnam: the Origins of Revolution*, N.Y., 1969.

MAHA SILA, VIRAVONG, *History of Laos*, N.Y., 1964.

MASPERO, G. (ed.), *Un empire colonial français: Indochine (A French Colonial Empire: Indochina)*, 2 vols., Paris, 1929–30.

MORDANT, GENERAL, *Au service de la France en Indochine 1941–1945 (Serving France in Indochina)*, Saigon, 1950.

MURTI, B. S. N., *Vietnam Divided: The Unfinished Struggle*, N.Y., 1964.

MUS, PAUL, *Viet-Nam: Sociologie d'une guerre (Vietnam: Sociology of A War)*, Paris, 1950.

NAVILLE, PIERRE, *La guerre du Viet-Nam (The War in Vietnam)*, Paris, 1949.

NEWMAN, B., *Report on Indochina*, London, 1953.

NGUYEN AI QUOC, *Le procès de la colonisation française (The Process of French Colonization)*, Paris, 1926.

O'BALLANCE, EDGAR, *The Indochina War 1945–1954: A Study in Guerrilla Warfare*, London, 1964.

ROBEQUAIN, CHARLES, *l'Evolution économique de l'Indochine française*, Paris, 1939. In English: *The Economic Development of French Indochina*, London, 1944.

ROBERTS, STEPHEN H., *History of French Colonial Policy 1870–1925*, 2 vols., London, 1929.

ROUBAUD, LOUIS, *Viet-Nam: La tragédie indochinoise (Vietnam: the Indochinese Tragedy)*, Paris, 1931.

ROY, JULES, *La bataille de Dien Bien Phu*, Paris, 1963. In English: *The Battle of Dienbienphu*, N.Y., 1965.

SABATTIER, G., *Le destin de l'Indochine: Souvenir et Documents 1941–1951 (The Destination of Indochina: Memories and Documents)*, Paris, 1952.

SACKS, MILTON, *Political Alignments of Vietnamese Nationalists*, Washington, 1949.

SAINTENY, JEAN, *Histoire d'une paix manquée (History of a Lost Peace)*, Paris, 1953.

SASORITH, KATAY D., *Le Laos*, Paris, 1953.

SISSOUK NA CHAMPASSAK, *Storm over Laos: A Contemporary History*, N.Y., 1961.

STAROBIN, JOSEPH, *Eyewitness in Indochina*, N.Y., 1954.

STEINBERG, DAVID J. (ed.), *Cambodia: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*, New Haven, 1957.

TABOULET, GEORGES, *La geste française en Indochine (French Activity in Indochina)*, 2 vols., Paris, 1955–6.

TANHAM, GEORGE K., *Communist Revolutionary Warfare: The Vietminh in Indochina*, London, 1961.

THOMPSON, SIR ROBERT, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam*, London, 1966.

THOMPSON, VIRGINIA, *French Indochina*, London, 1937.

TRUONG CHINH, *The August Revolution*, Hanoi, 1958.

———*The Resistance will Win*, Hanoi, 1960.

———*Primer for Revolt: The Communist Takeover in Viet-Nam*, N.Y., 1963.

VANLANDE, RENE, *l'Indochine sous la menace communiste (Indochina under the Threat of Communism)*, Paris, 1930.

VIOLLIS, ANDREE, *Indochine S.O.S.*, Paris, 1935.

VO NGUYEN GIAP. *Dien Bien Phu*, Hanoi, 1954.

INDONESIA

ALERS, HENRI J. H., *Om een rode of groene merdeka: tien jaar binnenlandse politiek in Indonesië 1943–1953 (Towards a Red or a Green Merdeka: Ten Years Internal Politics in Indonesia)*, Eindhoven, 1956.

ARX, A VON, *l'Evolution politique en Indonésie de 1900 a 1942 (Political Development in Indonesia)*, Fribourg, 1949.

ANDERSON, BENEDICT R.O'G., *Some Aspects of Indonesian Politics under the Japanese Occupation 1944–1945*, Ithaca, 1961.

AZIZ, M. A., *Japan's Colonialism and Indonesia*, The Hague, 1955.

BAUDET, H., and BRUGMANS, I. J. (ed.), *Balans van beleid: terugblik op de laatste halve eeuw van Nederlandsch Indië (Policy in the Balance: the last half Century of the Netherlands Indies in Retrospect)*, Assen, 1961.

BENDA, HARRY S., *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942–1945*, The Hague, 1958.

BENDA, HARRY S., and MCVEY, RUTH T., *The Communist Uprisings of 1926–1927 in Indonesia: Key Documents*, Ithaca, 1960.

BENDA, HARRY S., *et. al. Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia: Selected Documents*, New Haven, 1965.

BOEKE, J. H., *Indische Economie*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1940.

——— *Structure of Netherlands Indian Economy*, N.Y., 1942.

——— *The Evolution of the Netherlands Indies Economy*, N.Y., 1946.

BOUSQUET, G. H., *La politique musulmane et coloniale des Pays-Bas*, Paris, 1938; *A French View of the Netherlands Indies*, Eng. ed., London, 1940.

BRACKMAN, ARNOLD, *Indonesian Communism: A History*, N.Y., 1963.

BROEK, J. O. M., *The Economic Development of the Netherlands Indies*, N.Y.. 1942.

BRUGMANS, I.J. *et al., Nederlandsch-Indië onder Japanse bezetting: gegevens en documenten over de jaren 1942–1945 (The Netherlands Indies during the Japanese Occupation: Data and Documents over the Years 1942–1945)*, Franeker, 1960

CATOR, W. J., *The Economic Position of the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies*, Chicago, 1936.

DAHM, BERNHARD, *Sukarnos Kampf um Indonesiens Unabhangigkeit (Sukarno's Struggle for Indonesian Independence)*, Hamburg, 1964.

DAY, CLIVE, *The Policy and the Administration of the Dutch in Java*, N.Y., 1904, repr. K.L., 1966.

DJAJADININGRAT, IDRUS NASIR, *The Beginnings of the Indonesian-Dutch Negotiations and the Hoge Veluwe Talks*, Ithaca, 1958.

DOORN, J. A. A. VAN. and HENDRIX, W. J., *Ontsporing van geweld: Over het Nederlands-Indisch-Indonesisch conflict (Degeneration of Violence: On the Netherlands-Indies-Indonesian Conflict)*, Amsterdam, 1970.

FURNIVALL, JOHN S., *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy*, N.Y., 1944.

