THE COMMUNIST STRUGGLE IN MALAYA

GENE Z. HANRAHAN
with an introduction by
VICTOR PURCELL
and a postscript by
SIR ROBERT THOMPSON

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by

GENE Z. HANRAHAN

PERPUSTAKAAN NEGARA MALAYSIA
PERBADANAN PERPUSTAKAAN PERDANA MENTERI
KOLEKSI ARKIB PINTAR

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VICTOR PURCELL

and a postscript by
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FOREWORD

THIS study is one of a series on Communist movements in Eastern and Southern Asia which have been prepared for the international research program of the Institute of Pacific Relations. Other volumes include *Red Flag in Japan* by Rodger Swearingen and Paul Langer; *Government and Administration in Communist China* by S. B. Thomas; *The Viet Minh Regime* by Bernard B. Fall; and *The Communist Party of India* by M. R. Massani. Subsequent reports planned for later publication include an analysis of the Communist movement in Indochina by Milton I. Sacks and a documentary history of the Philippine Communist movement by Mr. Hanrahan.

The present study does not claim to be a comprehensive discussion of the 'Emergency' which has so seriously disturbed the military and political security of Malaya for several years, but only with one important phase of it. For a much more extensive account of Malayan political and economic problems in recent years, readers should consult a newly published I.P.R. study, *Malaya : Communist or Free?* by Dr. Victor Purcell who has been kind enough to write the introduction to Mr. Hanrahan's report.

Though, in many ways, Malaya can be regarded as an encouraging example of how a Communist rebellion can be suppressed by a combination of vigorous military and police action coupled with wide-ranging measures of resettlement and political reform, it is also a striking instance of the difficulties and high costs of such measures in an Asian colonial area. Even so vigorous a military commander as General Sir Gerald Templer has recently acknowledged that the Malayan Communist guerrilla forces, though severely weakened and discredited, are by no means eliminated but have been able to recruit new adherents and partially make

up for their heavy losses. In his farewell speech on leaving Malaya General Templer spoke of his greatest disappointment as the Communists' obstinate persistence in an apparently hopeless struggle and the smallness of the number of surrenders.

The Communist rebellion in Malaya, though now largely contained and driven back into the jungle, is still a factor of some importance in a South - East Asia which is only too well aware of the recent ominous Viet Minh victories in Indochina. It thus deserves continuing attention by students of Asian nationalism and of international Communist tactics.

Mr. Hanrahan, who is a lecturer at Adelphi College, New York, has specialized for some years in the study of guerrilla warfare and has done research on this subject for the U.S. Department of the Army. He is the author of a report, *Chinese Communist Guerrilla Tactics* (July 1952) and of articles on the Chinese Communist army and navy in various military journals. He is now engaged on a comprehensive study of the evolution of the Chinese Red Army.

The author and the Institute are grateful for valuable comments and editorial assistance to Mr. Lucian Pye of Princeton University, Miss Catherine Porter and Mr. S. B. Thomas.

WILLIAM L. HOLLAND
Secretary-General
Institute of Pacific Relations

New York, 14 *May* 1954

INTRODUCTION

BEFORE World War II, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was not a major force in local politics. It was active underground, being illegal, especially in Chinese schools and through its agency, the 'General Labour Union', and the youth bands calling themselves 'Anti-Japanese-Backing-Up-Association', but the Party did not constitute a real threat to the administration. The war, however, brought about a fundamental change. When Germany attacked Russia in June 1941, the MCP was for some months in an anomalous position: on the one hand it had now to back Soviet Russia in its fight against Germany, and on the other hand it was still committed to fighting 'imperialism' in the shape of Soviet Russia's ally, the British. But when Japan came into the war on 8 December and her troops landed in Malaya, the anomaly was removed and the MCP declared its full support for the Allies. It was not, however, until late in December 1941 that the Malayan Government, alarmed by the rapid advance of the Japanese, agreed to the inclusion of Communists among their resistance forces. A Chinese Mobilization Committee under the direction of a Singapore industrialist, Mr. Tan Kah-kee, had the approval both of the Kuomintang in Malaya and of the MCP and received also the blessings of the Governor, Sir Shenton Thomas. A contingent of Communists, a part of 'Dalforce', though without firearms, fought in the mangrove swamps of Singapore with considerable bravery.

The Japanese regarded the Chinese of whatever political colour, but especially the Communists, as their implacable enemies, and as soon as they had occupied Malaya they began mopping-up operations. In Singapore, the *Butai* (military detachments) swung into action, parading the Chinese population *en masse* and picking

out Communists or alleged Communists by the hundreds with the aid of informers — men, women, and children — hooded like members of the Ku Klux Klan. The persons thus singled out were at once executed, the total number perishing in this way probably exceeding five thousand.

While the Japanese were still advancing, the British army had trained some squads of Chinese Communists for sabotage operations behind the enemy lines and these, under Colonel Spencer Chapman, were active in blowing up trains and bridges and interrupting Japanese communications. With the fall of Singapore, however, these operations were discontinued and the Communists, reinforced by those who had escaped from the clutches of the *Butai,* betook themselves to the jungle highlands to organize what became known as the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). This was the military arm of the Communists and under MCP control.

The MCP was concerned more with its objective of establishing a Communist Republic in Malaya than in resisting the Japanese, but guerrillas (not more than 4,000 at the time) were nevertheless a big thorn in the side of the invader, harassing his communications and forcing him to divert a large number of troops to contain them. Then from May 1943 onwards a reconnaissance party of Force 136 arrived in the country by submarine or parachuted from aeroplanes. Contact was made with the Communist guerrillas in the highlands of Perak and eventually an agreement was signed between the MPAJA and the Supreme Allied Commander, Lord Mountbatten, whereby the former, in return for arms, money, and supplies, undertook to accept the latter's orders in the intended invasion of Malaya. (Temporarily, at least, the Communists dropped the aim of a Malayan Republic from their nine-point programme.)

As is well known, the Japanese surrendered and an invasion of Malaya was therefore not necessary. Instead, Lord Mountbatten's troops arrived to liberate Malaya from the Japanese. But in the

meantime the MPAJA had emerged from the jungle and had taken over control of the country. When the British arrived they received a warm welcome from the general populace but found that in all the towns and villages of the interior triumphal arches had been erected in honour of the MPAJA who were given the sole credit for the Japanese defeat! However, the MPAJA gave way with ill grace to the British Military Administration, and early in December they agreed to be disbanded, each receiving a gratuity of M$350 (about US$163 at the then prevailing exchange rate).

But while the Communists' military arm was disbanded and, temporarily at least, ineffective, the MCP itself was extremely active, and attempted by underground action to make the position of the British untenable. Through their General Labour Union they organized a series of strikes which paralyzed the country for several days at a time. Finally, however, they over-reached themselves when they attempted to enforce a general stoppage of work in 'a day of mourning for' (i.e. 'celebration of') the British defeat at Singapore in 1942, on its fourth anniversary on 15 February 1946. The British now took effective action, including the arrest of some of their leaders, which caused the MCP to confine its action to limited civilian objectives for more than two years. It was able, however, to infiltrate a number of the new political parties which sprang into being for the first time in the history of Malaya.

The circumstances leading to the Communist decision to challenge the British in open warfare in June 1948 are still, in some major respects, obscure. Attempts have been made to connect the outbreak of hostilities in Malaya and the Communist insurrections in Burma and Indonesia with the Communist conference held in Calcutta early in 1948, but some important links in the chain of evidence are missing. All that is certain is that from this time forward, the Malayan Communists attempted to gain a decision in their favour by terrorism and force of arms.

The course of what has come to be referred to as the 'Malayan Emergency' has for nearly six years been reported in the world press with emphases and slants differing with the reporters and with the policy of the newspapers. The outstanding development in the military operations against the guerrillas was the putting into operation from 1950 onwards of the 'Briggs Plan' by which over 500,000 Chinese squatters brought in from isolated clearings in the jungle were resettled in over 500 'New Villages'. The effect of this was to force on the MCP a change of policy, and on 1 October 1951 they issued a new directive in which they admitted their mistakes, especially that of engaging in indiscriminate terrorism and the sabotage of industry which had alienated so many labourers by injuring their source of livelihood. In future, the directive ordered, armed 'incidents' would be limited to specified objectives and the main energies of the MCP itself would be directed towards infiltrating labour and gaining its support. Because of the nature of the terrain, this directive took several months to reach all branches and outposts, and it was nearly a year before a copy of it fell into British hands.

In the meantime there had also been a radical change in British policy. On 6 October 1951 (five days after the issue of the new Communist directive) the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney, was ambushed and killed while motoring up the mountain road to Fraser's Hill. The new Conservative Government which had just come into power in Britain decided to replace him by a soldier who should be in charge of both the civil government and military operations. The soldier appointed was General Sir Gerald Templer. On assuming duty, General Templer applied himself primarily to his military task, his civil assignment, namely to lead Malaya towards self-government by the creation of a common citizenship and representative institutions, being relegated to second place. The energy with which the General speeded up military operations against the guerrillas, together with the decline in the number of 'incidents', was generally interpreted

as promising an early end to the war in the jungle. It was only when the new Communist directive came to light that the main reason for the comparative immunity of the countryside from acts of violence became apparent — but only to those who cared to face the facts. The main force of the guerrillas had withdrawn into deep jungle to re-form, but there were still enough of them in the settled areas to stage 'incidents' when such were necessary to maintain prestige or to capture food or arms. General Templer himself admitted that the Communist guerrillas were still as numerous as they had been at the beginning of the Emergency and were obtaining all the recruits they needed. The number of surrenders meanwhile remained constant (about one a day).

Mr. Hanrahan correctly sums up the situation as I see it, namely, a stalemate or a *status quo* but adds that 'this *status quo* is in respect of Malaya itself, since any radical change in the situation outside of Malaya would probably destroy the existing balance of power'.

British policy is officially declared to consist of measures aimed at securing a complete military victory over the guerrillas side by side with steps leading Malaya towards self-government. Unfortunately, while the military campaign to date shows no signs of reaching a successful conclusion, the measures taken by General Templer to bring Malaya further on the road towards self-government or to raise the standard of living of the people have not been impressive enough to rally the support of the people as a whole on the side of the Government. Nor have the General's collective punishments done anything to improve the regard in which the administration is held by the inmates of the 'New Villages'. The result is widespread apathy when there is not active hostility towards the regime. The departure of General Templer in June 1954 is thus likely to leave the Malayan problem still far from solution.

The real battle in Malaya (as General Templer has repeatedly affirmed, though the persuasive mildness of the phrase is in

strange contrast with his coercive methods) is for 'the hearts and minds of the people'. The Communists claim that the guerrillas constitute a Malayan People's Liberation Army — the 'liberation' being from British 'imperialism'. The 'Emergency' of 1948 is represented as a spontaneous rising of the people of Malaya — Malays, Chinese, and Indians — against British 'oppression'. The truth is, however, that 95 per cent. of the guerrillas are Chinese and the movement is a Chinese Communist one. Their propaganda department has taken great pains to explain to the people the basic ideological theories of Communism. The 'British enemy' is shown in uncompromising terms as the originator of a 'reactionary, criminal war'. The Communists look for support (moral if not material) from Communist China and their theory has obvious affinities with Maoism, but seems also to be orthodox Marxist - Leninist in some respects. The strength of their propagandist position is that they can confine themselves to promises while the Federal Government in Malaya is judged only by immediate results.

The British task has been to offer a counter-attraction to the promises of Communism in the shape of an improved standard of living and a concrete advance towards self-government. The depression in the rubber industry and the fall in real wages since 1939 have made it exceedingly difficult for the Government to offer more than the palliatives of 'welfare' and the moral consolations of 'uplift' in place of improved living standards, while the steps taken ostensibly in the direction of giving the people self-government have been widely interpreted by sections of the Malayan public as a concealed means of withholding it indefinitely from them. The slogans of democracy and the mottos of Samuel Smiles blared from loud-speakers over kampong, 'new village', and empty jungle have therefore been heard by the people as 'a plaintive and tremulous sound'.

In his study Mr. Hanrahan has, from various authentic sources, analysed the nature of Communist propaganda in Malaya and

has produced a very valuable aid to the understanding of the basic issues in the Malayan conflict. He makes it clear that the Communist arguments are put forward with considerable plausibility and skill and are calculated at least to impress the Chinese squatters, uprooted from their homes and (as so many of them are tappers) suffering from the depression in the 'capitalist' rubber market. Hitherto the Malay peasants have paid little heed to Communist blandishments, but the existence of an agrarian problem in their midst, as revealed by the recent report of the Committee on Rice Production, accompanied by almost universal rack-renting, means that they are by no means to be considered as permanently insulated from Communist contamination. Propaganda of a much cleverer kind than that at present relied on by the Government is required to meet the challenge. The tactics of treating social, political, and economic reform as a mere instrument of psychological warfare in aid of a military objective have manifestly failed. The departure of General Templer, if the British people can be made aware of the facts, should be the signal for a complete reconsideration of British policy and attitudes.

VICTOR PURCELL

Cambridge University, March 1954

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE rise of Communist movements in South-East Asia has proved to be one of the important but little-understood political developments of the post-war era. Full appreciation by Western students of the true nature of Communist growth in this area has been hampered largely because of the absence of detailed studies on the local movements in each country.

This study is concerned principally with the strategy and tactics of the Communist revolutionary movement in Malaya. The problem is treated historically: tracing the origins and early development of Malayan Communism, its activities in World War II, and its revolutionary course in the post-war years. The time span covers roughly nineteen years — from 1924 through 1953.

Special attention has been given throughout to the revolutionary doctrines and practices of the Malayan Communist Party. Much of this study therefore is concerned with such topics as armed insurrection, revolutionary techniques, labour activities, and guerrilla warfare. There are sound reasons for this emphasis. Western students of the Orient are, for the most part, more familiar with the purely ideological or social manifestations of such movements and many are prone to under-emphasize the importance of the ways and means employed in carrying out a militant Bolshevik revolution. Needless to say, the Communists themselves have always taken full cognizance of the realities of these media in achieving their own revolutionary goals.

In order to provide the student of South-East Asian Communism with some basic source materials, six important Malayan Communist Party documents (in translation) are included in the second half of this book. These documents have been selected

not only for their importance in the Communist struggle in Malaya itself; but as a guide to Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics as applied in other Far Eastern areas as well. Explanatory notes have been given where needed to acquaint the reader with special or unfamiliar terminology.

Most of the documents and sources used in this work are primary in nature, many of them having received little serious study to date. Captured Japanese Occupation records, Malayan Communist Party directives and histories, personal narratives and guerrilla texts have been referred to and, whenever possible, all data have been checked closely with other existing evidence.

I am indebted to the Institute of Pacific Relations for assistance in preparing the study and for arranging its publication. I also wish to express my thanks to Mr. William L. Holland, Secretary-General of the Institute, for his encouragement and editorial help, to Mr. Philip J. Jaffe for making available to me a number of documents from his library, and to Mr. Richard Howard who was particularly helpful in problems of Chinese translation. Though the study appears under the auspices of the International Secretariat of the Institute of Pacific Relations, I am solely responsible for opinions expressed in the volume.

GENE Z. HANRAHAN

New York, May 1954

CHAPTER I

EARLY COMMUNISM IN MALAYA

MARXISM-LENINISM AND THE COLONIAL COUNTRIES

Early Communist thinkers long argued that the Orient represented a vast pool of reserves for the world revolution. In planning for the First International, Marx prophetically wrote that the Asian struggle would 'give off the sparks into the charged mine of the modern industrial system'.[1] Similarly, as early as 1908, Lenin pointed up the 'sharpening of the revolutionary democratic struggle in Asia', emphasizing clearly that the Orient as well as Europe would prove to be 'the great international ally of the Bolsheviks'.[2] But in the years preceding the success of the October Revolution, the Asian picture was perhaps too confused — its lands too distant and removed from the 'European revolutionary centre' — to be of immediate concern. In 1919, however, the stunning Bolshevik defeats in Germany and Hungary, followed by a marked decline in the Red tide sweeping Europe, caused Communist theoreticians to look to the East with renewed interest.

This was paralleled by the founding of the Third International (Comintern) in March of that year. The Comintern was to be a professional revolutionary organization to coordinate, assist and direct national revolutionary movements. As a result of the failures in Europe, Lenin made some exploratory attempts to redirect Comintern efforts at least temporarily away from the

[1]Article dealing with the Taiping Rebellion, written in 1853. Cited in L.G. Safarov, *Marx and the East* (New York, 1934), p.8.

[2]Cited in Stefan T. Possony, *A Century of Conflict* (Chicago, 1953), p. 149.