GERBRANDY, PIETER S.. *Indonesia*, London, 1950.

GONGGRIJP, G., *Schets ener economische geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië (Survey of the Economic History of the Netherlands Indies)*, Haarlem, 1949.

GRAAF, H. J. DE, *Geschiedenis van Indonesië (History of Indonesia)*, The Hague, 1949.

GRAEFF, A. C. D. DE (ed.), *Van Vriend tot vijand: de betrekkingen tusschen Nederlandsch-Indië en Japan (From Friend to Foe: the Relations between the Netherlands Indies and Japan)*, Amsterdam, 1945.

HELFRICH, C. E. L., *Memoires van — (Memoirs of —)*, 2 vols., Amsterdam, 1950.

HELSDINGEN, W. H. VAN, *Daar werd wat groots verricht...; Nederlandsch-Indië in de XXste eeuw (Something Great has been Performed There.. ; the Netherlands Indies in the Twentieth Century)*, Amsterdam, 1941. An abbreviated and revised version of the above in English: *Mission Interrupted: the Dutch in the East Indies and Their Work in the XXth Century)*, Amsterdam, 1945.

HYMA, ALBERT, *The Dutch in the Far East: A History of the Dutch Commercial and Colonial Empire*, Ann Arbor, 1942.

JONGE, B. C., DE, *Herinneringen van — (Memoirs of —)*, ed. by S. L. van der Wal. Groningen, 1968.

KAHIN, GEORGE MCT., *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Ithaca, 1952.

KAT ANGELINO, A. D. A. DE, *Staatkundig Beleid en Bestuurszorg in Nederlandsch-Indië (Colonial Policy and Administration in the Netherlands Indies)*, 3 vols., The Hague, 1929–30. An abbreviated version of the above: *Colonial Policy*, 2 vols., The Hague, 1931.

KENNEDY, R., *The Ageless Indies*, N.Y., 1942.

KLERCK, E. S. DE, *History of the Netherlands East Indies*, 2 vols., Rotterdam. 1938.

KOCH, D. M. G., *Verantwoording: een halve eeuw in Indonesië (Accounting for Half a Century in Indonesia)*, The Hague, 1956.

KROEF, JUSTUS M. VAN DER, *Indonesia in the Modern World*, 2 vols., Bandung, 1954–56.

LEGGE, J. D., *Indonesia*, N.Y., 1964.

MCVEY, RUTH T. (ed.), *Indonesia*, New Haven, 1963.

——— *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, Ithaca, 1965.

MEULEN, D. VAN DER, *Ik stond erbij: het einde van ons koloniale rijk (I Was There: the Termination of Our Colonial Empire)*, Baarn, n.d.

MOOK, J. H. VAN, *Indonesië, Nederland en de wereld (Indonesia, the Netherlands and the World)*, Amsterdam, 1949.

——— *The Stakes of Democracy in South-East Asia*, London, 1950.

PALMIER, L. H., *Indonesia*, London, 1965.

PETRUS BLUMBERGER, J. TH., *De Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië (The Nationalist Movement in the Netherlands Indies)*, Haarlem, 1931.

PIEKAAR, A. J., *Atjeh en de oorlog met Japan (Achin and the War with Japan)*, The Hague, 1949.

PLUVIER, J. M., *Overzicht van de ontwikkeling der nationalistische beweging in Indonesië in de jaren 1930 tot 1942 (Survey of the Development of the Nationalist Movement in Indonesia from 1930 to 1942)*, The Hague, 1953.

QUISPEL, H. V., *Nederlandsch-Indië in den Tweeden Wereldoorlog (The Netherlands Indies during the Second World War)*, London, 1945.

REID, ANTHONY, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Acheh, the Netherlands and Britain 1858–1898*, K.L., 1969.

RUTGERS, S. J., and HUBER, A., *Indonesië*, Amsterdam, 1937.

RUTGERS, S. J., *Indonesië: het koloniale systeem in de periode tussen de eerste en de tweede wereldoorlog (The Colonial System between the First and the Second World War)*, Amsterdam, 1947.

SCHERMERHORN, W., *Het Dagboek van — (S's Diary)*. ed. by C. Smit. 2 vols., Groningen, 1970.

SCHILLER, ARTHUR A., *The Formation of Federal Indonesia 1945–1949*, The Hague, 1955.

SMAIL, JOHN, *Bandung in the Early Revolution 1945–46: A Study in the Social History of the Indonesian Revolution*, Ithaca, 1964.

SMIT, C., *De Indonesische Quaestie; de wordingsgeschiedenis der souvereiniteitsoverdracht (The Indonesian Problem: the Development towards the Transfer of Sovereignty)*, Leyden, 1952.

——— *Het akkoord van Linggadjati (The L. Agreement)*, Amsterdam. 1959.

——— *De liquidatie van een Imperium: Nederland en Indonesië 1945–1962 (The Liquidation of an Empire: the Netherlands and Indonesia 1945–1962)*, Amsterdam, 1962.

TEDJASUKMANA, ISKANDAR, *The Political Character of the Indonesian Trade Union Movement*, Ithaca, 1959.

VANDENBOSCH, AMRY, *The Dutch East Indies: its Government, Problems and Politics*, Berkeley, 1944.

VAN NIEL, ROBERT, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, The Hague, 1960.

VEER, PAUL VAN 'T., *De Atjeh-oorlog (The Achin War)*, Amsterdam, 1969.

VLEKKE, Bernard H. M., *Nusantara: A History of the East Indian Archipelago* Camb., Mass., 1943. Repr. *Indonesia*, The Hague, 1959.

WAL, S. L. VAN DER, *De Volksraad en de Staatkundige ontwikkeling van Nederlandsch-Indië (The People's Council and the Political Development of the Netherlands Indies)*, 2 vols., Groningen, 1964–5.

——— *De Opkomst van de nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië (The Emergence of the Nationalist Movement in the Netherlands Indies)*. Groningen, 1967.

WEHL, DAVID, *The Birth of Indonesia*, London, 1948.

WERTHEIM, W. F., *Indonesian Society in Transition: A Study of Social Change*, The Hague, 1959.

WILMOTT, DONALD E., *The National Status of the Chinese in Indonesia 1900–1958*, Ithaca, 1961.

WOLF, CHARLES, *The Indonesian Story: The Birth, Growth and Structure of the Indonesian Republic*, N.Y., 1948.

WOODMAN, DOROTHY, *The Republic of Indonesia*, London, 1955.

ZORAB, A. A., *De Japanse Bezetting van Indonesië en haar volkenrechtelijke zijde (The Japanese Occupation of Indonesia and its International Legal Aspects)*, Leyden, 1954.

MALAYA

ALLEN, JAMES DE V., *The Malayan Union*, New Haven, 1967.

ATTIWELL, K., *The Singapore Story*, London, 1959.

CHAPMAN, E. SPENCER, *The Jungle is Neutral*, London, 1954.

CHIN, KEE ONN, *Malaya Upside Down*, S'pore, 1946.
CLUTTERBUCK, R. L., *The Long, Long War*, N.Y., 1966.
COWAN, C. D., *Nineteenth Century Malaya: The Origins of British Political Control*, London, 1961.
GINSBURG, NORTON S., and ROBERTS, CHESTER F., *Malaya*, Seattle, 1958.
GULLICK, J. M., *Malaya*, London, 1963.
HANRAHAN, GENE Z., *The Communist Struggle in Malaya*, N.Y., 1954.
JACKSON, R. N., *Immigrant Labour and the Development of Malaya 1786–1920*, K.L., 1960.
JONES, S. W., *Public Administration in Malaya*, London, 1953.
JOSEY, ALEX, *Trade Unionism in Malaya*, S'pore, 1958.
LI, DUN-JEN, *Malaya: An Economic Analysis*, N.Y., 1955.
MILLS, LENNOX A., *Malaya: A Political and Economic Repraisal*, Minneapolis, 1958.
MORRISON, I., *Malayan Postscript*, London, 1942.
OWEN, F., *The Fall of Singapore*, London, 1960.
PARKINSON, CYRIL NORTHCOTE, *British Intervention in Malaya 1867–1877*, S'pore, 1960.
PEET, G. L., *Political Questions in Malaya*, London, 1949.
PERCIVAL, A. E., *The War in Malaya*, London, 1949.
PURCELL, VICTOR, *The Chinese in Malaya*, London, 1948.
——— *Malaya, Communist or Free*? London, 1954.
PYE, LUCIEN W., *Guerrilla Communism in Malaya: Its Social and Political Meaning*, Princeton, 1956.
RATNAM, K.J., *Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya*, K.L., 1965.
ROFF, W. R., *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, K.L., 1967.
THOMPSON, VIRGINIA, *Postmortem on Malaya*, N.Y., 1943.
TILMAN, R. O., *Bureaucratic Transition in Malaya*, Durham, 1964.
TREGONNING, K. G., *A History of Modern Malaya*, London, 1964.
TSUJI, MASONOBU, *Singapore: The Japanese Version*, Sydney, 1960.
WINSTEDT, R., *Malaya and Its History*, London, 1953.

PHILIPPINES

ABAYA, HERNANDO J., *Betrayal in the Philippines*, N.Y., 1946.
AGONCILLO, TEODORO, *The Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan*, Manila, 1956.
——— *Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic*, Manila, 1960.
——— *The Fateful Years: Japan's Adventure in the Philippines 1941–1945*, Manila, 1965.
BERNSTEIN, DAVID, *The Philippine Story*, N.Y., 1947.
BUENAFE, MANUEL, *Wartime Philippines*, Manila, 1950.
CORPUZ, ONOFRE D., *Bureaucracy in the Philippines*, Manila, 1957.
COSTA, H. DE LA (ed.), *Readings in Philippine History*, Manila, 1965.

CUNNINGHAM, CHARLES, *The Audiencia in the Spanish Colonies as Illustrated by the Audiencia of Manila*, Berkeley, 1919.

EGGAN, FRED; HESTER, EVETT D. AND GINSBURG, NORTON S., *Area Handbook of the Philippines*, 4 vols., New Haven, 1956.

FERNANDEZ, LENADRO H., *The Philippine Republic*, N.Y., 1926.

FISCHER, G., *Un cas de décolonisation: lès Etats-Unis et les Philippines (A Case of Decolonization: The United States and the Philippines)*, Paris, 1960.

FORBES, WILLIAM CAMERON, *The Philippine Islands*, 2 vols., Boston, 1928; revised 1945.

FRIEND, THEODORE, *Between the Empires: The Ordeal of the Philippines 1929–1946*, New Haven, 1965.

GRUNDER, GAREL A., and LIVEZEY, WILLIAM E., *The Philippines and the United States*, Norman (Okla), 1951.

HARRISON, FRANCIS BURTON, *The Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, N.Y., 1922.

HARTENDORP, A. V. H., *History of Industry and Trade of the Philippines*, 2 vols., Manila, 1958–61.

HAYDEN, JOSEPH RALSTON, *The Philippines: A Study in National Development*, N.Y., 1947.

KALAW, TEODORE M., *The Philippine Revolution*, Manila, 1925.

KEESING, FELIX M., *The Philippines: A Nation in the Making*, Hong Kong. 1937.

KIRK, GRAYSON L., *Philippine Independence: Motives, Problems and Prospects*, N.Y., 1936.

KOLB, A., *Die Philippinen*, Berlin, 1942.

LEAR, ELMER, *The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines: Leyte 1941–1945*, Ithaca, 1961.

LEVINSON, G. I., *Die Philippinen — Gestern und Heute (The Philippines: Yesterday and Today)* Leipzig, 1966.

LIANG, DAPEN, *The Development of Philippine Political Parties*, Hong Kong, 1939.

MAJUL, CESAR ADIB, *The Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Philippine Revolution*, Quezon City, 1957.

MALCOLM, GEORGE A., *The Commonwealth of the Philippines*, N.Y., 1939.

——— *First Malayan Republic: The Story of the Philippines*, Boston, 1951.

PHELAN, JOHN L., *Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses*, Madison, 1959.

RECTO, CLARO M., *Three Years of Enemy Occupation: The Issue of Political Collaboration in the Philippines*, Manila, 1946.

ROMANI, JOHN H., and LADD, THOMAS M., *A Survey of Local Government in the Philippines*, Manila, 1954.

ROMULO, CARLOS P., *Crusade in Asia: Philippine Victory*, N.Y., 1955.

SASTRON, MANUEL, *La Insurreccion en Filipinas y guerra hispano-americana en el Archipelago (The Insurrection of the Philippines and the Spanish-American War in the Archipelago)*, Madrid, 1901.

STEINBERG, DAVID JOEL, *Philippine Collaboration in World War II*, New Haven, 1967.