West and to concentrate attention instead upon the colonial areas of Asia. In July 1919 he exhorted the Communist parties in the capitalist countries to 'send arms and literature to the revolutionary parties in the colonies'.[3] However, no detailed plan had yet been worked out and no disciplined party organization existed in the East at this early date. As a result, few serious moves were made to implement this directive in the succeeding months.

The problem of developing a correct strategic doctrine for the Asian revolution was made the principal concern of the Second Congress of the Communist International, held in the late summer of 1920. It was the thesis of the Second Congress that the colonial areas of the Orient were a fundamental source of strength to the European capitalist nations. In view of this, where the 'direct approach' of 1919 had failed, a strategy of 'indirect approach', i.e., striking at the European powers through their colonies, came under consideration. One of the delegates suggested that if the industrially advanced capitalist nations could be cut off from their Asian colonies — areas which they relied upon so heavily for raw materials — then these imperialist nations would soon collapse.[4] This thesis was elaborated by Lenin who insisted that, in addition, since the Asian nations had neither a large native capitalist class nor a sufficiently sophisticated peasantry, the class conflict of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie must wait. First, the Communists must take advantage of the surge of nationalism in the East, uniting these contradictory alien classes against the principal foe: Western imperialism.[5]

The resolutions of the Second Congress were adopted unanimously and, as one student of Communism put it, marked 'the true starting point of the Bolshevik eastern orientation'.[6] Shortly

[3]Ibid. p. 151.

[4]*The Fundamental Tasks of the Communist International* (Moscow, 1920), pp. 114-18.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Possony, op. cit. p. 153.

thereafter, the Congress of the Peoples of the East was convened at Baku. Here, young nationalists from many Oriental countries made their first contacts with professional Communist revolutionaries. Almost two years later, in February 1922, the First Congress of the Toilers of the Far East was held in Petrograd, marking the first serious attempt made by the Communists to organize the proletariat of the colonial countries into a unified disciplined revolutionary force. Representatives from China, Japan, Korea, India, the Philippines and Indochina attended the First Congress. From this came one of the earliest-known links established between the revolutionaries of the colonial areas and the Comintern.[7]

In general, however, Communist activities in Asia in the years immediately following the Second Congress of the Communist International were exploratory, characterized more by failure than by success. True, a series of fledgling Communist parties and left-dominated organizations were formed and, in such countries as China and Indonesia, the Reds actually made serious bids for power. But mistakes were legion and Red insurrections generally met with disaster. As the Comintern acknowledged in 1928, '...imperialism has up to now succeeded in bloody suppression of the revolutionary movement in the colonies'.[8]

By 1928, Communist concern over colonial Asia had become more than just an experiment in the strategy of the indirect approach. The Communist leaders' fingers had been burned but their appetite was whetted. At the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International (September 1928) the problem of revolution in the colonies was again examined and debated and, in the light of the experiences of the preceding nine years, a more

[7] *The First Congress of the Toilers of the Far East* (Petrograd, 1922), pp. 220-48.

[8] *The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies:* thesis adopted by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International (New York, 1929), pp. 6-7.

effective and detailed strategy was outlined. Although the revolutionary movement in the colonies faced 'bloody suppression', it was argued that the 'actual significance of the colonies and semi-colonies...has vastly increased'. In fact, it was resolved, 'the vast colonial and semi-colonial world has become an unquenchable blazing furnace of the revolutionary mass movement'.[9]

The thesis of the Second World Congress, drawn up by Lenin, was held 'still valid', but much of it was modified in the light of experience. Strategy and tactics were given a clearer and more concrete definition.

Three fundamental tasks[10] were outlined at the Sixth Congress. First, a closer liaison was called for between the Communist parties and labour unions in the 'imperialist countries' and the 'revolutionary organization in the colonies'. Difficulties and errors in early organization were traceable in large part to inexperience. External direction and assistance were not 'regarded as adequate'. It was the belief of the Comintern that revolutionary victory in the colonies could not be carried forward successfully without strong assistance from senior party organizations. Secondly, the revolution in this early period was to take the form of mass demonstrations, intensive propaganda and political agitation. The time for actual armed insurrection would await, from necessity, the successful establishment of a militant party and the creation of a large mass base. Finally, an intensive struggle was to be launched against the colonial policy of the Social Democrats. Such a policy manifested itself in some of the earlier Marxist movements in the colonial areas and the Communists were making every attempt to purge their own ranks and establish a unified programme of action before renewing the struggle.

In the matter of strategy and tactics, the Sixth Congress

[9]Ibid. p. 1.

[10]The three tasks of the Sixth Congress are given in full in ibid. pp. 137-42.

continued Leninist policies by advocating a 'bourgeois-democratic revolution' for the colonial areas, i.e. the temporary united front of the bourgeoisie and proletariat against the Western colonial powers. Indeed, not only petty, but national bourgeoisie[11] were to be courted by the revolution — but the courtship was to be only temporary. Local parties were cautioned to keep close watch on these 'wavering elements' and to strive continually to maintain their own purity and 'independence'.[12] Full cognizance was taken of the fact that the 'bourgeois-democratic revolution' was but a temporary expedient, a '...stage signifying preparing of the prerequisites for proletarian dictatorship and socialist revolution'.[13]

The transition of the revolution from the bourgeois-democratic to a higher socialist phase demanded, however, 'certain minimum prerequisites,' including 'a certain level of development in the country of industry, of trade union organization and of a strong Communist Party'.[14] Of first importance in the transitional period was the question of 'organization' — both of a sound revolutionary party and of labour. As the Sixth Congress resolved, '...most important is the development of a strong Communist Party with a big mass influence...work in trade unions'.[15]

The tactical line laid down by the Sixth World Congress covered four general points: (1) a shifting of the revolutionary force in favour of the proletariat, the establishment of a national unity of the country and the organization of Soviets; (2) the carrying through of the agrarian revolution; (3) the widespread development of trade union organizations; (4) the establishment of

[11]'National bourgeoisie' is a Communist term frequently used to indicate the upper middle class and upper economic group functioning within a country. The elite of the so-called 'compradore class' in a colonial area would be considered national bourgeoisie.

[12]Ibid. p. 34.

[13]Ibid. p. 21.

[14]Ibid. p. 22.

[15]Ibid. pp. 22, 44.

equal rights for all nationalities and the realization of sex-equality.[16]

This tactical line was to be interpreted broadly, depending upon local conditions. The 'agrarian movement,' for example, was a relatively new concept for this area, a product no doubt of the lessons learned in the 1925-7 Chinese Revolution. Its application to other areas was not mandatory, but, rather, its possibilities were to be 'fully explored'. Similarly, the problem of equal rights for all nationalities would by design, take a different form in each country. The tactical line was thus meant to be a general guide and outline for local revolutionaries — not a hard and fast dogma.

The blueprint for revolution in the colonial areas of Asia, as we have seen, was prepared at the Second Congress of the Communist International and given full form at the Sixth Congress held in 1928. From that time to the present the general outline of this blueprint has remained unchanged. Certain tactical doctrines have been modified and local Communist organizations have often changed policies in order to adhere more closely to the flexible line of World Communism, yet the essential strategy remains that laid down in 1928.

COMINTERN OPERATIONS IN MALAYA

Early Comintern activities in the twenties encountered a climate, in most colonial areas, favourably disposed towards Bolshevik revolutionary doctrine. In such countries as China, Korea, India and Indonesia, nationalist intellectuals were already in the process of exploring this 'new' revolutionary concept through the medium of Marxist study groups. The overwhelming victory of Communism in the Russian Revolution made this a formula of success, greatly enhancing the prestige of Bolshevism in Asian lands. The Baku Conference and First Congress of the Toilers of the Far East, both held in the Soviet Union, attracted

[16]Ibid. p. 21. Given here in abstract.

a small but intense group of young nationalists from these areas. Many may have attended primarily from curiosity but left fully convinced of the workability of Communist revolutionary techniques for their own homelands. They later provided the hard core of early Communist revolutionaries in these regions.

Malaya, however, was the exception to this trend. No delegates from Malaya attended any of these early conferences and Malaya itself was notably absent in the revolutionary blueprint first outlined by the Communist International. In fact, the Malay Peninsula at this time was anything but a seething cauldron of revolution and nationalism. It was rather a placid country, apparently well content with British colonial rule. This apolitical atmosphere, so different from some other colonial areas of Asia, offered no fertile ground for the doctrines of Communism and remained, in the early years, of little interest to professional Bolsheviks.

The most notable feature of the Malayan social structure is its 'plural' nature. Rather than one national entity, the population of Malaya is divided into three major nationalities: Malays, Chinese and Indians, each by tradition remaining separate and distinct from the other. According to the 1947 census, the population of Malaya totalled some 5,808,000 people, the Malays making up 44.9 per cent. of the total population, the Chinese 43.4 per cent., the Indians 10.4 per cent., the Europeans less than 0.3 per cent. Marked differences in custom, religion, language, economic position and racial characteristics all serve to perpetuate these plural groupings — regardless of any mutual interests developed out of their common residence in the Peninsula.

The indigenous group, the Malays, had long considered both the Chinese and Indians unwelcome intruders in their land. Traditional British policy favoured the Malays over the other races and few Malay natives evidenced any dissatisfaction with their lot under British colonial rule. Many Malays were educated in British schools, and, for many years, they were the only ones

eligible to enter the Malayan civil service. Partly because of this preferential treatment given, the Malays, most of whom were farmers and rubber plantation workers, showed little interest in internal politics.

The Chinese, on the other hand, were as economically and politically aggressive as the Malays were passive. A major part of the Chinese community in Malaya, however, considered that country only a transient home. They awaited the day when they could amass a small sum of money and return to China. Though many fared well economically in Malaya, few remained long enough to sink deep roots in the country. In the nineteen twenties and thirties the ratio of emigrants to immigrants — both numerous — remained about equal.[17] Although Chinese nationalism ran high during this period, it was a nationalism tied to China and not to Malaya. Political parties and groups were but overseas branches of the main parties in China itself, and a major part of the intense Chinese political spirit in the early twenties was oriented more towards the revolution then going on in China than towards a possible revolt against the British — a revolt which could be brought about at best in the distant future and which would take place in a land most Chinese considered alien and temporary.

The Indians were also largely transients in Malaya. Migration from and to India remained high and Indian political and nationalistic feelings, though intense, were also oriented towards their homeland, not towards Malaya. Unlike the Chinese, however, they did not fare well economically, comprising the bulk of cheap coolie labour in the country. The Indians' low economic level resulted in a growing antipathy on the part of both Malays and Chinese towards them. This feeling served further to widen

[17]In 1939, for example, 115,792 Chinese immigrants arrived in Malaya, while some 106,375 Chinese returned to the China mainland. For a detailed account see Victor Purcell, *The Chinese In Malaya* and *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*.

the deep gulf of differences and antagonisms dividing these races.

Given this complexity of ethnic and socio-economic groups, the concept of a unified 'nationalism' for Malaya was alien. Such nationalist and revolutionary tendencies as did exist were oriented on a narrow racial basis away from, not towards, Malaya.[18] Finally, it might be suggested that such a form of nationalism, founded along narrow ethnic lines, in itself served as a deterrent to a single pan-Malayan nationalism. One student of this problem as it exists in Indonesia has written, 'Nationalism within a plural society is itself a disruptive force, tending to shatter and not to consolidate its social order.'[19]

It is evident that the Communists in other Asian colonial areas found it advantageous to utilize the ties of militant nationalism to bind together in a unified struggle many otherwise alien forces in the native population. The absence of a single national political consciousness in Malaya, however, prohibited the employment of this tactic and contributed seriously to the slow growth of Communism in Malaya.

Another important factor which retarded the development of Communism in Malaya was the apparent failure of the British Communist Party to foster and direct revolutionary activities in Malaya. As we have previously noted, the senior Communist parties in the imperialist countries were charged with the task of assisting and developing the cause of Marxism-Leninism in their respective colonial areas. This programme was carried on with some success by the French Communist Party in Indochina and

[18]We have seen that both Indians and Chinese were politically oriented towards their respective homelands An interesting adjunct to this was a small group of Malays who showed some interest in politics. They were more inclined, however, to direct this interest towards their racial brothers, the Indonesians or towards individual Malay States, rather than towards a unified Malaya.

[19]J. S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India, A Study of Plural Economy* (New York, 1944) p. 468. Cited in George M. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, 1952), p. 60.

a lesser degree by the Netherlands Communist Party in Indonesia.

The British Communist Party, however, made no known gains in Malaya. There appear to be several reasons for this failure. The British Communist Party has never been an exceptionally strong revolutionary force, even in England, and the vastness of the British colonial empire at this time greatly overtaxed its limited resources. Certainly such fertile regions as India and Egypt had a higher priority than distant and unknown Malaya. Furthermore, in Malaya, English was spoken much less frequently than Malay, Tamil or Chinese. Certainly the linguistic, cultural and racial barriers between the peoples of Malaya and the British Left Wing were formidable and even up to the present time these barriers have proved sufficient to keep Malaya outside the range of activities and interests of the British Communist Party.

Finally, there is the question of revolutionary cadres. As Malaya itself was not represented at the earlier meetings of the Communist International, no Malays were available in this period for revolutionary training. Those Chinese and Indians who were given Comintern duties were more needed in India and China than in Malaya. As a result, the priority of other areas, coupled with a complete lack of Communist revolutionaries familiar with the complexities of the Malayan scene, served further to retard the growth of Marxism-Leninism in the Peninsula.

It is thus not surprising that the first actual Communist activity in Malaya should have been brought about more by accident than design. In the early spring of 1924, an Indonesian revolutionary named Alimin stopped over in Singapore for a brief time while en route to the Pan-Pacific Labour Conference[20] to be held

[20]The Pan-Pacific Labour Conference, functioning under Comintern auspices, was held for the purpose of organizing the proletariat of the Far East into a disciplined Communist organizational weapon. It was an outgrowth of the labour platform agreed upon at the Fifth World Congress of the Communist International held in June-July 1924.

in Canton in June of that year. Alimin's activities in the British Crown Colony have never been outlined clearly, but there is some indication that he carried out limited recruiting among the more radical elements there.[21]

Alimin evidently made a full report of his activities in Singapore to the Comintern at the Pan-Pacific Labour Conference, for early in 1925 Tan Malaka, then Chief Comintern representative for all South-East Asia, persuaded Chinese Communist Party leaders in Canton to undertake the infiltration of Left-Wing groups in Singapore. A special representative from the Chinese Communist Party, reportedly named Fu Ta-ching, was subsequently sent to Malaya to effect a liaison with resident Chinese and Indonesian revolutionaries.[22]

Indonesian Comintern agents again became active in Malaya a short time later. In 1925 a Communist insurrectionary attempt on the island of Java failed and a number of leaders were forced to flee to Singapore. Among these were Tan Malaka, Subakat and Tamin, and (later) Alimin and Musso.[23] Although these Indonesian revolutionaries were concerned principally with a review of party problems in the Dutch East Indies, some attempt was evidently made to agitate among the Malays — no doubt to balance concurrent efforts by the Chinese Communists to organize the Overseas Chinese in the area.

Language was no barrier to the Indonesians, but the results appear to have been negative. Tan Malaka himself blamed this failure on the 'lazy and contented' Malays. He apparently wrote off all future attempts at political work with the Malays by bitterly concluding that '...the only hope lay with the Chinese'.[24] The

[21]Japanese Military Administration Documents: *The Occupation of Malaya*, 'Section IV: Origins of the Malayan Communist Party'.

[22]Chijin Tsutsui, *Nampo gunsei-ron* (Military Government in the Southern Regions), (Tokyo, February 1944), p. 335.

[23]Details on the events leading up to this insurrection, and of the subsequent journey to Singapore, are given by Kahin, op. cit. pp. 79-84.

[24]Rene Onraet, *Singapore : A Police Background* (London, 1947), p. 110.

arrest and subsequent deportation of several of the leading Indonesian Communists evidently brought to a close all Indonesian-sponsored efforts at revolutionary organization in the Malay Peninsula.

Parallel with the operations of the Indonesians in Malaya were the efforts then being inaugurated by the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern located in Shanghai. Emphasis was placed upon the introduction of experienced Chinese agents into the Malayan Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang (Nationalist Party).[25] In succeeding years, Comintern agents operated safely within the protective confines of the Kuomintang, active principally in Singapore and at the Overseas Branch Headquarters of the Chinese Nationalist Party located in Kuala Lumpur.