WOLFF, LEON, *Little Brown Brother: How the U.S. Purchased and Pacified the Philippine Islands at the Century's Turn*, N.Y., 1961.

WORCESTER, DEAN C., *The Philippines: Past and Present*, 2 vols., N.Y., 1913; revised in one vol., 1930.

ZAIDE, GREGORIO F., *The Philippine Revolution*, Manila, 1954.

THAILAND

BARTLETT, NORMAN, *Land of the Lotus Eaters*, London, 1959.

BLANCHARD, WENDELL, *Thailand: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*, New Haven, 1958.

COAST, JOHN, *Some Aspects of Siamese Politics*, N.Y., 1953.

CROSBY, *Sir* JOSIAH, *Siam: The Crossroads*, London, 1945.

FISTIE, P., *l'Evolution de la Thailande contemporaine (The Development of Contemporary Thailand)*, Paris, 1967.

GRAHAM, WALTER A., *Siam*, 2 vols., London, 1924.

GRISWOLD, ALEX B., *King Mongkut of Siam*, N.Y., 1961.

INGRAM, JAMES C., *Economic Changes in Thailand since 1850*, Stanford, 1955.

INSOR, D., *Thailand: A Political, Social and Economic Analysis*, N.Y., 1963.

LANDON, KENNETH P., *Siam in Transition: A Brief Survey of Cultural Trends in the Five Years since the Revolution of 1932*. Shanghai, 1939.

——— *The Chinese in Thailand*, N.Y., 1941.

MOFFAT, ABBOT L., *Mongkut, the King of Siam*, Ithaca, 1961.

NUECHTERLEIN, DONALD E., *Thailand and the Struggle for Southeast Asia*. Ithaca, 1965.

REEVE, W. D., *Public Administration in Siam*, London, 1952.

RIGGS, FRED W., *Thailand: The Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity*, Hawaii, 1966.

SKINNER, GEORGE W., *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History*, Ithaca, 1957.

THOMPSON, VIRGINIA, *Thailand: The New Siam*, N.Y., 1941.

VELLA, WALTER F., *The Impact of the West on Government in Thailand*, Berkeley, 1955.

WILSON, DAVID A., *Politics in Thailand*, Ithaca, 1962.

Index

ABDUL RAHMAN, Tengku, 539, 541, 544–5
Abdul Wahab, 253
Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, 221
Accion Catolica, 232
Adun Detcharas, 323–4
Aguinaldo, Emilio, 83, 229, 233
Ahmad Boestamam, 133
Alejandrino, Casto, 307
Alexander, Lord, 182, 186
All Burma Youth League, 319–20
Alliance UMNO-MCA-MIC, 539–41, 543–4
Along Bay, Treaty of (1948), 444–5
Amery, Leopold, 129
Anak Agung gde Agung, 487
Ananda Mahidol, 322
Angkatan Muda, 326
Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, 320–1, 389–92, 394, 397–8, 400, 404, 422
Anti-Separation League, 85
Aoki, Kazuo, 246, 248–9, 262, 267
Aquino, Benigno, 229, 233–4, 247
d'Argenlieu, Georges Thierry, 360, 414–15, 417, 425, 432, 442
Arita, Hachiro, 107
Atjeh, rebellion (1942), 184, 195
Atlantic Charter (1941), 129, 144, 146
Attlee, Clement, 398–400
Aung Gyi, 127
Aung San, 86, 126, 130, 204–5, 224, 228, 241, 244, 317–21, 348, 392–3, 397–400, 422
Aung San-Attlee Agreement (1947), 398–9
Auriol, Vincent, 448, 511
Auriol: Bao Dai Agreement, *see* Elysée Agreement
Ayabe, Kisuyu, 349
Azad Hind Fauj, *see* Indian National Army

BA GYAN, 235, 319
Bajpai-Saw Agreement (1941), 128
Balik Papan, 177, 196
Baling, talks at (1955), 544
Ba Maw, 85, 125–7, 129, 205–7, 223–4, 226–8, 230, 235, 240–1, 244–5, 248, 289, 314–19, 321, 348–9, 393, 397
Ba Pe, 85, 208
Ba Swe, 127, 319
Bandung: BFO-Conference (1949), 483; West Java Conferences (1948), 439
Bao Dai, 260, 343–5, 363, 374, 443–5, 448–51, 467, 491, 493, 495, 499–501, 504, 514–16, 518, 521–2, 524
Barisan Benteng, 480
Barisan Pelopor, 329–30, 350–1
Barisan Pemuda Asia Raya, 235
Bataan, battle of (1942), 184–5
Batu Caves, raid on (1942), 301
Bedell-Smith, Walter, 524
Beel, Louis, 484–5, 489
Bekasi, 369
Bell Act, *see* Philippine Trade Act
Benteng Republik, 422–3

Bidault, Georges, 424–5, 519, 523–5
Bijzonder Federal Overlag, 441, 483, 488
Binh Xuyen, 367, 449, 515, 519, 522
Bismarck Sea, battle of (1943), 237
Black, Robert, 544
Blitar rebellion (1945), 327, 351
Blum, Léon, 425
Bollaert, Emile, 442–6
Bonifacio, Andres, 83
Bose, Rash Behari, 201–2
Bose, Subhas Chandra, 127, 202, 240, 247–8
Boun Oum, 504
Boven Digul, 83
British North Borneo Company, 14, 405
Brooke, Charles Vyner, 405
Burhanuddin al-Helmy, 356, 467, 541
Burma Defence Army, 224–5, 228, 241, 318
Burma Executive Administration, 223–6, 244, 290
Burma Independence Act (1947), 400
Burma National Army, 318–20, 347. 391
Burma Revolutionary Party, 127, 320
Burma Road, 111, 121, 185–6, 347
Burma-Siam Railway, 239
Burma White Paper (1945), 382, 389–90
Burmese Independence Army, 181–2, 186, 195, 204–6, 224, 226, 241, 318
Burmese Patriotic Forces, 391–2
Buu Loc, 519, 524

Calcutta, Conference of (1948), 457–9
Cao Bang, battle of (1950), 495–7
Cao Dai, 114, 259–60, 367, 433, 443, 461, 499, 519
Capadocia, Guillermo, 309
Catroux, Georges, 109, 111–12, 121
Cavite, 167
Chairul Saleh, 326
Chang Fa-k'uei, 294–7
Chiang K'ai-shek, 88, 95, 111, 131, 147, 153, 199–200, 292, 314, 323, 347, 359, 446–7, 450
Chin Peng, 471, 544
Chindits, 244, 313–14
Chit Hlaing, 85, 244
Chou En-lai, 525–6
Christison, Philip, 369
Chu Van Tan, 295, 298
Chulalongkorn, 90
Chungking, Treaty of (1946), 371
Chuo Sangi-in, 250
Churchill, Winston, 122, 129, 155, 178, 523–4
Clark Airbase, 166–7, 173, 176
Cochin China, rebellion (1940), 115–16
Cochran, Merle, 484–5, 488
Cochrane, Archibald, 126
Comintern, 115, 291
Committee of Good Offices (Indonesia), 437–8, 487
Constitutionalist Party, 87
Coolie Budget Commission, 71
Coral Sea, battle of the (1942), 187
Corregidor, 176, 185
Coste-Floret, Paul, 445
Critchley-DuBois proposal, 440, 482, 484

Dai Viet, 88
Dalat, Conference at (1946), 414–15
Dap Chhuon, 508
Darlan, Jean, 149
Day River, battle of (1951), 498
Death March (Philippines), 196
Decoux, Jean, 111–12, 116–19, 148, 169, 261–6, 270, 296, 325, 340–2, 344, 369–70
Democrat Party (Vietnam), 114
Democratic Alliance (Philippines), 384–5
Democratic Party (Cambodia), 388, 492–3, 507–8, 510–11
Denpasar, Conference at (1946), 420, 429
Dewantoro, *see* Ki Hadjar Dewantoro
Diem, *see* Ngo Dinh Diem
Dien Bien Phu, battle of (1953–4), 510, 519–23
Digul, *see* Boven Digul
Djakarta Charter (1945), 355
Djawa Hokokai, 233, 253–4, 329, 333, 351
Dobama Asiayone, 85, 126, 130, 224
Dobama-Sinyetha, Asiayone, 224–5, 228, 319
Doihara, Kenji, 256, 312
Dong Minh Hoi, 294, 296–7, 370, 372, 374, 418–19, 443, 447

Dong Trieu-Mao Khe, battle of (1951), 498
Doorman, Karel, 182
Dorman-Smith, Reginald, 129, 389–92, 394
Doumer, Paul, 8–9, 11, 53
Dulles, John F., 517, 522–4
Duran, Pio, 229, 233, 338

East Asia Youth League, 235, 315
Eden, Anthony, 523–4
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 522–3
Elizabeth II, Queen, 546
Ely, Paul, 521
Elysée (Auriol-Bao Dai) Agreement (1949), 448–9, 451, 491, 493
Evangelista, Crisanto, 309

Federal Agreement (Malaya, 1948), 403, 537
F-kikan, 201
Fontainebleau, Conference of (1946), 414–15, 418–19
Free Thai, 323–4
Freedom Bloc, 126, 128, 131
Frente Popular (Popular Front), 157, 233
Front Demokrasi Rakjat, 477–80
Fujimara, Masuzo, 255–6
Fujiwara, Iwaichi, 201

Gandhi, Mohandas K., 76, 201
Gapi-federation, 87, 141–2
Gatot Mangkupradja, 241
Gaulle, Charles de, 112, 295–6, 340–1
General Council of Burmese Associations, 84–5
Geneva, Conference of (1954), 510, 522–8
Gent, Edward, 410, 473
Gerakan Rakjat Indonesia, 87
Gerakan Revolusi Rakjat, 478
Giap, *see* Vo Nguyen Giap
Gokhale, Gopal K., 76
Goode, William, 548
Government of Burma Act (1935), 14, 85, 124, 389, 397
Gracey, Douglas, 367
Grand Conseil des Intérêts Economiques et Financiers, 19–20
Guadalcanal, battle of (1942–3), 187, 237
Guam, 167, 174
Guerrero, Cesar, 232
Gurney, Henry, 473, 531

Haiphong, bombing of (1946), 425
Hamid II of Pontianak, 429, 490
Hanoi, battle of (1946), 441
Hanoi, Treaty of (Ho-Sainteny Agreement, 1946), 409–10, 413
Harada, Kumakichi, 219, 241, 249, 253, 330, 351
Hare-Hawes-Cutting Bill (1932), 84, 157
Harrison, Francis B., 6, 84
Hasjim Asj'ari, 252, 254
Hatta, Mohammed, 86, 139, 219, 251, 254, 325–6, 353, 356, 376, 423, 476–82, 485, 490
Heiho's, 238
Helfrich, Coenraad E. L., 172, 182
Hertogh, Bertha, 535
Hirohito, 146
Hitler, Adolf, 123
Hizbullah, 350, 479
Ho Chi Minh, 295–8, 364, 371–5, 410–11, 414–15, 418–19, 423–5, 427, 442–5, 447, 449, 461–3, 466–7, 501, 505–6, 513–14, 517, 519, 528 (*see also* Nguyen Ai Quoc)
Ho-Moutet Agreement (1946), 415–16, 424
Ho-Sainteny Agreement, *see* Hanoi, Treaty of
Hoa Binh, battle (1951–2), 501–2
Hoa Hao, 114, 260, 367, 433, 461, 519
Hoang Minh Giam, 450
Hoang Van Thu, 292
Hodosho, 355–6
Hoge Veluwe, Conference of (1946), 412–13
Homma, Masaharu, 176, 184–5, 203, 233
Hukbalahap, 305–8, 310–11, 338, 349, 383, 385, 459, 475
Hull, Cordell, 121, 135, 151, 153, 155–6, 165–6
Husain Djajadiningrat, 252, 329
Huynh Phu So, 114, 260, 461

Ibrahim bin Yaacob, 133, 241, 256, 299, 356
Iida, Shojiro, 181, 205, 207, 223, 243
Imamura, Hitoshi, 183, 218–19, 330
Imperial Rule Assistance Association (Japan), 213, 228

Imphal-Kohima, battle of (1944), 312–13
Independence of Malaya Party, 536–9
Indian Independence League, 201–2, 240, 247–8
Indian National Army, 201–2, 240, 247–8
Indochinese Communist Party, 88–9, 114–15, 291, 293, 309, 373
Indochinese Democratic Front, 115
Indonesian Independence Preparatory Committee, 354
Inter-Asian Conference, *see* New Delhi
Isamura, Takesuke, 243, 314, 316
Ishak bin Haji Mohammed, 133, 467
Ismail bin Tengku Mohammed Yasin, Tengku, 132
Itagaki, Seishiro, 352, 356
Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, 327