As we have noted, Communist activities centred among the more aggressive Chinese, and, to a limited extent, among the few exiled Indonesian revolutionaries temporarily residing in Singapore. From the first, however, special emphasis appears to have been given to the Hailams (Chinese from Hainan Island). The clannish, secretive Hailams remained separate from other Overseas Chinese, comprising a closely-knit group with a long and proud revolutionary tradition. Since most were coolies and servants, they were looked down upon by the more prosperous mainland Chinese and provided fertile soil for early Communist agitation. Indeed, it was this racial group which made up a majority of the membership of the Malayan Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang. Rene Onraet, Commissioner of the Singapore Police at the time, felt that the Hailams were deliberately chosen by the Communists, remarking that '...no other

[25]From 1923 through 1927, the Nationalist and Communist Parties on the China mainland were working under an agreement of mutual cooperation. The Malayan Revolutionary Committee represented the more radical and pro-Communist factions in the Malayan Overseas Branch of the Chinese Nationalist Party.

set of men could have been so successfully secretive and persistent against organized opposition'.[26]

Communist activities within the Kuomintang were apparently successful, for the power and influence of the Malayan Revolutionary Committee grew considerably in the years before 1927. The principal Leftist organizational effort, of course, centred on the Chinese populace and was directed more towards the revolution engulfing China than against the colonial regime in Malaya. Many hundreds of thousands of dollars were channelled through this group to China to further the efforts of the revolutionaries there. In addition, many sons of the more partisan Overseas Chinese journeyed to Canton to take their revolutionary training at the newly-created Whampoa Military Academy.

Following the violent split in 1927 between the forces of the Kuomintang and Communists in China itself, most of the Left-Wing members of the Malayan Revolutionary Committee broke away from the Overseas Branch of the Kuomintang. As in China, the plight of the Communists in Malaya in the succeeding months was difficult. First, a large segment of the Chinese community in Malaya remained faithful to the Chinese Nationalist Party and many proved openly antagonistic towards the Left; second, decisive repressive measures instituted by the colonial authorities against the then outlawed Communist Party often curtailed severely the scope of revolutionary activities. Leftist ranks in Malaya did receive limited bolstering at the time from a group of Chinese Communists who fled China following the break. A large percentage of these are reported to have been Cantonese, fleeing the Red disaster in the bloody Canton Commune.[27]

Shortly after the Communist-Nationalist break in China, possibly in the winter of 1927-8, several Chinese agents arrived in Malaya under Comintern orders to establish a regular Communist organization in that area. Thus evolved the *Nan-yang*

[26]Ibid. pp. 110-11.
[27]Tsutsui, op. cit. p. 146.

kung-ch'an-tang or South Seas Communist Party.[28] This appears to have been the first serious effort made by the Comintern to tie the various areas of South-East Asia together in a single party structure, for the Nan-yang Communist Party was given full jurisdiction over Siam and a voice in party activities in Indochina, Indonesia and Burma as well as in Malaya. Similarly, efforts were now being made to organize the revolution in Malaya itself. This was a modification of the previous strategy of penetrating overseas factions of political parties whose main interest centred on either China or India.

There is some evidence that from this arose the first serious conflict between the Comintern and the Chinese Communist Party over party policies in this area. According to Japanese intelligence sources, the Comintern was seriously concerned with previous Chinese Communist-directed activities in Malaya. Party cadres in the area were accused of being 'out of touch with the real mass elements' and of neglecting to institute a 'broad workers' and peasants' movement'. In addition, other races aside from the Chinese were to be encouraged to join the ranks of the Communists and 'much closer cooperation and liaison with the Comintern' was ordered.[29]

No doubt Comintern reluctance to let the Chinese Communists dominate South-East Asia, especially in dealing with Overseas Chinese, was of paramount importance in this move. The temporary defeat of the Chinese Communist Party was probably looked upon by the Comintern as an opportune moment to again re-assert itself in the South-East Asian countries. This mild antagonism and apparent struggle for operational control over Left activities in Malaya, first evident at this time, was to remain a constant point of contention in the Malayan revolutionary struggle for the next two decades.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Japanese Military Administration Documents, op. cit.

THE PERIOD OF ORGANIZATION AND PROPAGANDA

Essential to Communist progress in this early period was the need for organization and propaganda among the people. Almost from the first, special emphasis was given to the radically-inclined youth and students of the lower and middle schools. Around 1926, a Communist Youth League (CYL) was set up in Singapore, later expanding throughout the Malay Peninsula. Privately-financed Chinese schools, where all classes were taught in Chinese, were marked for early penetration. A high percentage of the school teachers were strongly Leftist in their beliefs and they provided the Communists with an excellent means for winning over the idealistic but politically unsophisticated youth. Night schools, set up for those employed during the day, were similarly used by the Communists in their aggressive propagandizing of the students.

The so-called 'Incident of March 12' affords an excellent view of Communist youth organization in this period. The twelfth of March 1927, the anniversary of Sun Yat-sen's death, was scheduled to be a national holiday for all Overseas Chinese in Singapore. The Communists, however, sought to capitalize on a projected Kuomintang celebration of the day by inciting disorder and unrest. In the words of one Communist agitator '...the Right Party merely wished to celebrate it with the same pomp as that of an anniversary of a great saint or festival of Christmas, whereas the Left of the Party wished to seize the opportunity to initiate their principles'.[30] According to information subsequently obtained by the Singapore Police, a strong contingent of Communist youth were organized under the direction of night-school teachers (many of whom were Hailams) and sent out to carry on demonstrations, incite violence and cause general disturbances wherever possible. Results from the Left point of view were apparently favourable. There followed a general 'boycott' of all

[30]The account here is taken from Onraet, op. cit. p. 111.

transportation in Singapore and hundreds of students demonstrated and held open-air mass meetings. As a result, a number of agitators were arrested by the police and charged with disorderly conduct.

Combined with work among the youth was an all-out Communist effort to organize and propagandize the general populace. There was indeed no shortage of propaganda, and the early Communist operation was often scornfully looked down upon by the police as a 'paper movement' — though few of those men evidently realized the long-range achievements which could be realized through the application of this type of psychological warfare.

A frequently-stressed theme of the Communists was the charge that the British interfered with Chinese education. This served as a psychological counter-attack against British suppression of Left-dominated schools and, at the same time, it exploited a sensitive area of feeling on the part of all Overseas Chinese, many of whom had long voiced disapproval of British pressure exerted against a separate Chinese educational system in Malaya.

Other propaganda aims were varied but generally clearly projected the Communist line at the time. In March 1928, following the organization of the Nan-yang Communist Party, for example, a series of leaflets and pamphlets contained the following anti-British propaganda line: 'Bring Singapore under the Red regime. Fight for a political hegemony everywhere. Establish a Soviet State. Long Live Leninism!' Another leaflet, marked for general distribution among the workers, contained the following: 'Revolutionary workers of the East and South, awake! Overthrow British and Dutch Imperialism! Fight against the capitalists, the owners of factories and mills! Down with British Imperialism!'[31]

The Communists were never reluctant to capitalize upon ill-feeling or public demonstrations to further their own aims —

[31]M. Musso, 'How Great Britain is Ruling the Malayan Countries', *Eastern and Colonial Bulletin* (December 1929), p. 15.

even at the sacrifice of human life. As early as 1926, for example, a Left-organized demonstration over uncertain issues was allowed to turn into an armed clash between the demonstrators and the police in which a number of participants were killed.[32] This pattern, i.e. inciting disorder, propagandizing, creating martyrs, was one which became general in the Malayan area in succeeding years.

Of greater importance than the distribution of leaflets during this early period was the organization of labour. As we have noted, this was a central theme in the Second, Fourth and Sixth World Congresses of the Communist International. Outside of the development of the Party itself, labour union work was, in effect, '...the most important of the immediate general tasks of the Communists in the colonies....'[33]

In the earliest period of organization, few experienced labour cadres were available and the Communists were able only to carry on propaganda and, in some cases, to give advice to the strikers. On one occasion, for example, Red counsel given to the strikers of the Singapore Transport Company was credited with having '...prolonged the strike for several weeks'. On other occasions, the Communists are reported to have supplied the more militant strikers with crude home-made bombs for use against the police.[34]

With the creation of the Profintern (the Communist Trade Union International) in 1924, Red labour organization in Malaya assumed more formal shape. A Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat was set up in Shanghai that year, charged with uniting all Leftist labour organizations in the Asian area. A short time later, a group of Chinese Communists began a series of attempts to set up a single unified labour organization in Malaya. This resulted in the formal establishment of the Nan-yang (South

[32]Ibid.
[33]*The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies*, op. cit. p. 44.
[34]Onraet, op. cit. p. 112.

Seas) Federation of Labour which some two years later, in 1926, was reported to be under the influence of 'Chinese revolutionaries'.[35]

Like the Nan-yang Communist Party, the Nan-yang Federation of Labour was designed to function over a wider area than Malaya alone. Although its central headquarters was located in Singapore, its aim was to unite the various Communist-dominated labour organizations of Sumatra, Borneo, New Guinea, Celebes, Burma, Siam and Indochina as well. British authorities permitted the South Seas Federation of Labour to operate freely for the first two years of its existence, and two annual congresses were actually held during this period. With the Nationalist-Communist split in 1927, however, Leftist intrigues could not help but come to the attention of the authorities and a general curtailment of Communist labour agitation was begun by the Government. But the Communists continued their efforts, subject to frequent British interference, and even managed to instigate a serious strike in March 1928.

A small strike of Chinese shoemakers was followed by a general walkout of some 2,000 other labourers. The strikers, adhering to the Communist line, demanded a wage increase of 40 per cent. and engaged in open demonstrations in the streets of Singapore. Clashes with the police followed in which the strikers employed 'fire and bombs'. Taking advantage of the general disorder, the Communists distributed leaflets calling upon the workers of all Malaya to join in the fight, 'not only against their employers but also against British Imperialism'.[36]

As a result of this and other Communist actions, the South Seas Federation of Labour was outlawed by the authorities. A marked reduction in Communist labour agitation followed. As

[35]Nanyang Federation of Labour, 'Malay Labour Steps Out Onto the World Stage', *The Pan-Pacific Monthly*, No 33 (December 1929-January 1930), p. 22.

[36]Musso, op. cit. p. 15.

the Federation later lamented, 'British oppression was too great in 1928 and now they have forced us into an illegal existence by their terroristic tactics.'[37]

An effective tool used at the time to counter the Communists was that of deportation. Since few Chinese in Malaya held citizenship,[38] it became standard British policy to arrest all suspected labour agitators and Communist agents, deporting them post-haste to mainland China. Deportation, however, was more often than not followed by more serious consequences. It should be remembered that at this time Communism was outlawed in China itself, and Chinese returned by the Malayan authorities were frequently executed by the Nationalist Government of China.[39]

The problem of government suppression was a major point brought up by the four delegates of the South Seas Federation of Labour at the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Conference held in Shanghai in August 1929. The delegates also lamented the difficulties encountered in attempting to organize the many nationalities living in their area, and called upon the Pan-Pacific Federation of Trade Unions '...to arrange to send workers from imperialist countries to help us'.[40] A major problem was considered to be the establishment of 'efficient organizations' and, although a 'programme of demands' had been drawn up, it was

[37]Nanyang Federation of Labour, op. cit. p. 22.

[38]In the pre-war years, a Chinese or Indian could gain citizenship only if both parents had been born in the country and resided there for at least fifteen years. Naturalization was restricted to those who had lived there for fifteen years or who were born in Malaya and had lived there for eight years.

[39]The *Straits Times* of 28 October 1929, for example, contains the following: 'According to a recent visitor here from China, a number of Chinese who were recently banished from here were shot on arrival in Chinese territory. The eleven Hylams [*sic*] who had acted as teachers in Singapore and whose [*sic*] schools were declared unlawful were also executed.'

[40]Nanyang Federation of Labour, op. cit. p. 23.

most necessary for the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat to 'help us to perfect this programme'.[41]

The problems underlined by the four delegates from the South Seas Federation of Labour no doubt reflected equally well the similar difficulties then facing the Nan-yang Communist Party. These were evidently of sufficient importance to come to the attention of the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern in Shanghai. Communist setbacks in the area resulted in an apparent Comintern decision to initiate a thorough review of its operations in South-East Asia.

First evidence of this came at the Third Representative Congress[42] of the Nan-yang Communist Party, secretly convened in Singapore during the fourth week of April 1930. The Nan-yang Communist Party was officially dissolved at the Congress under what appears to have been a Comintern directive. One observer at the time reported that the Comintern may have resorted to this '...possibly because of its cumbersomeness, possibly because of the disorderly state into which it had been thrown'.[43]

No doubt both these were contributing factors, but a much deeper conflict seems to have been involved. We have already touched upon earlier evidence of contention between the operations of the Chinese Communist Party in this area and those of the Comintern. Even the strong re-assertion of Comintern leadership in the establishment of the Nan-yang Communist Party in 1928 does not appear to have resolved this problem. A basic reason, of course, was faulty Comintern appraisal of the fundamental problems in South-East Asia. For example, the Comintern had long been dissatisfied with the emphasis given to the organization of Overseas Chinese over that of other races. Yet it failed or possibly refused, for reasons of doctrine, to take

[41]Loc. cit.

[42]The First Congress was held in the winter of 1927-8, and the Second may possibly have been convened (though this is not certain) about the time of the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Conference held in August 1929.

[43]Onraet, op. cit. p. 113.

cognizance of the fact that many of the races in the area, as for example the Malays, were little inclined to accept the programmes of the Communists. Another feature neglected by the Comintern was the question of 'cadres',[44] i.e. specially trained Communists with experience in leadership, organization, propaganda, labour agitation and so forth. Outside of a few Indonesians and Annamites, the Chinese were the only group large enough to carry out this programme.

The old problem of plural societies is again central here. This evidently presented a problem which the Comintern either could not or would not face. Finally, there was the question of which organization was actually the superior. The Comintern held unquestioned seniority in the hierarchy of World Communism, but the fact that cadres from the Chinese Communist Party did much of the actual work tended continually to turn operational control in this area back to the Chinese Communist Party. This was a problem the Comintern hoped to resolve in the dissolution of the Nan-yang Communist Party.

To replace the Nan-yang Communist Party, two new organizations were set up. A Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was to be founded, under the direct operational control of the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern. This was an obvious move to shift leadership of the Communist movement in Malaya away from the Chinese. Party organs in the Dutch East Indies, Siam, and Burma were to be sub-departments of the MCP but were reportedly so arranged only on a temporary basis. Once local parties proved strong enough, they were to be given full status with the MCP.

The other organ established was a separate Indo-Chinese Communist Party, to function independently of the other group. Marked advances made by the Annamite revolutionaries in this

[44]The term 'cadre' is used both as a singular and plural form. This is based upon a similar utilization of the term cadre *(kan-pu)* in Chinese. The plural form 'cadres' is often used in English.

period were instrumental in bringing this about. Some writers believe that certain Annamite revolutionaries such as Nguen Ai Quoc, later to become known as Ho Chi Minh, strongly resented Chinese Communist leadership in the area and severely criticized the poor record previously made by the Chinese. As their influence in the Comintern was not slight, the Indo-Chinese were given local autonomy. This belief, however, remains essentially speculative for there is, so far as this writer knows, no definite proof of Indo-Chinese antagonism towards the Chinese Communists at this time.

According to Japanese reports, the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern (then located in Shanghai) subsequently set up a 'Southern Section' in Hong Kong to facilitate closer liaison with the local parties in the south. The Southern Section was also charged with direct handling of the Communist movement in Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Yunnan and Fukien provinces in South China, but it is not clear whether it was also meant to direct the Chinese Communist guerrilla movement then developing in Kiangsi Province.[45]

Shortly thereafter, the Nan-yang Federation of Labour held its annual Congress in Singapore. Following Comintern orders it was reorganized into the Malayan Federation of Labour, renewing its affiliation with the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat in Shanghai. A clue to Comintern designs at the time, calling for a broader organization of other races and a de-emphasis of Chinese pre-eminence, is found in the tone of the Congress. New emphasis was to be placed upon the Malays. In the words of one representative, 'The mass of Malay workers are yet to be organized into trade unions and brought under the leadership of the Malayan Federation of Labour...the main point to bear in mind is that the Malay worker must be reached and recruited....'[46]

[45]Japanese Military Administration Documents, op. cit.

[46]Cited in the *Pan-Pacific Monthly*, No. 38 (September-October 1930), pp. 39-40.