JAVA SEA, battle of the (1942), 182
Jones Law, 7
Jonge, Bonifacius C. de, 86
Juliana, Queen, 490

KABATAANG KALIBAPI, 236
Kalibapi, 233–5, 246, 334–5
Kanthoul, Huy, 508–9, 510
Kapariz, 334
Karen Centre Organization, 226
Kartalegawa, Suria, 439
Katipunan, 83
Kawabe, Masakazu, 243, 245, 316
Kenpeitai, 199, 207, 223–5, 231, 258–60, 286, 301, 306, 311, 315, 319
Keo Tak, 508
Kesatuan Melayu Muda, 133, 215–16, 356
Kesatuan Melayu Singapura, 132
Kesatuan Ra'ayat Indonesia Semenanjong, 356
Khmer Issarak, 387–8, 407, 492–4, 507, 511, 516, 528
Khmer Liberation Movement, 507
Khuang Aphaiwong, 324
Ki Hadjar Dewantoro, 219
Killearn, Lord, 413
Kimura, Heitaro, 316
King, Edward P., 185
Kobayashi, Ichiro, 136–7, 141
Kohima, 312–13
Koiso Declaration (1944), 328 330, 333, 350, 353–4, 356–7
Koiso, Kuniaki, 322
Kokubu, Shinshichiro, 250, 254
Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat, 365, 376, 421, 423
Konoye, Fumimaro, 97, 107, 118, 137, 146, 154–5
Kuroda, Shigenori, 246–7, 337
Kurusu, Saburo, 165–6
Kwo Min Tang, 130, 216, 292–3, 296–7, 300, 304, 311, 347, 370
Kwok Fen Nam, Albert, 327

LABOUR FRONT (Singapore), 543, 545, 547
Labour Party (Singapore), 542
Lai Teck, 131, 301, 468, 471
Laniel, Joseph, 514
Laniel Statement (1953), 514, 516
Lao Dong Dang, 504, 507, 513
Lao Issara, 363, 407, 494, 504, 506–9
Lasjkar Rakjat, 241
Lattre de Tassigny, Jean de, 497–502, 518
Lau Yew, 473
Laurel, José, 234, 246–8, 280, 307, 310, 334–6, 338, 383
Lava, Vicente, 309
Le Van Vien, 519, 522
Leclerc, General, 368, 411, 416
Lee Kuan Yew, 543, 547–8
Lennox-Boyd, Alan, 544–5
Letourneau, Jean, 509, 512
Leyte, battle of (1944), 336–7
Liaison Conference (Japan), 108, 145–6, 153, 155, 164, 192, 197, 203, 214–15, 272, 332
Lie, Trygve, 447
Lien Viet, 419, 505
Lim Chin Siong, 543
Lim Yew Hock, 545–7
Limburg Stirum, Joan P. Van, 10
Linggadjati Agreement (1946), 409, 413, 416, 422, 426, 438, 440
Liu-chou, Conferences of (1942, 1944), 294, 297
London, Conference on Burma (1947), 398
London, Conference on Malaya (1956), 544
London, Conferences on Singapore (1956–8), 545–6, 548

Lu Ban, 571
Lyttleton, Oliver, 531, 539, 541

MacArthur, Douglas, 173, 176, 184–5, 305–7, 337, 349, 382–5
MacDonald, Malcolm, 396
MacGillivray, Donald, 541
MacMichael, Harold, 394
Madiun, rebellion of (1948), 441, 475, 481–2
Madjelis Rakjat Indonesia, 142
Maeda, Tadashi, 327
Maha Sangha Association, 225–6
Mahabama Party, 319
Makapili, 338
Malay Nationalist Party, 467
Malayan Chinese Association, 533–5, 537–41, 543–4
Malayan Communist Party, 130–3, 216, 300–4, 309, 403, 467–73, 530–4, 544
Malayan Democratic Union, 402–3, 467
Malayan Indian Congress, 403, 467, 471, 536, 540–1
Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, 300–5, 307–9
Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Union, 300
Malayan Racial Liberation Army, 473, 475
Malayan Union, 394–6, 401–4, 470, 535–8
Malcolm, Neill, 405
Malik, Adam, 326
Malino, Conference of (1946), 412, 428
Malino-policy, 427–31, 438
Manila, battle of (1945), 339
Manopakorn, 91
Mansur, Mas, 219, 252, 254
Mansur, Tengku, 439
Mao Tse-tung, 131, 294, 419, 460
Marshall, David, 543–6
Masjumi, 252–4, 328–9, 350–1, 421–2, 476–7, 480–1
Matsui, Iwane, 259
Matsumoto, Shunichi, 342
Matsuoka, Yosuke, 107, 112, 119, 123, 146, 152–3
Maungdaw, 244
McCarthy, Joseph, 497
Meiktila, battle of (1945), 347
Mendés-France, Pierre, 525–6
MIAI, 87, 142, 217, 221–2, 252–3
Midway, battle of (1942), 187
Min Yuen, 473, 475, 532
Modjokerto, 417
Mohan Singh, 202
Molotov, Vyacheslav, 123, 525–6
Mongkut, 90
Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms (1918), 8
Mook, Hubertus van, 136, 138, 360, 410, 412, 427–30, 436, 438, 440, 484
Monireth, 265
Monivong, 265
Mountbatten, Lord Louis, 313, 320, 346, 348, 360, 391
Moutet, Marius, 415
Muhammadijah, 219, 221, 252
Mus, Paul, 442
Musso, 479–81
Mya, Thakin, 86, 127, 224, 240, 244, 317, 319, 392, 400
Myitkyina, 314, 346
Myochit-Party, 127–8

Nadjamuddin daeng Malewa, 430
Nagano, Yoshiuchi, 352
Nahdatul Ulama, 220, 252
Narayanan, P. P., 540
Nasu, Yoshio, 223, 243
Navarre, Henri, 518, 520
Ne Win, 318
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 76, 459
New Delhi, Inter-Asian Conference at (1947), 423, 447
New Delhi, Special Asian Conference at (1949), 447, 486
New Life Movement (Indonesia), 351, 353
Ngakyedauk Pass, 313
Ngo Dinh Diem, 88, 260–1, 345, 443–4, 449, 515, 524, 527–8
Ngo Dinh Khoi, 364
Ngo Dinh Nhu, 515
Nguyen Ai Quoc, 88, 115, 291, 293–6 (*see also* Ho Chi Minh)
Nguyen Binh, 432–3, 461
Nguyen Hai Tan, 294, 297
Nguyen Phan Long, 491, 497
Nguyen Van Ninh, 88
Nguyen Van Tam, 502, 512, 514–15, 519
Nguyen Van Thinh, 114, 432–3
Nguyen Van Xuan, 444–6
Nicoll, John, 543