On 27 April 1930, a French Comintern agent named Joseph Ducroux (alias Serge Lefrance) arrived secretly in Singapore to make an official report on problems there and to see to it that Comintern directives were being carried out. According to Rene Onraet, Commissioner of Police at the time, Ducroux was given the responsibility of 'conducting a thorough survey of the Malayan position and the establishment for it of direct communications with the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat in Shanghai, the reorganization of Red Labour Unions, the payment of subsidies to the Malayan Communist Party, the Malayan Trade Unions, the Communist Youth Organization and finally — 50,000 in gold set aside by the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat for work in Malaya and Burma'.[47]

Ducroux had little time to carry out his ambitious task, for on the first of June he was arrested by Singapore authorities along with two leading Chinese Communists, one reportedly no less a figure than Fu Ta-ching.[48] Apparently severely shaken by the experience, Ducroux made a full confession to the British, tracing in detail the entire Red network in East and South-East Asia. The British authorities acted swiftly, arresting fourteen leading Communists in Malaya, including the Secretary of the Seamen's Union, the Secretary of the Malayan Labour Union and the Secretary of the Chinese Labour Union, all Red-dominated labour groups.[49]

The Southern Section of the Far Eastern Bureau in Hong Kong was closed down and a number of high-ranking Red leaders were taken in the process. Among this group was Ho Chi Minh, who was subsequently sentenced to six months in prison for seditious activities. Similarly, the British wasted no time in informing the Chinese Nationalist Government of the activities of the Comintern in Shanghai. As a result, the head-

[47]Onraet, op. cit. p. 113.
[48]Tsutsui, op. cit. pp. 146-7.
[49]*Pan-Pacific Monthly*, No. 38 (September-October 1930), p. 39.

quarters of both the Far Eastern Bureau and the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat were raided by the Chinese. Comintern agent Hilair Noulens, then Secretary of the Pan-Pacific Federation of Trade Unions, was later convicted of subversive actions by Chinese courts and received the death sentence, which was later commuted to a brief prison term.[50]

Ducroux's amazing confession, followed by prompt British and Chinese police action, proved to be a crippling blow to the Communists in South-East Asia. In Malaya, the Communist organization was broken and thrown into utter disorder. The senior echelons of the party were behind bars, outside channels for financial assistance were blocked and Comintern guidance was severed. True, British police action affected no more than a few score hard-core Communists in Malaya, but at this early date the party there consisted of no more than a handful of ardent revolutionaries, and their arrest was a serious blow to the organized Communist movement in Malaya.

Though badly hurt, the Communist movement in Malaya was not dead. Shortly thereafter the Communists began the slow, tortuous process of rebuilding their revolutionary machine.

[50]Onraet, op. cit. pp. 113-14.

CHAPTER II

THE MALAYAN COMMUNIST PARTY

THE EMERGENCE OF THE MALAYAN COMMUNIST PARTY

JUST what positive steps were taken at the April 1930 congress towards creating an effective Malayan Communist Party is not clear. It is quite possible that the party at the time was almost stillborn, because of the stunning defeat following the arrest of Ducroux. According to one Communist historian, the actual formal establishment of the party did not take place until the following year, when the various Marxist cells and party members still active in Malaya were called together for a Pan-Malayan Cadres Meeting.[1] Although a large part of the Communist organization had been destroyed in the previous year, a number of individuals and small units were no doubt still at large and available to participate in the actual organization of the MCP.[2]

The Pan-Malayan Cadres' Meeting reportedly adopted the following resolution: '...to carry on the struggle for national liberation, formulate a military programme for the overthrow of imperialism and feudal aristocracy, and to establish the Soviet Republic of Malaya by the coordinated efforts of the proletariat and peasantry'.[3]

[1]Wu Tien-wang, 'The Communist Party of Malaya' (Unpublished manuscript, 1947?), p.1.

[2]According to Ducroux, the Communist organization in Malaya at the time of his arrest numbered the following; some 1,500 party members, about 10,000 members of Communist-led labour unions, 50 active women party workers and 200 members enrolled in the Anti-Imperialist League, a party-front organization. R. Onraet, *Singapore: A Police Background* (London, 1947), p. 117.

[3]Wu Tien-wang, op. cit. p. 1.

Although the programme outlined above had as its aim the militant overthrow of the colonial government and establishment of a Soviet Malaya, the party, at its low ebb, was not naive enough to embark upon such an ambitious course without considerable rebuilding and preparation. Instead, a preliminary line was agreed upon, embodying the organization of labour, the creation of 'wide-spread economic struggle' through the medium of strikes, and the unification of the workers and peasants, 'so as to be prepared for the coming mass struggle'.[4]

The new party programme was more easily put on paper than put into practice. The party itself was still weak and ineffectual. In the next two years the Communists evidently carried on little work other than covert recruiting of new party members and the establishment of a few secret cells. Funds were low and senior party direction, either from the Comintern or the Chinese Communist Party, was apparently lacking. If publicity is any criterion of activity, the Malayan Communist Party, to all intents and purposes, was non-existent. No mention was made of Communist activities in the more widely-read Malayan papers during this period.

Several events occurred in 1933 which served to halt the retreat of organized Communism in Malaya. Of major general importance was the world-wide economic depression which left many people in terrible poverty and hence acutely sensitive to the doctrines of Communism. This was especially true in Malaya where national economic welfare was tied to only two products: rubber and tin; both extremely susceptible to price fluctuations on the world market.

The other important event was the re-establishment of the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern in Shanghai, again furnishing the South-East Asian parties with much needed direction, advice and financial assistance. Comintern liaison was quickly effected with the Malayan Communist Party and immediate

[4]Ibid.

directives were evidently dispatched to the Central Committee of the MCP ordering mass demonstrations, strikes, sabotage of the British naval installations at Singapore, transportation boycotts, demonstrations against increased taxation, and so forth.[5]

In conjunction with this directive, the MCP immediately embarked upon a party 'purification movement', weeding out the weaker and less aggressive members and, at the same time, initiating a broad recruiting campaign aimed at expanding party membership.[6] According to one Communist writer, the 'party apparatus' was established in every state throughout Malaya during this period.[7]

The 6th of March 1934 was an important date in this period. Given added impetus in the previous year, the Central Committee of the MCP held its Sixth Plenary Session at which the Constitution of the MCP was drawn up.[8] The Constitution was especially significant in that it represented an advanced stage of party development and, at the same time, laid the organizational foundation upon which a strong and powerful party could be built. Such previously undefined problems as qualifications for becoming a party member, the principles of party organization, party laws, discipline, duties and finances now received exact definition.

In addition, formal liaison was now established with the parent body, the Comintern. The MCP at this early date was not yet a regular member of the Communist International, but rather, an affiliate.[9] Its admittance as a regular member awaited further development and progress.

[5]Cited in V. Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (London, 1951), p. 363.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Wu Tien-wang, op. cit. p. 1.

[8]This Constitution, in translation, is included below in this study.

[9]The Chinese term is *yu-pei*, usually translated as 'to prepare' or 'to make ready'. It is known that fledgling parties in small areas did not always hold regular membership in the Communist International

Finally, the MCP was now in a position to ask for outside assistance on a larger scale than previously. The fortunes of the Chinese Communist Party were apparently still at a low ebb in Malaya, for the orientation of the moment was towards the Comintern and Moscow. This is evident from the nature of party requests at the time. The Comintern was asked to effect a liaison with both the British and Indian (but apparently not with the Chinese) Communist parties, to accept young revolutionaries from Malaya for Comintern training in the USSR and to send a Comintern representative to Malaya to inspect party operations. As Comintern policy was still aimed at a pan-Malayan type of party organization (including Indians and Malays as well as Chinese), a Unification Committee was set up by the Central Committee to be composed of one Indian, one Malay and one Chinese.[10]

THE POPULAR FRONT AND THE ANTI-JAPANESE MOVEMENT

While the Malayan Communist Party was struggling to regain its strength in the mid-thirties, a grim new spectre began to haunt the Soviet Union. This was the spectacular rise of fascism in Germany and Italy, and the new military power of Japan. It was logical that the Soviet Union should attempt to counter this threat with any means available. One tactic was to alter the militant Comintern line at the time to a more friendly Popular Front[11] — an alliance with all other groups, whether Right or Left, in a joint effort aimed at curbing the growth of fascist power.

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but were considered probationary or preparatory members. The official term for such an organization was a 'fraternal affiliate'. From the evidence at hand, it appears that the Malayan Communist Party was considered to be in this category.

[10]Cited in Purcell, op. cit. p. 364.

[11]A working definition of popular or united front is desirable here. There are two types of united front: the united front from below and the

This policy was officially adopted as the tactical line of the Comintern at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, held in Moscow in the late summer of 1935. Operating under the guise of an alliance of all native elements against 'growing imperialist expansion', the Popular Front line was given added importance for all parties in the colonial countries. All races and political groups were to be allied in a general united front against the 'common enemy'. The Communists reckoned wisely that such a move would be of added value in giving their weary, struggling and closely-watched local party organs a much-needed breathing spell. At the same time it would serve to reinforce party strength with the support of other elements.[12]

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united front from above. The first is aimed at splitting the leaders from the masses, then rallying the masses to the Communist cause. The second is somewhat more devious. In this tactic both the leaders and masses are courted and brought into an alliance with the extreme Left. The Communists then aim to gain eventual full control over the entire united front and use it for their own ends. In the final stage such undesirable elements as the Right-Wing leaders, national bourgeoisie, etc. can be discarded. The Popular Front (1935-9) was an advanced form of the second, considered by one noted student of World Communism to be' . . . the most perfect form yet devised of the united front from above'. See H. Seton-Watson, *From Lenin to Malenkov* (New York, 1953), p. 177. An excellent survey of the Popular Front appears in this work on pages 176-99.

[12]The official Comintern programme for the colonial areas at the time was outlined by Wang Ming as follows: 'It is precisely in connection with the growing imperialist expansion along the entire front in the colonial and dependent countries, precisely in connection with the growth of the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples against imperialism, that the question of the anti-imperialist united front in all the colonial and semi-colonial countries assumes, as has been very correctly pointed out by Dimitroff, exceptional importance. Despite the fact that the national liberation movement in these countries progresses unevenly, that the relationship between the class forces in the various countries is unequal, that the power and importance of the proletariat and its Communist Parties in the political life of these countries vary and that the anti-imperialist united front tactics are therefore applied differently in each of these countries — these tactics never-

In view of Comintern decisions, the MCP immediately called another 'Pan-Malayan Cadres' Meeting' at which the new tactical line was adopted. Wu Tien-wang gives the following account of this conference: 'The meeting analyzed the internal and external situation then, objectively appraised our class power and anti-imperialist feeling among the masses. Working on the fundament [*sic*] that the revolution in Malaya was still capitalist in nature, the party was convinced that, with the proletariat as its nuclei, and with the collaboration of the peasantry and *petite bourgeoisie*, the formation of an anti-imperialist united front was possible. Thus our party revised its programme and resolved to struggle to establish a Republic of Malaya.' Based on such a programme, the party hoped to neutralize and, if possible, to win the support of the national bourgeoisie. The decisive change in the party's policy was the outcome of its revolutionary experience accumulated in the course of five years.[13]

In some respects this new line may appear to be very similar to the resolutions of the Second and Sixth World Congresses of the Communist International. The inclusion of the national bourgeoisie, for example, was agreed upon in the earlier congresses. The distinction, however, is apparently one of passive acceptance of these elements on certain conditions (the earlier line) as against active courtship of all such forces, the theme of the Popular Front.

The subtle indication in the platform of the MCP that it arrived at this new line on its own initiative is an obvious equivocation. Local parties were pledged to accept fully the decisions agreed upon by the World Congress of the Communist International in accordance with the principles of democratic centralism.

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theless assume primary importance for each of these countries.' Wang Ming, *The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonial Countries* (New York, 1935), p. 12.

[13]Wu Tien-wang, op. cit. p. 2.

Associated with the so-called Popular Front was the anti-Japanese movement, aimed particularly against Japanese military expansion. Actually, the anti-Japanese movement antedated the Popular Front by several years and had perhaps a much broader mass appeal than the Popular Front, though it served to bolster it in many ways. Strong anti-Japanese sentiment followed the armed invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and the Communists were quick to capitalize on this by organizing anti-Japanese and anti-imperialist organizations — especially among the patriotic Chinese. In the case of those which were independently created, Communist tactics called for the usual practice of infiltration and minority control. These new organizations were to serve a dual purpose: to whip up the spirit of militant nationalism in the local Chinese populace, and to provide a front for subversive activities of party members.

In Malaya, the usual pattern developed. Chinese residents in Singapore established the Union of Overseas Chinese. This group was formed shortly after the Japanese occupation of Manchuria and was strongly anti-Japanese in character. In the succeeding months, a hard core of Communists seized control of the Union and proceeded to remould it into a vehicle for party-line anti-imperialist, anti-Japanese propaganda. Better to cloak its activities, the MCP even went so far as to announce its 'reorganization' into the Malayan Anti-Imperialist League:[14] serious attempts were made to cover all revolutionary and subversive work with an anti-Japanese screen.

With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese conflict in 1937, the anti-Japanese movement underwent an amazing transformation.

[14]Later, when the Communists again attempted to broaden the racial basis of the MCP, the party was ostensibly 'reorganized' into the 'All-Malayan Races Liberation League' (then known to the authorities as the Racial Emancipation League). This was in 1937. The party, of course, still functioned as it had in the past. The only change was the name announced to the world at large. Party members were still known as members of the MCP.

Many people and political groups which had previously been wary of the so-called Popular Front were now drawn to the anti-Japanese movement, and both party ranks and anti-Japanese front organizations swelled greatly.[15]

The great attraction of such a movement at the time is probably best illustrated by a former Communist who recently wrote:

> In 1937, I was influenced by the surging waves of anti-Japanese patriotism. Young men all over Malaya joined in anti-Japanese work to save the country, and their enthusiasm was great. Like them I joined in the work with great earnestness. Many of these patriotic young men used to extol the brave and courageous spirit of the members of the Communist Party in their fight against the Japanese for the salvation of the country, and under the circumstances an impression was created in me regarding the Communist Party. I admired it as a gallant and heroic warrior, ready to succour the weak.[16]

Lam Swee, who wrote this, was typical of many young Chinese at the time — men who turned to the Communists not for reasons of political philosophy but because they believed the Communist Party represented the vanguard in the struggle against Japan. It is no wonder that the entire Popular Front in Asia was soon overshadowed by one of its parts: the anti-Japanese united front. While both served the purpose of the Comintern equally well, by its nature the anti-Japanese movement tended to attract more Chinese than other races and subsequently led to a resurgence of Chinese dominance in the leadership of the MCP itself.

The Japanese attack on China in 1937 served another Communist interest at the time. The Chinese Nationalist and Communist parties on the Chinese mainland again joined efforts in the struggle against Japan. This re-alliance was extended to Malaya, where both parties began to cooperate in a joint anti-Japanese movement. They functioned for a while in an organi-

[15]According to one Communist writer, some 300 new members were enrolled in the MCP in 1937 alone. Wu Tien-wang, op. cit. p. 3.

[16]Lam Swee, *My Accusation* (Kuala Lumpur, 1951), p. 3.

zation known as the National Salvation Association, an organization which later came under Leftist domination. Similarly, such party front organizations as a Proletarian Art League and Proletarian Writers' Association were set up as a means of recruiting new members.

It should perhaps be noted here that stubborn Chinese Nationalist and Communist rivalry over control of the Overseas Chinese was dictated in this period by reasons other than political philosophy alone. The Overseas Chinese channelled millions of dollars back to China, both in the form of outright contributions and in remittances to families. The depleted war chests of the Chinese Nationalists and Communists alike were sorely in need of this added revenue. The struggle for control over the Overseas Chinese throughout this entire period was thus economic as well as political — and the competition for this key group continues between the two forces today.

LABOUR ORGANIZATION

The ill-fortune which plagued the Malayan Communists in the early thirties was particularly evident in the field of labour organization. Many experienced party agitators, organizers and union officials had been deported or were serving long prison sentences. The party was hard-pressed to carry out its projected tasks in the labour field.

By 1934, however, much of the party structure itself had been rebuilt. New funds and leadership supplied by the re-established Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern permitted an expansion of Communist efforts on the labour front. No doubt the general economic unrest of the times had much to do with the gradual resurgence of Communist labour activity. That year the Communists again appeared on the labour stage in the Malayan General Labour Union, successor to the defunct Malayan Federation of Labour. The Far Eastern Bureau in Shanghai followed suit by establishing the Malayan Chinese Seamen's

Union in Shanghai. This organization was designed to function as a means of introducing Communist agents into Malaya. Rigorous police action by the Chinese Government, however, soon put it out of business.[17]

By 1935, the Communists had apparently made great progress in labour work. Labour agitation reached such a pitch as seriously to concern the colonial authorities. This situation culminated in the Batu Arang[18] strike in the winter of that year. In a work stoppage over obscure demands, Communist-led miners took full possession of the mine and defied all attempts to force them out. Evidently strike leadership was in the hands of Left extremists, for they then proceeded to set up a 'Soviet Government', including the establishment of an elaborate defence system, courts, and an administrative body.

Seriously worried over the turn of events, the colonial Government mustered a force of three hundred policemen and made a daring surprise attack on the mine under cover of darkness. After a brief armed clash between the strikers and police, the mine was re-taken.[19]

The British authorities were deeply concerned over this sudden development. The Inspector-General of Police, Federated Malay States, subsequently stated in his report concerning the Batu Arang incident:

> The Federated Malay States has passed through the most serious crisis of its history. It was within an ace of dissolving into temporary chaos as a result of Communist intrigue. The evidence is now clear that Batu Arang was to be the trial of strength between the Communist Party and the Government. Had the organization there not been crushed and crushed quickly it is almost certain that there would not only have been a general strike but that this

[17]Onraet, op. cit. p. 114.

[18]Batu Arang, a coal mine located in the state of Selangor, supplied a major portion of the fuel for electric power plants and railroads on the Malay peninsula.

[19]Ibid. p. 116.

country . . . would have been in very serious danger of being overrun by angry and desperate Chinese mobs.[20]

While this writer cannot agree that the incident was as serious a threat as suggested by this report, it is quite obvious that the strike was meant to be a Communist show of strength. It is doubtful, however, that the MCP was fully prepared to make an all-out bid for revolutionary supremacy at this early stage—even had the strike proved to be a complete success. It is interesting to note that the Batu Arang strike has been favourably regarded by the Communists and is considered a 'glorious page' in the annals of the Malayan revolutionary struggle.[21]

Apparently Red labour organization did not falter noticeably following the Batu Arang strike. The following year, 1936, was considered by one Communist historian to be the 'high tide in party labour work'.[22] Typical of one of the better-run strikes of that year was one involving some 30,000 labourers in pineapple canning and the building industries. The walkout lasted twenty-four hours and was marked by a number of mass demonstrations in which government buildings were surrounded by the strikers. When the colonial authorities began to arrest the Red labour agitators, the Communists countered by calling out thousands of longshoremen, foundry mechanics, rubber tappers, and tin miners in three provinces under the guise of a so-called 'sympathy walk-out'. While this strike was no doubt successful, Communist claims that over 300,000 strikers took part are doubtful.[23]

The Red-dominated strike wave continued through immediate pre-war years. The Communists infiltrated unions ranging from longshoremen to tin miners and from ricksha-pullers to construction coolies. This general strike trend was gradually brought

[20]Ibid. pp. 117-18.

[21]See: Supplementary Views of the Central Committee on Strategic Problems of the Malayan Revolutionary War, in the second part of this book.

[22]Wu Tien-wang, op. cit. p. 2.

[23]Ibid.

under control through government action in the 1940-1 period. Through the medium of labour organization, however, the Communists had managed to recruit many hundreds of cadres and thousands of supporters — men who were deluded into believing that the MCP was struggling for their well-being far beyond the call of its own revolutionary ends. It was this legacy of active support on the part of a few, and passive acceptance on the part of many, that the British found difficult indeed to legislate out of existence.

THE INTERNAL SCHISM

Hardly had Communist efforts in the labour field reached maturity before internal difficulties of the gravest nature beset the party itself. A group of extremists, impatient with the protracted and devious course of the 'revolution', attempted to alter the party line in favour of a more militant, aggressive attack against the British. Forming a strong opposition faction within the party's ranks these extremists openly challenged the leadership of the Central Committee and, as one Communist later reported:

> ...audaciously and brazenly demanded termination of strikes and the breaking up of militant workers into small underground groups. They vehemently opposed the organization of the labour masses on a semi-open basis. They advocated the policy of educating the militant workers secretly and striving for the establishment of Soviet power. They denounced the anti-imperialist United Front policy of the party and labelled it the political line of the Social Democrats.[24]

That this heresy differed strongly with the existing Comintern line (i.e., the Popular Front) made it all the more dangerous. Though the cry 'Trotskyism' immediately rang out, Wu Tien-

[24]Ibid. p. 3.

[25]Left Opportunism, in Communist terminology, is a tendency to over-estimate the progress of the revolution and, therefore, to endanger its development. Left Opportunists, for example, are often guilty of 'adventurism', i.e., of taking unnecessary risks; or of 'putschism', i.e.

wang more correctly identified it as 'Left Opportunism'[25] which he noted confronted the party 'with its most serious crisis'.[26]

Evidently the Left Opportunist group was of sufficient importance to warrant the attention of the Comintern itself. Apparently at the behest of the MCP, a trouble-shooter named Lai Teck (later known as Comrade Wright) was subsequently relieved of his duties as Comintern liaison chief in Hong Kong and ordered to deal with the internal rift then plaguing the MCP. According to one Japanese writer, the Chinese Communist Party in Yenan also took active steps to help its comrades in the south, dispatching a group of seven trained revolutionaries post-haste to Malaya.[27]

The exact remedial action taken is not clear, but we know that an 'offensive' was launched 'against the opportunists' which lasted for six months, the final result being that 'the true colour of the opportunists was exposed in its entirety'.[28]

Wu Tien-wang states that Lai Teck, the newly arrived Comintern agent, directed the major portion of this purge, restoring 'the ideological unity within the party' and wiping out 'the last remnants of incorrect inclinations'. And most important following this, Lai Teck 'emerged the beloved leader of the party'.[29]

The ascendancy of Lai Teck at this time was of great importance. Although a Comintern agent, he had lived in China for some time and may have been part Chinese. He could therefore be expected to fuse the interests of the Comintern with the tremendous surge of Chinese revolutionary leadership in the MCP.

This was to be of increasing significance in the years leading up to World War II, for the anti-Japanese phase of the United Front had achieved great success in Malaya. But by its nature

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of initiating an armed uprising at a time when the circumstances are unfavourable to its success.

[26]Ibid.

[27]C. Tsutsui, *Nampo gunsei-ron* (Tokyo, 1944), p. 152.

[28]Wu Tien-wang, op. cit. p. 3.

[29]Ibid.

it had attracted virtually none but Chinese to the Communist cause. This again served to minimize Comintern operational control over the Communists in Malaya and, at the same time, tended to re-assert Chinese Communist interest in the revolutionary movement there. Though there was no friction on overall policy (which was decided upon by the Comintern), to all intents and purposes operational control over the actual revolutionary movement again passed into the hands of the Chinese and, hence, the Chinese Communist Party. This problem was to lie dormant for several years, to reappear at a critical time in the early months following the close of World War II.

THE FLEXIBLE PARTY LINE

Probably the most significant gauge of the close strategic and tactical relationship between the MCP and World Communist leadership was the continual shifting of the party line — always in keeping with that laid down by the Comintern. In this respect, the MCP did not function independently but as a willing instrument of the global Communist movement. This was especially evident in the years immediately preceding World War II.

The party line prior to 1939, for example, was characterized by militant anti-imperialism and anti-Fascism. With the signing of the Stalin-Hitler pact, however, the line of the MCP as of other local parties, underwent a complete *volte face*. Strikes and work stoppages, aimed at cutting off the strategic flow of materials destined for Fascist areas, ceased abruptly and the wave of anti-Fascist propaganda subsided.

About the middle of September 1940, this line was again modified to suit Soviet policies. The MCP received orders from the Hong Kong Branch of the Chinese Communist Party to cease all anti-British movements and to offer 'no opposition... to any campaign initiated by the Chinese community in Malaya to aid the British war effort'.[30] No doubt this was aimed at

[30]Cited in Purcell, op. cit. p. 365.

bolstering the strength of the then seriously-weakened British fighting machine in order to balance off the potential enemies of the Soviet Union.

The Nazi invasion of Russia in June 1941 again called for a shift in the party line. The anti-Fascist anti-imperialist policies were re-asserted, although attacks against the British, then allies of the Soviet Union, were noticeable by their absence. Of great significance was the fact that many of the shifts in the policies of the MCP during this period did not redound to the advantage of the party itself. The pro-British line, for example, did not suit the long-range purposes of the Communist struggle in Malaya. Regardless of party rationalization, the continuous shifts in the party line worked only to the advantage of the USSR. This leaves us with the obvious conclusion that the interests of the local parties were always subordinated to those of the Soviet Union, even if this meant the possible extinction of the local party itself.

The rapid growth of the MCP in the late thirties did not go unnoticed by the British authorities. Although no all-out attempts were made completely to eliminate the party, continued pressure was exerted to keep the strength of the Communists at a minimum. A series of legal barriers was set up to effect this. As the MCP was not registered with the colonial Government, its status remained illegal, and it functioned underground. Active party members were therefore subject to arrest and imprisonment.

The Banishment Ordinance was called upon when it was deemed necessary to rid Malaya of top party leadership. Under this ordinance, any non-British subject could be deported as an undesirable alien, at the discretion of the local authorities. This legal weapon was utilized more and more in the late 1930s.

In 1937, for example, twenty of the party's senior command were deported under this law.[31]

The British, however, had no intention of waging an all-out war on the Communists; and the looseness of immigration laws, intensive party recruiting and a process of introducing new leadership replacements into Malaya by means of the various seamen's unions (used to effect liaison between the China mainland and the Malay peninsula), kept the party with a full staff of competent leaders.

In addition to the Banishment Ordinance, probably the most effective legal means employed by the authorities in curtailing Red growth was the Trade Union Enactment of 1940. This provided for: (1) the compulsory registration of all associations with trade union objectives; (2) the auditing of union accounts; (3) prohibiting the use of union funds for political purposes; and, (4) granting trade unions and their members certain legal protection in their trade union activities. This went far towards restricting Red control over the Malayan labour movement. Because of the World Communist line at the time, the MCP found itself in a dilemma in attempting to counter this. Though British policies were seriously hurting its development, the Comintern line was anything but anti-British. The MCP itself had to adhere to this pro-British outlook, even though a militant policy at the time might well have accomplished more in the way of resolving its difficulties.

ON THE EVE OF THE WAR

Under the competent leadership of Lai Teck the MCP in the years leading up to the war expanded both in size and influence. Total party strength in 1939 was said by one writer

[31]V.Thompson and R. Adloff, *The Left Wing in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1950), p. 128.
[32]Ibid. p. 126.

to have reached more than 100,000,[32] but this figure is undoubtedly greatly exaggerated. It is doubtful that the MCP ever exceeded 10,000 members at any time in its history. Party membership in this period most probably numbered no more than 5,000 members at the most.

The MCP soon stretched its organizational tentacles throughout the entire Malay peninsula. The main command functioned as the Central Committee in Singapore. State Committees were organized in such places as Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, Singapore, Penang, Johore, Negri Sembilan, Muar, Batu Pahat, Selangor, Ipoh and Kuantan. Local committees met once or twice each year for the purpose of discussing party policy, Comintern directives and local programmes. Emergency meetings called by the Central Executive Committee were held at Kuala Lumpur. Party leadership was both young and spirited. The party secretary was but thirty-three years old, while the average age of the policy-making Central Executive Committee and Standing Committee was twenty-six.[33]

A corollary to the growth of the party itself was the expansion of the various anti-Japanese organizations. By December 1941, this movement was placed under the over-all direction of the Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Mobilization Federation. A major effort was made to recruit students and youths. While outwardly non-political, the Federation was really set up to function as a propaganda and training school for potential Communist party members. A total of thirty sub-committees was organized in the provinces and in the larger cities throughout Malaya. One Japanese writer reports that the Federation totalled more than 2,000 active members during this period.[34]

By the outbreak of the Second World War, the MCP had recruited many thousands of new members, trained hundreds of revolutionary cadres and generally reached an advanced stage of

[33]Tsutsui, op. cit. pp. 153-4.
[34]Ibid. p. 153.

consolidation and preparation. Japanese intelligence reports indicated a comprehensive and well-developed party organization in existence at the outbreak of the war.

When the Japanese invaded Malaya in December 1941, the MCP had probably the most effective organization there, outside of that of the British colonial Government. Its strength in actual active party membership probably numbered no more than five thousand, but the Communists could rely upon many additional thousands of sympathetic Overseas Chinese.[35]

In addition, the underground tradition, a marked anti-Japanese bias, and a militant party spirit assured the MCP of an active role in the subsequent armed struggle against Japan — a struggle which was to increase manifold the strength and spirit of the Communist cause in Malaya.

[35]It has been suggested by some reviewers of the draft manuscript of this study that I may have overdrawn the strength of the Communist movement in Malaya in the period before World War II. While I do not feel this has been the case, it is certainly not my intention to overstate Communist strength in any of these earlier periods The reader should keep in mind that assessing the true strength of a Communist movement at any time is a difficult task. Drawing a clear-cut line between the hard-core Communist cadres, the average dues-paying party members, and Left-Wing sympathizers is difficult indeed, and certainly the MCP during much of this early period owed its existence solely to a few hundred dedicated militant revolutionaries — no more. But it is equally true that, at times, party strength swelled considerably through the employment of labour unions, front groups and such organizations as the Communist Youth League. The comments of Lucian W. Pye, a keen student of Communism in Malaya, are however, of importance in placing such movements in the proper perspective. He suggests '...that a distinct and peculiar quality of all Communist movements when discussing their own histories is to exaggerate *both* periods of strength as well as weakness. In fact, often when Communist parties have been relatively weak, they have tended to glorify what few successes they had out of all proportion, and whenever they do receive setbacks, especially if these involve what later is interpreted as incorrect tactics, they tend to exaggerate the seriousness of the crisis.'

CHAPTER III

THE MALAYAN PEOPLE'S ANTI-JAPANESE ARMY

ORIGINS OF GUERRILLA RESISTANCE

As early as the summer of 1941, six months before the Japanese attack on Malaya, the MCP made a series of exploratory proposals to the British, offering cooperation and assistance in the event of war. The Chinese Communists in South-East Asia were all too familiar with the expansionist designs of the Japanese in China proper and most were acutely aware of the threat to Malaya itself. As active financial and political supporters of the resistance on the China mainland, they had most to fear from the Japanese and were more than anxious to ally themselves with the colonial forces. No doubt the expectation of greater freedom of action in the event of an alliance with the Government added to the incentives of the Chinese, especially those with membership in either the Kuomintang or the MCP.

The British at this early date, however, refused to compromise on their earlier position. Reluctance to deal with the outlawed political factions in the Chinese community was a contributing factor to this decision. Of equal importance, however, was the somewhat naive colonial view that the employment of Asians would be open admission that the enemy possibly could occupy a British colony, and would therefore 'have a disastrous psychological effect on the Oriental mind'.[1]

This issue remained dormant until 8 December 1941, when the Japanese began their armed invasion of Malaya. Ch'en Chia-keng, then in charge of the party's anti-Japanese movement, recom-

[1] S. Chapman, *The Jungle is Neutral* (New York, 1949), p. 29.

mended immediate armed resistance to the invader, exhorting his fellow-members to renew their pledges of assistance to the British authorities.

This action was approved by the Central Executive Committee of the MCP that same day and the Communists joined with other Overseas Chinese groups in again volunteering their services. The hard-pressed British, surprised by the sudden Japanese blow, had little choice but to modify their position and accept the timely Chinese offer.

Initial plans were worked out on a non-political basis, calling for the voluntary mobilization of all Overseas Chinese. In Singapore, fifteen leading Chinese residents called together an 'Anti-Japanese Mobilization Committee', which was formed for the purpose of recruiting a Chinese militia force to assist in the defense of the city. A leading role in this movement was played by the Communists, but a number of Kuomintang members and independents were also active in the newly-created defence force.

Headed by a prominent Chinese Nationalist Party member and resident of Singapore, Tan Kah-kee, the Chinese volunteers (known officially as DALFORCE) fought valiantly in the last-ditch defence of Singapore, representing probably the largest volunteer militia in the resistance. The exact size of DALFORCE is not certain, but it is reported to have numbered from one to two thousand Chinese. (Tragically, the volunteers received very little training and were poorly equipped. A large number fought with no weapons but household knives and crude clubs. In four days of action in the swamps outside Singapore, many were lost. Those who were captured or who surrendered were summarily executed by the Japanese.)

In addition to DALFORCE, Communist resistance plans called for an alternate and more unorthodox strategy. On 15 December the British confirmed their good intentions by releasing all Leftist political prisoners from confinement. The following

day, a secret conference was held with British officers to blueprint a plan of action.

Still operating with strictest security, a meeting was arranged by two Chinese-speaking British secret agents. The MCP was represented by two Chinese, one no less a personage than its Secretary, Lai Teck. Major F. S. Chapman acted on behalf of the British military authorities. Chapman later reported the 'cloak and dagger' atmosphere of the conference, held 'in a small upstairs room in a back street of Singapore', in which 'both Chinese wore dark glasses'.[2]

The meeting was to bear fruit. The Communist representatives agreed to supply a number of young Chinese as trainees for 101 Special Training School (101 STS), a newly created guerrilla warfare and sabotage school of which Major Chapman was Deputy Commandant. It was made clear from the start that the trainees were to be used only as the British command saw fit. This was a marked victory for the British Government. But the fact that the MCP would select all students served seriously to offset this.