Nishihara, Isaku, 111–12
Nishioeda, Hitoshi, 215
Nixon, Richard, 523
Nomura, Kishisaburo, 109, 153–4, 164–6
Nu, Thakin, 86, 127, 244–5, 317, 319 400
Nu-Attlee Agreement (1947), 400

O'Doherty, Michael, 231
Ong Eng Guan, 547
Onn bin Ja'afar, 396, 534–6, 538–40
Osmena, Sergio, 84, 157, 230, 337, 382, 384–5

Pan Malayan Council of Joint Action, 403, 469–70
Pan Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, 469–71
Pan Malayan Islamic Party, 541, 543
Pan Malayan Labour Party, 540
Pangkalpinang, Conference of (1946), 428–9
Panglong Treaty (1947), 399
Pantja Sila, 355
Parindra, 86, 217, 219, 235
Partai Buruh, 377, 421, 423, 476, 480
Partai Islam Indonesia, 87, 221
Partai Kommunis Indonesia, 421, 476–8, 480–2
Partai Nasional Indonesia, 86, 377, 420–2, 430, 476
Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia, 221–2
Partai Sosialis, 377, 477
Partai Sosialis Indonesia, 477–8
Partido Nacionalista, 84, 156–9, 162, 232, 384–5
Party Negara, 540
Pasquier, Pierre, 88–9
Pathet Lao, 495, 504, 506, 510, 514–16, 525, 528
Pau, Conference of (1950), 491, 495–6, 505, 512, 516
Paw Tun, 181, 393
Pearl Harbor, 166, 174, 339
Peninsular Malay Union, 535, 540–1
People's Action Party, 543–4, 547–8
People's Party (Thailand), 90–1, 322
People's Volunteer Organization, 392, 394, 398–9
Percival, Arthur, 179
Persatuan Perdjuangan, 420–2
Persatuan Ulama-Ulama Selurun Atjeh, 331
Peta (Indonesia), 241, 251, 253, 326, 333, 350–1, 366
Peta (Malaya), 241, 256, 299
Pétain, Philippe, 110–11, 149, 263, 340–1
Phahon Phonphayuhasena, 91, 267
Pham Cong Tac, 260, 461, 519
Pham Quynh, 345, 364
Pham Van Dong, 88, 292, 415, 450, 525–6
Phan Boi Chau, 87–8
Phan Chau Trinh, 87
Phan Ke Toai, 345, 363
Phetchabun-project (1944), 323–4
Phetsarath, 264, 344, 363, 371, 387, 494
Phibun Songkhram, 91, 117, 119, 167–8, 170, 248, 266–8, 322–4, 492
Philippine Communist Party, 309
Philippine Constabulary, 241, 335
Philippine Economic Readjustment Act (1939, Tydings-Kocialkowski Bill), 160
Philippine Executive Committee, 229–30, 232–4, 246
Philippine Rehabilitation Act (1946, Tydings Act), 385
Philippine Tariff Act, 39, 40
Philippine Trade Act (1946, Bell Act), 385–6
Philippine Veterans Associaton, 233
Phu Ly, battle of (1953), 520
Phuc Quoc, 88, 115, 259–60, 294
Pignon, Léon, 446
Po, San Crombie, 226, 244
Poorten, Heinter, 183
Potsdam, Conference of (1945), 357, 359
Poulo Condore, 83
Preparatory Executive Committee (Burma), 205–6, 223
Pridi Phanomyong, 91, 169, 267–8, 322–5, 346, 406
Progressive Party (Singapore), 542
Pu, U, 125–8
Putera, 217, 219–20, 223, 241, 252–4, 329, 333

Quezon, Manuel, 84, 157, 160–1, 184–5, 204, 209, 230

RABAUL, 178
Radford, Arthur, 522
Radjiman Wediodiningrat, 352
Ramos, Benigno, 229, 233, 336, 338
Rance, Hubert, 397, 400
Recto, Claro, 336
Reid, Lord, 545
Rendel, George, 543
Renville Agreements (1948), 438. 440, 476, 478, 485, 487, 489
Ricarte, Artemio, 229, 336, 338
Rizal, José, 83, 334
Robin, René, 148
Roem, Mohammed, 488
Roem-Van Royen Statements (1949). 489–90
Romusha's, 237–40, 351
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 93, 129, 151. 154–6, 160, 165, 185, 383–4
Round Table Conference, The Hague (1949), 488, 490
Roxas, Manuel, 84, 234, 246, 335. 383–5
Rubber Regulation Agreement (1934). 28, 35, 54