While negotiations were going on, the MCP inaugurated its own Malayan Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Mobilization Society, officially set up on 19 December. Ch'en Yang-ch'ing was named its chairman. Two days later the Central Executive Committee of the MCP held a special meeting in Singapore, putting the final stamp of approval on the negotiations with the British. A four-point programme was outlined.

1. Unite the peoples of Malaya in the resistance effort and assist the British in the defence of Malaya against the Japanese.
2. Arm all party members and the masses, and wage an all-out war of resistance.
3. Wipe out all fifth columnists, all enemy agents and traitors.

[2]Ibid. p. 31.

4. Resist the Japanese occupation through the formation of clandestine guerrilla bands and planned terror.[3]

The same day, 101 STS began instruction in Singapore. This school was not the official product of the military high command, but rather was created through the independent and often hotly-contested efforts of a few British officers, men who had long advocated a policy of fostering behind-the-lines guerrilla warfare. When official permission was finally given, the school was literally thrown together in a few brief hours. Lt. Col. J. M. Gavin, a guerrilla specialist, commanded its instructional and operational arm, while Major F. S. Chapman was named its Deputy Commandant. The teaching staff consisted of some ten officers and fifty enlisted men, all specialists in one or another form of paramilitary warfare. The first class was made up of fifteen Chinese Communists, picked up the previous day from a meeting place on a Singapore street corner.

Individual courses at 101 STS lasted ten days and a total of seven classes were rushed through the training programme. In a brief two-week period, classes were initiated almost hourly, and one hundred and sixty-five men in all were graduated. These men were British-trained, but all were selected by the MCP. Although relatively few in number and only superficially trained in the difficult art of guerrilla warfare, the 165 graduates of 101 STS were subsequently to prove their mettle forming the hard core around which later grew the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA).

As the last British defences in Malaya crumbled before the onslaught of the Japanese, the MCP completed its final plans for eventual enemy occupation. In addition to supplying guerrilla trainees to the British, the party organization prepared again to go underground. In February 1942, a final meeting of all top-ranking MCP members was held in Singapore, where the policy of continued armed resistance was laid down. This was to be

[3]Tsutsui, *Nampo gunsei-ron* (Tokyo, 1944), pp. 156-7.

the principal line of the MCP throughout the next three and a half years of occupation.[4]

Shortly after the first of the year, 101 STS closed down, but its brief existence was not to end without a legacy. Original plans called for the organization of 'stay-behind' parties, to be led by Europeans and made up of Asians. Rapid enemy advances necessitated a last-minute change in orders, however. To expedite guerrilla efforts in rear areas, the British pursued a policy of sending each class from 101 STS into the field to function on its own as an independent team. As the regular forces rated highest weapons priority, the Chinese guerrillas were often given a minimum of arms and demolition equipment, but none refused to go.

Such a policy, while a necessary expedient at the time, was to prove disadvantageous in the long run. First, the Communist guerrillas were left to their own devices, without liaison with the British. They were, therefore, free to follow Communist rather than British dictates as the occupation continued. Secondly, many of the poorly-equipped guerrillas were bitter at having been sent into enemy territory armed with what at first appeared to be no more equipment than the British deemed fit.

THE BIRTH OF THE MALAYAN PEOPLE'S ANTI-JAPANESE ARMY

As the classes of 101 STS were graduated, each moved into the field, and each was subsequently to provide the basic cadre for later growth and development of Communist guerrilla units.

The fifteen-man first class was sent to the northernmost defence lines, then located about half-way down the waist of the peninsula. Moving into the State of Selangor, the guerrillas later carried

[4]According to one source, in February 1943 the Third Conference of the Central Executive Committee was held at which a nine-point Anti-Japanese programme was adopted. Further details on this are unknown. Wu Tien-wang, 'The Communist Party of Malaya' (unpublished ms., 1947?), p. 6.

out limited but effective operations against Japanese communications lines north of Kuala Lumpur. The State Committee of the MCP succeeded in making contact with this group, subsequently recruiting for it some thirty-five additional partisans.

In succeeding weeks, the first class continued its operations in the jungles and mountainous regions of northern Selangor. Liaison was finally effected with the Central Committee of the MCP, and in March 1942 the First Independent Force of the MPAJA[5] was formally established.[6]

The second class of 101 STS, numbering approximately thirty-five guerrillas, barely reached Negri Sembilan before they were overrun by the Japanese, then sweeping rapidly down the peninsula. Fortunately, they made contact with the local British commander, who supplied them with additional weapons, including ten machine guns, sixty carbines, one thousand grenades and some ten thousand rounds of ammunition. On 7 January 1942, the guerrillas scheduled their first operation, a raid on the municipal police headquarters at the town of Kuala Pilah.

The second class still had much to learn in the art of guerrilla warfare. The unit swept into the city haphazardly and few of the guerrillas were completely agreed on a unified plan of action. Tactical surprise was lost, as the over-anxious raiders fired their weapons before the order was issued. Still worse, the attackers consistently failed to take advantage of the surrounding cover. The result was decisive defeat for this embryonic force. The raiders withdrew into the recesses of the jungle to nurse their wounds.

[5]British military authorities subsequently termed these units 'regiments' and later 'groups' The Chinese character, however, is *pu* (each unit known as a *tu-li pu,* which can be considered a unit or force, whichever the translator deems most appropriate). The regiment or *t'uan* is much larger in size than the Independent Force of the MPAJA.

[6]Hai Shang-ou, *Ma-lai-ya jen-min k'ang-jih chun* (The Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army), *Hua-ch'ao chu-pien-she* (Singapore, December 1945), p. 58. Pages 34-36 deal with the activation of the First Independent Force.

A short time later, the second class received word from the MCP that their unit was to be officially designated the Second Independent Force of the MPAJA. In the middle of February, this unit set up operational command along the Negri Sembilan-Malacca border, taking advantage of the dense jungle there. Liaison was effected with Communist guerrilla forces operating in the nearby States of Selangor and Pahang. The original guerrilla class was subsequently reinforced by more than fifty British and Indian stragglers. Most of these, however, died or surrendered within the first year of occupation.

The Second Independent Force later succeeded in mobilizing from the tin mines in the area, a number of new recruits, many of whom had had previous association with Communist-led labour and mining unions. Despite continued Japanese military pressure, the Second Independent Force grew to more than 160 men in the first six months of operations.[7]

The sixty graduates of the third training class of 101 STS left Singapore on 20 January 1942, moving up into the mountainous dense jungle regions of North Johore. After a few days of guerrilla operations they settled down to re-group and consolidate their position. Within a few months, the guerrillas in North Johore expanded their number to a total of 360 men, some recruited locally, some sent to the guerrilla base by the regional MCP committee; still others joining the guerrillas to escape the Japanese seizure of Singapore. This unit was later reorganized into four platoons and functioned as the Third Independent Force of the MPAJA.[8]

The Fourth Independent Force of the MPAJA consisting of the final classes graduated from 101 STS, infiltrated through the Japanese lines on 30 January 1942. Timing the operation with the defence of Singapore, this group set up its base in the jungles

[7]Ibid. pp. 37-39.
[8]Ibid. pp. 40-41.

of southern Johore, subsequently growing to more than 250 men before the first year of occupation ended.[9]

THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

Following the first few weeks of active guerrilla operations, the Communist partisans began to withdraw into the protection of the jungle. The initial period of open and adventurous behind-the-lines activities had served to point up the lack of training and experience of both individuals and leaders, and the casualties had not been light. Furthermore, the British surrender in February warned the resistance forces that all outside assistance would be cut off. The few weapons and equipment were to be used with more caution and the stores of ammunition expended only when necessary.

As the original units in the MPAJA moved from the brief offensive period into a more defensive phase they began an all-out struggle for bare survival. In the first months of occupation, the jungle was an enemy as well as a protecting friend. Most of the Chinese guerrillas were ill-prepared, both mentally and physically, to live in the jungle, and the toll from disease, desertions, enemy attacks and insanity increased by the day. Some died as a result of their failure to adapt to jungle conditions, others were victims of the mopping-up campaigns initiated regularly by the Japanese. Many Japanese front-line troops remained in Malaya throughout the early days of occupation and every effort was made to use them in stamping out the Communists.

This period of extreme difficulty lasted almost eighteen months and, despite large-scale recruiting in the first few months, the forces of the MPAJA began to shrink. Food became a critical problem. The guerrillas had yet to establish a supply liaison with the sympathetic populace and some units existed for days on nothing but jungle vegetation. The Fourth Independent Force,

[9]Ibid. pp. 42-44.

for example, is reported to have lived five days on grass alone.[10] In all, an estimated one-third of the entire guerrilla force was lost in this period.[11]

The first year and a half of occupation also saw more independent guerrilla risings, in addition to those fostered by the graduates of 101 STS. A majority of these, however, were to prove more disastrous to the partisans than to the enemy. In the State of Kedah for example, the MCP State committee, assisted by a number of independents, organized a guerrilla unit in the early months of 1942. The British military rout at the Slim River left the region literally covered with discarded arms and equipment and served to furnish the guerrillas with an almost inexhaustible source of weapons.[12]

The guerrillas, however, were both ill-trained and poorly led and they had no sooner armed themselves than they were annihilated. The official history of the Communist guerrillas in the region gives the following reasons for this defeat: (1) Kedah is principally an agricultural plain and unfavourable for guerrilla warfare. (2) The populace in Kedah was largely composed of Malays, most of whom were pro-Japanese in sympathies. (3) The masses of Kedah had received little political education and lacked political consciousness, spirit and determination.[13]

Communist historians, however, fail to cite several equally important causes for the guerrilla defeat: namely, poor leadership, inexperience on the part of the guerrilla forces themselves, and over-ambitious and foolhardy assaults made by the resistance forces against regular front-line Japanese infantry units still

[10]Ibid. p. 14.

[11]Central Military Committee, MCP, 'Ma-lai-ya jen min k'ang-jih chun chan-chi' (The Combat Record of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army). In: *War and the Overseas Chinese of the South* (in Chinese), (Singapore, January 1947), pp. 28-29.

[12]A British liaison officer reported that the Communist guerrillas were making special trips to the Slim River area as late as 1944 to gather weapons and equipment they had retrieved and secretly stored there.

[13]Ibid. pp. 29-30.

stationed in the area. Such high-quality forces seldom find difficulty in mopping up relatively untrained guerrillas.

In the State of Trengganu, located along the north-east coast of the peninsula, another hastily formed guerrilla force met with a similar fate. Just prior to the Japanese invasion, the local British officials cooperated with the State committee of the MCP in organizing a militia to defend the east coast in the event of attack. Some 300 Chinese were subsequently recruited but ordered to remain in civilian dress, acting as scouts and advance guards for the regular army. This poorly-armed unit attempted to continue the resistance after the British defeat, but was badly beaten and nearly destroyed. Although a few members managed to continue a tenacious, if sporadic, resistance, it was not until some years later that the Trengganu guerrillas were to be rebuilt into a strong resistance unit.[14]

In Perak, the independent resistance movement fared better than did its more unfortunate neighbours. The core of this guerrilla force was composed of a number of Chinese who fled Japanese oppression, seeking security in the jungles. Assisted and equipped by a by-passed British infantry unit, the Perak guerrillas soon numbered seventy men. After a brief period of fighting, contact was made with the Perak Military Affairs Committee of the MCP and this force soon came under Communist leadership. Operating from a mountain base aptly called the Chu-Mao Mountain (named after Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese Communist leaders), the Perak guerrillas in July 1942 were officially renamed the Fifth Independent Force of the MPAJA.

PERIOD OF CONSOLIDATION AND GROWTH

By late summer of 1943, the MPAJA entered a new stage of

[14]Following a liaison with the Central Military Committee of the MPAJA in Pahang, this force received new recruits and on 7 November 1944, was reformed into the Seventh Independent Force of the MPAJA.

development. Additional recruiting, training and internal consolidation served to weld together a more experienced and much wiser guerrilla organization than that which took the field early in 1942. Further, many of the Japanese front-line forces were no longer in Malaya and the secondary occupation units proved less successful in carrying out large-scale counter-guerrilla operations.

Probably the most important contributing factor in this growth was the political and organizational work carried on by the Communists among the people. This stage was aptly named the 'period of political struggle' by the guerrilla command and it marked the building of a large mass base for the resistance force. Effective political propaganda enabled the units of the MPAJA to rely upon the mass elements for food, supplies and intelligence; the people also furnished a wide source of potential recruits. The so-called period of political struggle lasted until the end of 1944, resulting in a fourfold growth in the size of the MPAJA and the creation of a sympathetic mass base numbering hundreds of thousands.

Cadres from the ranks of the MPAJA carried on some of this mass work, but much credit can be given to the party itself. On the State level, clandestine party committees worked tirelessly on the guerrillas' behalf. Similar committees functioned on the municipal and local levels. The principal vehicle for mass work was the People's Anti-Japanese Federation, organized to establish contact between the guerrillas, the party underground organs and the masses. On the State level, People's Representatives' Congresses were set up to facilitate supply, financial assistance, communications and intelligence for the units of the MPAJA. A Military Affairs Committee operating in each State concentrated upon recruiting additional guerrillas, effecting liaison, and similar tasks.

Party command during the period of occupation remained in the hands of the Central Committee of the MCP. The location of party headquarters remains a mystery, but it maintained

complete and far-reaching control over guerrilla units, political workers and local party cells alike. The Central Military Committee of the MCP, believed to have been located somewhere in Pahang, acted as the supreme command organ of the MPAJA. Lau Yeh (Liu Yao) was the Chairman of the Central Military Committee; its members were elected from the various units in the MPAJA. Those forces with graduates from 101 STS were given priority in representation.

The Central Military Committee exerted strategic and top-level control over the MPAJA but, as guerrilla operations require a maximum of independent action, the command relationship was not as strict as that existing in regular armies. Complete operational freedom was given to the independent force commander. He was expected to conduct operations according to terrain, local conditions, mass consciousness and enemy strength.

Each independent force was considered an independent operational unit and functioned in a strategically favourable defence area. Located near the independent force headquarters were units of company strength. Their number and size remained flexible, depending upon the local situation. Each independent force averaged from two to five of these companies, and the company carried on day-by-day guerrilla operations. As with the independent force, the company commander was allowed complete tactical freedom, and was expected to utilize his units with independent thought, resourcefulness and initiative. Each company had from three to five platoons, numbering from ten to twenty men each.

Individual guerrillas in the MPAJA received daily political and military training. Military education centred on the use of small arms, physical education, drill, and basic guerrilla tactics. The average enlisted man was brave and well-disciplined, but he remained a poor soldier in many respects. Most were illiterate and lacked individual initiative. In addition, they were notoriously poor marksmen and the concept of fire discipline remained alien

to many regardless of training. While the average age of the enlisted guerrilla was from 18 to 22 years, the guerrilla officers were older (approximately 23 to 26 years of age) and usually better educated. Officers were selected for reasons of education, background and political reliability. Potential officer candidates were sent to Pahang for a two-months' course held at the People's Academy of the Sixth Independent Force (this guerrilla unit was organized in August 1943, beginning with but three rifles and it came to be known as the 'unarmed army'). The Commandant of the People's Academy, Ch'en Kuang, was a graduate of the 8th Route Army's guerrilla school (K'ang-ta) in Yenan, China. He reportedly patterned his training on that utilized by the Communist armies in China. Texts, as with those used in all units of the MPAJA, were written either by British liaison guerrilla specialists, or were guerrilla texts brought down from China by former members of the Communist 8th Route and New 4th Armies.

Regardless of military education and training at special schools, however, the junior officers in the MPAJA proved no great asset to the guerrilla command. This was especially true at the platoon level. While there was little criticism of the high-ranking commanders of the guerrilla units, the average platoon commander was found lacking in general initiative and incentive. As the war continued, the shortage of good officers became critical and the guerrilla command initiated special 'guerrilla middle schools' on the independent force level. But these were not too satisfactory, largely because of lack of good candidate material. An experienced British liaison officer later reported that the junior officers throughout the entire period of occupation proved to be 'the weakest link in the guerrilla set-up'.[15]

Political education and training were emphasized in the MPAJA. During the early months a Communist Party Representative, or *tang tai-piao*, functioned as a political commissar

[15]Chapman, op. cit. pp. 157-8.

on the company level. The political commissar was the second-in-command of the unit and in charge of all political training and education. All problems of a non-military nature were his direct concern.