SAIGON, battle of (1945), 367
Saigon, Conventions of (1949), 449 50
Saipan, 322
Saito, Yaheita, 215
Sajap Kiri, 423, 427, 476–7
Sakdal Movement, 233
Sakdal rebellion (1935), 69, 191
Salan, Raoul, 502
Salim, Agus, 424
Samsuddin, 217–18
Santos, Jose Abad, 208, 229, 231
Santos, Pedro Abad, 307, 310
Sao Shwe Taik, 400
Sarekat Islam, 81, 86
Sarraut, Albert, 87
Sartono, 87
Sassen, Emmanuel, 484–5, 488
Savang Vatthana, 343
Saw San Po Thin, 319
Saw, U, 127–9, 181, 393, 397, 400
Saya San rebellion (1930), 85
Schermerhorn, Willem, 413
Seinendan, 235, 241
Seni Pramoj, 323–4
Setiadjit, 479, 481
Sharp, William F., 185
Shigemitsu, Mamoru, 248–9
Shu Sangi-kai, 249
Sihanouk, Norodom, 343, 368, 387 8, 492–4, 508–12, 514–16
Simon Commission (1928), 85
Singapore Atrocities (1942), 200
Singapore, battle of (1942), 178–9
Singapore General Labour Union, 468–9
Singapore Muslim Conference (1943), 216
Singapore, Treaty of (1946), 406–7
Sinyetha Party, 125–6, 224
Sisavang Vong, 343, 363, 368
Sittang, battle of the Lower (1942), 181
Sjafei, Mohammed, 354
Sjahrir, 86, 139, 325, 376–7, 410, 412, 420–2, 427, 476–9
Sjarifuddin, Amir, 87, 326, 423, 427, 476, 479, 481–2
Slim River, battle of (1942). 175, 178
Slim, William, 320, 347
SOBSI, 424, 478–80
Soe, Thakin, 127, 224, 319–20, 348
Son Ngoc Thanh, 260, 343, 363, 368, 387–8, 508–9, 511, 515
Souphanouvong, 371, 387, 494, 504–5, 528
South-East Asian Youth Conference, *see* Calcutta, Conference
Souvanna Phouma, 494, 507, 515
Stalin, Josef V., 93
Stevenson Restriction Scheme (1928). 28
Stikker, Dirk, 485
Stilwell, Joseph B., 185, 313–14, 346
Straits Chinese British Association, 403
Subardjo, Ahmed, 327, 377
Sudarsono, 421–2
Sudirman, 417, 421–2
Sugiyama, Hajemei, 321
Sukarni, Kartodiwirjo, 326
Sukarno, 86, 207, 213, 216, 218–19, 226, 230, 249, 251–2, 254, 325–6, 329, 350, 353, 355–6, 365–6, 375–6 410, 421–2, 427, 481, 485, 489–90
Sukawati, Tjokordegde Rake, 430
Sukiman Wirjosandjojo, 87
Sumita, Raishiro, 149
Sumulong, Juan, 157
Sutardjo Kartohadikusumo, 87, 137, 140–1, 206
Sutardjo Petition (1936), 87

Sutomo, 87
Suzuki, Kantaro, 357

TA Thu Thau, 88, 114
Tadjuddin Noor, 430
Takagi, Sokichi, 182
Tan Cheng Lock, 402, 533–4, 539, 544
Tan Malaka, 327, 376, 420, 421–2, 477–8, 480
Tanabe, Moritake, 354
Tanaka, Shizuichi, 233, 246
Tangerang, 429
Taruc, Luis, 307
Templer, Gerald, 531–2, 538–9, 540–1
Terauchi, Hisaichi, 164, 194, 312–13, 337, 353, 356, 365, 367
Thakins, 85–6, 125–7, 129–30, 181, 204–5, 207, 216, 223–7, 243, 289, 316–18, 320–1, 325, 346
Thamrin, Mohammed H., 87, 140–1
Than Tun, Thakin, 86, 127, 224, 317, 319, 348, 392, 400
Thein Maung, 244
Thein Pe, 224, 318, 320
Thirty Comrades, 130, 181
Thomas, Shenton, 131
Tilak, Bal Gangadhar, 76
Tjarda van Starkenborg Stachouwer, A. W. L., 136, 142
Tjipto Mangunkusumo, 139
Togo, Shigenori, 164–5, 193
Tojo, Hideki, 146, 155–6, 163, 166, 192–3, 243, 246–9, 251, 255, 267, 314, 322
Tokyo, Conventions of (1941), 148
Tokyo, Treaty of (1941), 120, 408
Toyoda, Soemu, 337
Toyoda, Teijiro, 149, 154
Trade Depression (1930s), 28, 38, 40, 46, 52–3, 58–9, 63–4, 69–71, 84–6, 88, 90, 92, 94, 98–101, 161
Tran Quang Vinh, 260
Tran Trong Kim, 200, 261, 344–5, 364
Tran Trung Lap, 115
Tran Van An, 200, 261
Tran Van Giau, 88, 116, 363, 367–8, 432
Tran Van Huu, 491, 500–2
Tran Van Soai, 519
Tras, 531
Trinh Minh The, 499, 501
Triple A Movement, 217–19, 221–2, 233, 235, 332
Trotskyists (Vietnam), 114, 367
Truman Doctrine (1947), 458
Truman, Harry S., 385, 500
Truong Chinh, 292, 462, 505
Tsuchihashi, Yuitsu, 109
Twenty One Party (Burma), 85
Tydings Act, *see* Philippine Rehabilitation Act
Tydings-Kocialkowski Bill, *see* Philippine Economic Readjustment Act
Tydings-McDuffie Act (1934), 7, 16 41, 84, 157, 382

UNITED Malay National Organization, 396, 401–4, 467, 469–71, 534–41, 543–4
United Nations Commission for Indonesia, 487–8

VARENNE, Alexandre, 71
Vargas, Jorge, 204, 228–31, 233–4, 241, 247, 335
Viet Minh, 292–8, 306, 309, 345, 363–4, 367–8, 370–5, 411, 418–19, 424, 427, 431–3, 442–6, 450, 460–3, 466–7, 491, 494, 504–5, 511
Viet Nam Phuc Quoc Dong Minh, *see* Phuc Quoc
Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, 87–8, 261, 291, 294, 297, 370, 373–4, 418–19, 424, 443, 447
Vinh Yen, battle of (1951), 498–9
Visman Commission (1940), 141–2
Vo Nguyn Giap, 88, 291–3, 295, 297, 372, 374, 411, 416, 419–20, 425–6, 467, 496, 498–9, 501–3, 506, 510, 520
Volksraad, 10, 14, 19–20
Vu Hong Khanh, 294, 297

WAHID Hasjim, 353
Wainwright, Jonathan, 185.
Wan Waityakorn, 248
Wang Ching-wei, 200, 248
Washington, Treaty of (1946), 408
Watanabe, Wataru, 214–15
Wikana, 327, 478, 481
Wilhelmina, Queen, 142, 382
Wilson, Woodrow, 77
Wiranata Kusuma, 353, 439
Wiwoho Purbohadidjojo, 87, 140–1

Wondoamiseno, 252
Wood, Leonard, 6, 84

XUAN, *see* Nguyen Van Xuan

YAMAMOTO, Isoroku, 174
Yamamoto, Kumaichi, 246
Yamamoto, Moichiro, 220
Yamashita, Tomoyuki, 175, 178–9, 200, 337–8
Yan Dang Khum, battle of (1941), 118
Yem Sambaur, 492–3, 497, 508
Yen Bay, mutiny (1930), 88
Yoshizawa, Kenkichi, 137
Young Men's Buddhist Association, 84
Youtevong, Sisovath, 388
Youth Conference, South-East Asian, *see* Calcutta, Conference
Yunan Railway, 109–10, 147

ZHDANOV, Andrey, 458

ISBN 0 19 638263 7