As the political commissar usually ranked senior to the unit military commander in the party, the pattern of the commissar system in the MPAJA began to follow the disastrous road previously taken by the commissars in the Red Army of the Soviet Union. The unit commissar too often exceeded his authority and considered himself the senior officer in matters military as well as political. As might have been expected, a number of clashes resulted between the unit commander and his political counterpart, and many arguments as to whether a problem was military or political were relayed to the high command for final action.

The political commissar problem was climaxed by the now famous September First Incident (1942) at Batu Caves in Selangor. A general conference was called for the date to include all high-ranking officers in the MPAJA and the MCP for the purpose of discussing future military policy. The exact events which transpired are not clear, but it is known that there was a sudden Japanese raid on the Red meeting place just at daybreak on 1 September. Subsequent Communist accounts claim the Japanese employed more than 2,000 men.[16] The Communists were taken completely by surprise. In the battle that followed the MPAJA reportedly lost over a hundred men, including at least half its political commissars.[17] Among those reported killed were Hsiao Chung, a member of the Central Committee; Chu Wei, political commissar of the Fourth Independent Force; Ho Fu, Commander of the Fourth Independent Force; Hsiao Cheng, member

[16]Chou wei-hui (Singapore Committee) MCP, *Chi-nien ch'i-chou-nien t'ung-kao* (Seven Years After the September First Incident), (Singapore, 1949), p. 17.

[17]Hai Shang-ou, op. cit. p. 35.

of the Selangor Committee of the Malayan Communist Party; Ch'en Shu, political commissar of the Second Independent Force; Hsu Tu-piao, political commissar of the First Independent Force, and many others.

Official Red opinion as to the causes of this stunning defeat are of interest. Hai Shang-ou reports that 'insufficient secrecy in organizational preparation' was the principal cause.[18] The Singapore Committee of the MCP, on the other hand, assigned three more fundamental reasons: (1) weakness in work within the army; (2) lack of a military plan; and (3) insufficient military training.[19]

Perhaps the most fascinating theory concerning the Batu Caves incident is one which is held in high regard in certain intelligence circles. According to this theory, Lai Teck had actually concluded an informal 'live and let live' agreement with local Japanese intelligence officers as early as April 1942. This agreement was evidently unknown to other high-ranking Red officers. At the time of the Batu Caves Conference, a large segment of the delegates, a majority of whom were political commissars, were beginning to question some of Lai Teck's policies, and were possibly considering active opposition to him. As the story goes, Lai passed information concerning the time and place of this meeting on to his Japanese contacts, and the Japanese Army by conducting the raid unwittingly assisted Lai in purging the party ranks of his enemies. As far as this writer can ascertain, there is no substantial evidence in any Communist publications to support this theory, even after the expulsion of Lai Teck in 1948. Yet certain actions taken by Lai in the early post-war period and a prisoner interrogation report of one Japanese intelligence officer tend to verify at least some parts of this theory.

A more tangible result of the September First Incident was the abolition of the political commissar system in the MPAJA. A

[18]Ibid. p. 15.
[19]Chou wei-hui, op. cit. p. 19.

Deputy Force and Deputy Company Commander were created in its place. These officers were given the dual task of carrying on political education of the troops and assisting the unit commander, but they were definitely to remain the commander's junior in all matters. The headquarters of the MPAJA provided the final lament to this defeat when it reported that 'the political commissar was abolished from the guerrilla ranks as a majority of the political officers gave their lives in battle [the September First Incident] and no qualified replacements were available to fill their posts'.[20]

Within the unit, political work consisted of lectures, given by both the officers and enlisted men, 'criticism meetings' and group discussions. Although no private criticism or breach of discipline was tolerated at these group meetings, all men were allowed to voice open criticism of their commanders and their ability. Although the Communist doctrinaires hold that such methods provide good 'mass therapy', the end result more often than not was a drop in the morale of the officer concerned. All too often this would be followed by indecisive action and lack of incentive in actual guerrilla operations.

Considerable emphasis was also given to group singing, the staging of plays, and so forth. Illiterates were taught to write a few characters and daily classes were given in *kuo yu*, the Chinese 'national language', then the *lingua franca* of the MPAJA. In addition, each independent force had its own newspapers. These were read within the unit itself and distributed to the local populace. Some twenty or more newspapers were issued regularly by the forces of the MPAJA, most of them crudely mimeographed by local headquarters. Of these, thirteen were in Chinese, five in English, four in Tamil and two in Hindustani. The guerrilla papers carried such titles as: *The Great Masses,*

[20]Hai Shang-ou, op. cit. p. 28.
[21]Central Military Committee, MCP, op. cit. pp. 27-30. This report

Liberation, The Voice of Freedom, The Cry of Victory and *The Anti-Japanese Vanguard*.[21]

The so-called Period of Political Expansion saw the formation of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Independent Forces of the MPAJA.[22] The Fifth was organized in Perak in December 1942, the Sixth in August 1943 and the Seventh in September 1944.

Interestingly enough, both the Fifth and Sixth Independent Forces functioned with different objectives from the remaining units in the MPAJA. The Fifth Force was created for the purpose of traitor-killing, this activity being carried out by independent killer squads numbering approximately ten men. Although all Independent Forces had this type of group, the operations of the Fifth seem to have been more professional and on a larger scale than the others. Besides eliminating the usual traitors, informers, spies and deserters, these squads often operated against non-Communist partisans. They proved a most effective fear-control device, both for the civil populace and guerrillas alike. According to their own figures, over 2,500 so-called 'traitors' were assassinated by these specialists during the war.[23]

The Sixth Independent Force, on the other hand, was organized for the sole purpose of carrying on propaganda and political work, and for training guerrilla cadres. Active guerrilla operations were conducted only when absolutely necessary. The People's Academy, the guerrilla OCS functioned under the direction of the Sixth Independent Force.

ALLIED-GUERRILLA LIAISON: FORCE 136

In October 1944 the MPAJA moved into a more advanced stage of development. This period was marked by active assistance

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lists by name, location and language, each of the newspapers issued by the MPAJA during the war.

[22]The 8th Independent Force, the last unit created, was not brought into the MPAJA until after the war in September 1945. It numbered some 400 men and operated in Kedah.

[23]Hai Shang-ou, op. cit. pp. 54-56.

given to the guerrillas by the Allied High Command. Although the MPAJA was predominantly a Chinese organization, it was never without a small number of Allied military personnel. During the first year of operations, official reports of the MPAJA showed that more than seventy Allied soldiers were in its ranks. Most of these were stragglers, by-passed in the rapid Japanese advance, while a few others were members of the small 'stay-behind parties' which later linked up with the guerrillas.[24]

At the close of the first year, however, there remained but ten of the original group. The survivors, principally British officers, never assumed actual leadership duties in the guerrilla units but were rather used to give weapons instruction, to write simple training manuals, and for similar tasks. Although allies, they were often kept ignorant of guerrilla plans, leaders, and activities of other guerrilla forces outside their immediate area. Many were held under close 'protective watch', their movements restricted by the guerrilla command. One very competent British officer in this group, Major Chapman, never met the unit commanders as such, but worked through secondary liaison officers, men who he continued to believe were, in fact, the real commanders. As an amusing commentary, he later wrote in his excellent narrative, *The Jungle Is Neutral,* that attempts made by him to learn Chinese were deliberately frustrated: each daily lesson was given in a different dialect!

During the first years, there were few additions to this group. An American Major, shot down over Singapore, was rescued by the Fourth Independent Force, while an Englishwoman later lived at the base of the Seventh Independent Force in Trengganu.

The principal Allied liaison effort with the units of the MPAJA was to come later and to be carried out by the now famous Force 136. The origins of this liaison bear examination as they were to have a pronounced effect upon guerrillas and British alike.

When Malaya fell to the enemy, not all the British guerrilla

[24]Central Military Committee, MCP, op. cit. p. 29.

specialists went into the jungle. A group of the 101 STS instructional staff, headed by Colonel Richard Broome of the Malayan Civil Service and John Davis, a former officer in the Federated Malay States Police, escaped by a small steamer, via Java, eventually, in April 1942, reaching the headquarters of Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) then located at Colombo, Ceylon.

Lack of contact with enemy-occupied Malaya precluded any satisfactory intelligence on conditions there, and the escapees immediately set out to establish an organization capable of contacting the forces continuing the resistance. Force 136, newly formed to contact, supply and direct guerrillas and resistance groups in Burma, Siam and Indochina, proved to be the most effective medium for this task, and the Malayan Section was activated in July 1942 and put under the direction of Basil Goodfellow.

Broome and Davis later journeyed to Calcutta in search of potential recruits for their new unit. While there, they made contact with Lim Bo-seng, a Straits-born Chinese educated in English schools. Lim had previously proven his loyalty and courage by leading a group of seventeen survivors of DALFORCE out of Malaya, and he now welcomed the opportunity of getting back into the fight.

Force 136 assigned Lim to recruit Straits-born Chinese, men who were to be trained for two months as radio operators and interpreters, later to be introduced into the guerrilla areas as members of British-led liaison teams. He proceeded to Chungking where he got in touch with the Nationalist Government, briefing them on his mission.[25]

General Wu Te-chen of the Chinese Nationalist Government

[25]Information regarding the actions of Lim Bo-seng and the early problems of creating Force 136 are taken largely from a pro-Nationalist source, *This Singapore*, by N. I. Low (Singapore, 1946), pp 57-70, and from Chapman, op. cit. Chapter 12.

obtained the consent of Chiang Kai-shek for this programme, and the Chinese Government subsequently agreed to furnish the British with the necessary trainees. It should be noted here that the trainees selected by the politically astute Chiang were trusted members of the Kuomintang — men whom the British officers expected to use as key liaison personnel with the Communist guerrillas in the jungle! The so-called 'united front' between the Communists and Nationalists, however, had long since reached the breaking point and Kuomintang men were received with hostility in Communist-dominated guerrilla regions. This unfortunate situation was to have more pronounced consequences once actual operations began.

The training of the first teams was concluded in the early spring of 1943. Exploratory liaison was effected through Operation Gustavus I. A group of five Chinese Kuomintang agents, led by Captain John Davis, were landed on the West coast of Malaya by a Dutch submarine. Contact was later established with the guerrillas in the jungle and additional liaison groups were introduced in the same manner in operations Gustavus II, III, and IV.

Early contact by Force 136 was made with the command representatives of independent forces in the MPAJA, but it was not until December 1943 that arrangements were made to set up a meeting between the British officers and the supreme guerrilla command. Until a formal agreement was drawn up, the British teams could accomplish little in the way of positive work.

On 30 December and 1 January 1944, the conference between the two groups took place. Chang Hung and another officer from the MPAJA headquarters conferred with Major Chapman and Captain Davis, the latter acting as the chief representative of SEAC in Malaya. Interpreting was undertaken by Lim Bo-seng.

The agreement drawn up represented a victory for the British. The guerrillas agreed to cooperate with the Allied Armies in

their operations against the Japanese and, also, to cooperate fully in the maintenance of law and order in the country both during and after the war. Force 136, for its part, agreed to supply the MPAJA with weapons, funds, training and medical facilities. Most important, the British liaison officers managed to extract a pledge from the guerrillas that the mission was only military and 'no questions of post-war policy were to be discussed'.[26]

The guerrilla command, failing to take advantage of a promising situation, left the conference without so much as an attempt to extract a minimum of special post-war political rewards or considerations. This opportunity missed may well be considered an indication of both a lack of liaison with the Communist policy command outside of Malaya and of an almost unbelievable error in strategy on the part of the MCP, one which would probably have been worked to maximum advantage by Communist guerrilla forces in other lands.[27]

It was, of course, official policy of SEAC that political concessions would not be offered guerrillas in the Asian areas. But as the months wore on, the British were to attach much importance to the MPAJA as a supporting force in the projected Allied in-

[26]Chapman, op. cit. p. 234.

[27]In reading the draft of this chapter one of my critics has questioned this hypothesis, i.e. that the Malayan Communists had been lacking in skilled leadership when it drew up the agreements with the British during the war. His argument was as follows: 'To begin with, the international line was to cooperate with the Allies in all formal discussions. Secondly, the MPAJA needed further arms if for no other reason than to make its members feel they were really being soldiers. Thirdly, the MCP knew full well that, just as in the case of the agreements in 1941, whatever political promises they made with the British would be quite irrelevant. In short, they knew that they had a free hand for political work in Malaya during the war period.'

While I will agree that the Malayan Communists needed British assistance, I do not believe it follows that the Communist command was therefore forced to accede to British arguments in reference to political questions. Communist guerrillas in Crete, Greece, and Yugoslavia during the last war were in much the same position, but did not give in on political matters as did the Red guerrillas in Malaya.

vasion of Malaya, and some political agreements might well have been bargained for had the Communist pursued a positive policy in this respect.

Throughout the remainder of 1943, additional Force-136 liaison teams were introduced by submarine. The island of Pangkor was utilized as the principal point of rendezvous. Submarine liaison, however, was a poor medium at best and there was a number of failures at effecting a rendezvous. Difficulties in communications, intensive Japanese security measures and the small amount of supplies which could be transported by undersea craft, kept Force-136 activities during this period to a minimum. By late 1944, however, liaison between Malaya and the outside improved considerably. Originally, this area had been considered out of range of Allied aircraft, but the introduction of the new model Mark IV Liberator now made possible a more effective air supply, permitting flights even as far south as Johore.

Further intensification of the guerrilla supply programme was ordered by the Allied High Command in preparation for Operation ZIPPER. Scheduled for August 1945, ZIPPER was the code designation for a projected amphibious assault on the west coast of Malaya. The MPAJA was scheduled to play an integral part in this operation and considerable effort was made to build up the strength of the guerrilla forces.

The plans of Force 136 called for attaching so-called Group Liaison Teams and Patrol Liaison Teams with each unit of company strength or better in the MPAJA. The teams were composed of two British officers and three Chinese, two radio operators and one interpreter. The main air supply effort began in November 1944 and continued throughout the remaining months of the war. This programme proved a success and in the following ten months, enough equipment to arm 3,500 guerrillas was brought in. Funds amounting to 150 taels of gold a month (worth roughly £3,000 sterling) were supplied to the

guerrilla headquarters for subsistence, while some 510 liaison personnel and almost one and a half million pounds of equipment were flown in from bases in Ceylon, India and the Cocos Islands.

The system of supply was considered a success, but the overall achievement of the entire mission is open to some question. In the first place, liaison was effected with individual units only; the British never made contact with either the leaders of the MCP or the Central Military Committee. In many cases, the liaison officers met with everything from mild toleration to open resentment on the part of the guerrillas. Intelligence gathering, one of the prime functions of Force-136 personnel, was kept at a minimum and only scanty information was supplied by the reluctant guerrillas. The fact that almost all the Chinese personnel of Force 136 were Kuomintang members no doubt accounted for much of this poor cooperation and suspicion on the part of the Communists. The latter was aggravated to some degree by the Japanese occupation authorities who attempted to introduce agents into the guerrilla organization for the specific purpose of exploiting this weakness.

Some writers have stated that the cooperation and assistance between these two allies were generally favourable, but the evidence at hand does not bear out this observation. N. I. Low, pro-Kuomintang writer, gave some clue to this situation when he reported: 'Among the many things which are vague, one fact emerges with considerable clearness. It is that many thousands of guerrillas remained outside the ranks of Force 136, in other words, that the resistance movement was a large circle which included in it a much smaller circle — Force 136 — and that the two were not exactly coincident.'[28]

GUERRILLA CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR EFFORT

The war came to a close in September 1945, and the British effort, aimed at arming and utilizing the guerrillas, was to reap

[28]Low, op. cit. p. 67.

no reward. Operation ZIPPER died in the planning stages. The over-all contribution of the MPAJA to the cause of the Allies was, therefore, negligible. No criticism, however, can be directed towards British strategy, for had the war continued the MPAJA would probably have proved its worth, playing an important role in the final assault on Malaya.

As it was, however, the total record of the MPAJA does not deserve the credit given it by pro-Communist writers. The first period represented only internal development and outside assistance. As guerrillas who tied down Japanese occupation forces and harassed enemy communications and supply lines, their contribution was small. According to Japanese military occupation reports, the MPAJA was never more than a minor irritant and certainly no strategic threat to the occupation forces there.[29]

According to the official history of the MPAJA, it undertook some 340 individual operations with the enemy during the period of occupation, of which 200 were considered major efforts.[30] In a similar period of guerrilla action against the British in the post-war struggle (June 1948 to December 1951), however, we notice a much more determined effort being made by the Reds. According to British reports, there were some 13,585 actions, of which 4,155 were considered major engagements in this latter period. Japanese casualties (both killed and wounded) in Malaya in World War II numbered some 2,300 in all, or almost three to every one suffered by the MPAJA. This, however, averaged only two or three daily, a small number indeed for a 5,000-man guerrilla force actively interested in engaging the enemy.

Finally, it should be noted that the traitor-killing programme carried on by the MPAJA more often than not took precedence over guerrilla action conducted against the Japanese. By their own admission, the guerrillas executed or murdered 2,542 so-

[29]Japanese Military Administration Documents: *The Occupation of Malaya,* Section IV-2.
[30]Central Military Committee, MCP, op. cit. p. 30.

called traitors, a number at least equal to the total number of Japanese both killed and wounded.[31]

It is generally agreed by the British, however, that the MPAJA would have proved its worth in Operation ZIPPER, certainly justifying its existence and Force-136 support. From the point of view of the guerrillas and of the MCP on the other hand, the existence of the MPAJA was certainly justified for many reasons. It proved a training ground for future party members, a source of military supplies and a base for military education of party members, and it created a wide degree of mass support for the Leftist cause.

Some speculation is warranted as to the possibility of the MCP high command deliberately carrying out a policy of saving their guerrilla strength, engaging the Japanese as infrequently as possible, in keeping with the strategy of 'let the Allies win the war while we concentrate on expansion and consolidation for the post-war period'. This policy is not alien to Communist guerrilla organizations. It was in evidence in Crete, Greece and possibly in China itself during World War II. Although there is some evidence substantiating this point of view, the general thesis does not seem to be validated by fact. First, the party and military leadership was not noted for brilliance, and it is difficult to imagine inept leaders arriving at this overall policy, especially after their poor record in dealing with the British. Secondly, there appears to have been no liaison with any outside directing organ during the Japanese occupation. This would have precluded the transmission of higher and more effective policy directives from Yenan or Moscow. Finally, the MPAJA appears to have been struggling for existence during most of the occupation, and it is difficult to imagine party leadership drawing up any long-range plans under such conditions. When the MPAJA was finally armed by Force 136, they took active steps to prepare for the forthcoming Operation ZIPPER and appear to have

[31]Hai Shang-ou, op. cit. p. 54.

been more than willing to commit their main forces in this action. If such a policy had been in effect, once supplied, trained and armed, the guerrillas both would and could have tried to conserve their strength rather than to commit themselves to a potentially hazardous and costly action against the Japanese.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERIOD OF INDECISION AND THE POLICY OF MODERATION

POST-WAR GUERRILLA PROBLEMS

THE abrupt termination of hostilities in September 1945 appears to have caught both the Communist guerrillas and the Allied South-East Asian Command completely by surprise. Neither had a clear-cut plan for the immediate post-war period. Although a few officers in SEAC feared possible usurpation of authority by the guerrillas, no definite steps were taken to counter this threat. Instead, the British were unusually slow at moving in their troops, resulting in the absence of civil control between the time of the original Japanese surrender and the arrival of British occupation units.

The MCP and the MPAJA were even less prepared to take advantage of this singular opportunity. For the first few weeks, as the only power in Malaya, the MPAJA virtually held complete control of the peninsula, especially the more remote inland regions. Disarming Japanese troops, it added to its weapons stores, and the guerrilla force of six to seven thousand men operated almost unopposed in the liberated regions.

In addition to this, the MCP and its guerrilla arm were at the highest level of active mass support, with thousands of people sympathetic to them. In most interior areas, the final victory over Japan was not celebrated to extol the efforts of the Allies. Triumphal arches and inscriptions honoured instead the forces of the MPAJA. The moment was most opportune and Communist strategy might well have ranged from complete usurpation of authority to a threatening show of force, thereby

blackmailing the unprepared British into a belated agreement on special political concessions. But the guerrillas failed to act. Additional Force-136 personnel, parachuted in after the end of the conflict in a token attempt to take command of the resistance forces, reported that the guerrillas were both unco-operative and, in many cases, openly hostile. Yet no attempts were made to seize control of the peninsula.

Again, faulty and indecisive party leadership appears to have played the key role in this failure. With almost unbelievable naivete the Communists first assumed that Malaya would be reoccupied by a Chinese army.[1] Once this rumour proved unfounded, the Communist leaders continued to act indecisively, largely because of divided counsel. A subsequent internal rift developed over the adoption of a positive post-war policy. Official British charges that the Communists were aiming at eventual control of all Malaya were correct, but they erred when they assumed that the Communist line was well prepared and ready for immediate implementation.

Instead, two diametrically opposed strategic plans were apparently being considered. One plan argued for an immediate civil struggle, fought along guerrilla lines which had worked so well for the Communist forces in China. This came to be known as the 'Chinese Line'. The other argued for a continued policy of labour organization and agitation similar to that carried on before the war. There is some indication that this latter thesis was favoured by those who advocated following traditional Soviet revolutionary tactics rather than the modified version promulgated by the Chinese Communists. The Soviet group won out and a so-called 'moderates' policy' was established as the correct tactical line.[2]

[1]Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya* (London, Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 264-6.

[2]Quoted from a Malayan Communist Party document, cited in V. Thompson and R. Adloff, *The Left Wing in Southeast Asia* (New York, William Sloane, 1950), pp. 132-41.

According to the party's own analysis, the working class in Malaya, including their families, numbered approximately 30 per cent. of the total population, representing probably the largest proletarian base in all South-East Asia.[3] Further, most of the labourers were either Chinese or Indian, presenting a favourable area for Leftist propaganda and infiltration.

There is some evidence, however, that complete agreement on this policy did not exist, especially for the rank and file of MPAJA guerrillas. Although attacks on the defeated Japanese forces were kept at a surprising minimum (only two cases were reported), a number of armed clashes ensued against the Japanese-trained Malay police. Interestingly enough, some of this antagonism is reported to have been fostered by the Japanese as a final gesture against their old enemies.[4] Additional sporadic fighting also took place between the forces of the MPAJA and the few non-Communist guerrilla units on the peninsula.[5]

Before long, the British landed their main forces and the time for active revolt had passed. Units and commanders of the MPAJA were marched on parade throughout the liberated areas and many individual commanders and guerrillas received decorations from the British High Command. No special political concessions were granted, however, and all Communist feelers either to make the MPAJA into a permanent militia force or to incorporate it into the Malay defence establishment were coldly received.

Under continued British prodding, units of the resistance forces began to disband. On 1 December 1945, the official order

[3]Ma-lai-ya kung-ch'an-tang (Malayan Communist Party), *Ma-lai-ya ko-ming chan-cheng ti chan-lueh wen-ti* (Strategic Problems of the Malayan Revolutionary War) (N.P., December 1948), p. 3.

[4]Purcell, op. cit. p. 264.

[5]A small Malay guerrilla force was organized by Force 136 in North Perak and in Kedah, fighting under the name Ashkar Melayu Setia (AMS), or Royal Malay Army. An additional group of some 500 Kuomintang guerrillas was active along the Malaya-Siam border. This latter group proved to be the victim of a number of Communist raids.

for the de-activation of the MPAJA was issued by Lau Yew, Chairman of the Central Military Committee. The order was not without bitterness. Lau reviewed the achievements of the guerrillas and claimed that the British failure to extend extra political concessions was nothing short of treachery. 'In effect', Lau lamented, 'no rewards were offered to the resistance patriots but given to the traitors and puppets who collaborated with the enemy'.[6]

Demobilization, despite guerrilla bitterness, proceeded smoothly. According to the *Straits Times* (2 Novemeber 1945), one guerrilla was killed early in November in a disagreement with authorities. Following this incident the British occupation officials publicly stated: 'It should be made clear that the guerrilla forces are an integral part of the British invasion forces and as such are dependent on the orders of the British authorities.' Aside from this one difficulty, the British met with no further overt resistance on the part of the guerrillas. As each soldier was disarmed, he received a mustering-out bonus of 350 Malayan dollars (about US$163 at that time) this latter to be paid in two instalments. According to agreement, all veterans of the MPAJA were to receive one bag of rice in January 1946.

The problem of disarming the guerrillas was an important one. To accomplish this, no mustering-out pay was given until all arms and ammunition were handed in to the Government. Of the 6,800 guerrillas demobilized, less than 500 failed to turn in weapons and Force-136 records indicate that most of the air-drop supplies marked received were eventually returned.

As early as 31 October 1945 the general public was ordered to surrender arms, but such an order did not apply to Force-136 personnel or to any of the resistance forces under its control. Following the de-activation of the MPAJA however, this order was made mandatory for the entire populace. On 1 February

[6]This final order appears in full in Hai Shang-ou, *Ma-lai-ya jen-min k'ang-jih chun* (Singapore, 1945), pp. 56-57.

1946, the British ordered the death penalty to be introduced for those found guilty of illegal possession of arms on the grounds that they were '...seriously concerned at the increase in cases of robbery and gang robbery with arms' (*Straits Times*, 21 October 1945 and 1 February 1946).

But the British failed to reckon with guerrilla resourcefulness. A number of mis-dropped Force-136 arms (estimated at 20 per cent. of the total air-dropped) was not reported by the guerrillas as having been received and was never turned in. Furthermore, weapons taken from disarmed Japanese troops and those picked up during the first stages of the war were also kept concealed. Before MPAJA units demobilized, most of these arms (including Brens, Stens and carbines) were secretly stored at strategic points for future use. Apparently several thousand weapons were hidden from the authorities after the close of the war. The failure of the British to anticipate this and to offer added monetary incentives aimed at uncovering these additional weapons was to prove costly with the advent of the 1948 civil struggle.

The disbandment of the guerrillas did not mean the end of the MPAJA. To ensure a skeletal structure and close liaison between the former guerrillas, the MCP immediately organized the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army Ex-Service Comrades Association which functioned under close party supervision. On a 'keep-in-touch' basis, an accurate record was kept of all guerrilla veterans.

The period leading up to the demobilization of the MPAJA was marked by a series of exploratory moves made by the MCP itself. In the early post-war days, most of these took the form of proposals and recommendations made to the British concerning various political problems. In the later part of September 1945, for example, the MCP made 'eight proposals and six suggestions' to the British Military Administration (BMA) which were ignored. Again on 7 November 1945, the Central Committee of the MCP issued a proclamation which called for such things

as a democratic constitution, freedom of political organization, the right of self-determination for the people, self-government, the establishment of an All-Malayan Congress, the right to vote for all those over eighteen years, and greater rights for women.[7] These were also disregarded by the British authorities.

At the Eighth Enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee, held between 22-27 January 1946, the so-called 'moderates' policy' was officially adopted, giving the party a more definite political line. Lai Teck was reportedly the leading advocate of this line and was instrumental in getting it accepted by the Central Committee.[8] His arguments at the time were subsequently published by the party and are of interest. Summing up the 'new conditions', he stated: 'Today, the colonial problem can be resolved in two ways: (1) Liberation through a bloody revolutionary struggle (as in the case of Vietnam and Indonesia) or; (2) Through the strength of a National United Front (which embodies total popular solidarity with harmony established between all political parties and factions).'[9]

Lai argued that conditions were 'not favourable' for the first course (i.e. armed insurrection along the Chinese line), but that instead the fundamental task should be '...to use the utmost strength to preserve a peaceful front, to determinedly protect world peace, to carry out the Charter of the United Nations, annihilate the remnants of Fascism, and to counter the imperialist policy of colonial exploitation....'[10]

This was obviously the Comintern line at the time, but its application to Malaya is questionable to say the least. Lai, for example, argued on the somewhat doubtful premise that the

[7]Lai T'e (Lai Teck), 'Report Given at the Eighth Enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee of the Malayan Communist Party', 22-27 January 1946 (in Chinese), p. 15.

[8]Lam Swee, *My Accusation,* (Kuala Lumpur, Benar Publishing Co., 1951), pp. 10-11.

[9]Lai T'e, op. cit. p. 12.

[10]Ibid.

re-emergence of the United Front was needed because Great Britain in 1946 was in much the same position as Japan in 1941. As the policy against Japan at the time was the United Front, so a similar policy should be adopted in 1946 against England.[11] No mention was made of the new military strength of the MCP and of the obviously excellent conditions which then existed for armed insurrection.[12]

With the moderate policy agreed upon, the Central Committee outlines three basic duties: (1) To maintain a correct line in reference to the revolutionary movement for national liberation and to establish a firm Malayan democratic United Front (2) To bring about the spirit of a new democratic struggle (3) To strengthen the organ of international peace: the United Nations.[13]

A more detailed explanation of the 'democratic' programme of the MCP was issued in May 1946. It affords a clue to the true party line at the time. This programme included nine general points:

(1) Establish self-rule in Malaya based upon the principles of national self-determination to have the authority to determine the administration of Malaya, its legal code and laws and have the authority to decide problems related to politics, economics, finances, national defence, foreign affairs, etc.

(2) Set up an All-Malayan National Assembly and draw up a democratic constitution; to establish a democratic council in

[11]Ibid.

[12]The argument has been brought up by some observers that a fundamental reason why the MCP adopted the 'moderate line' at this time was a subjective one, rather than at Comintern orders. It is suggested that the MCP at the time may well have over-estimated its strength and felt that it could win eventually in Malaya without resorting to an armed revolt. It was argued that with such strength the proper organization of the labour movement would in itself suffice to bring victory. This is an interesting thesis and may have some merit. There is, however, as yet no substantial evidence to support this argument.

[13]Ibid. p. 15.

each state; and give the people of all races the right to vote, regardless of class, political party, sex or belief.

(3) Realize a Malayan democratic government and guarantee a democratic press; freedom of publication; freedom to organize; freedom of assembly; the right to strike; freedom of travel; belief and absolute freedom of human rights.

(4) Carry out an independent tariff policy; open free trade; bring about the betterment of the worker, peasant, and commercial conditions; expand the national economic structure; and improve social programmes.

(5) Obtain universal increase in salaries and revenue; relieve the unemployed, downtrodden people; lower prices; do away with oppressive, irregular taxes and excessively high rates of interest; and reduce taxes.

(6) Abolish the servile system of education; institute a democratic and free education in the national language of each race; set up professional colleges; and expand the national culture.

(7) Institute an eight-hour work day; improve working conditions; abolish the system of contractual apprenticeship; put a social security programme into operation; use the economic surplus to help the impoverished and grant freedom of agricultural pursuit.

(8) Recognize equal rights for women in politics and society; put a policy of equal work and equal compensation into operation; guarantee two-months' rest for female workers before and after giving birth; grant protection in work; abolish the system of female servitude; and establish a commission on suffrage.

(9) Unite the oppressed peoples of the Far East; preserve the natural independence of the Far East; and strive together to preserve world peace.[14]

[14]Ma-lai-ya kung-ch'an-tang (Malayan Communist Party), *Ma-kung-tang chien min-chu kang-ling chien-shih* (A Simple Explanation of the

Outwardly this nine-point programme appears to have been honest and just. Certainly it must have appeared to many to be one in which the best interests of Malaya itself were placed in the foreground. A closer appraisal of this 'democratic programme', however, gives evidence of more subtle designs. For example, raising such impractical demands as increased salaries and lower prices without clear-cut proposals for bringing about such advances, were obviously meant to put the British on the defensive. Similarly, such proposals as citizenship and free education for all races were meant to appeal directly to the Overseas Chinese and Indians, and possibly to stir up general unrest.

The colonial authorities, of course, fully realized that to relinquish control over Malaya at this crucial time and to grant the people self-rule would have been tantamount to handing the country over to the Communists. The MCP was the only unified militant force with the exception of the BMA. It would have been a simple matter indeed for the MCP to seize the reins of power from the other parties.

In the latter part of 1946, the Communists made further proposals regarding the new Malayan Constitution then being outlined by the colonial authorities.[15] Through the party's front organization, the MPAJA Ex-Service Comrades Association, three suggestions were made:

First, we recommend that all the un-official members of the Legislative Council be elected by popular vote. It is because only the unofficial members elected by the people can really represent the interests of the people. Should the un-official members of the Council be appointed by the representatives of the British Government, they are sure to represent the Government instead of the people.

Past and Present Programmes of the Malayan Communist Party) (Singapore, May 1946).

[15]Details on the post-war constitutional movement are given in V. Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya*, op. cit. pp. 280-8; and V. Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (London, Oxford University Press, 1951), pp. 381-99.

Second, we recommend that equal citizenship be granted to all the peoples, and that the qualifications for gaining Malayan citizenship be simplified. Only then, more Malayan Chinese and Malayan Indians would possess the necessary qualifications of Malayan citizenship: only then, more Malayan Chinese and Malayan Indians would contribute their share in the work of rehabilitating Malaya. Regarding the question of citizenship, we request that the term of domicile in Malaya be reduced to seven years. That is to say, those who have lived in the Malay Peninsula (including Penang) and Singapore, for seven years (including the period of Japanese occupation), commencing on the date of registration, be eligible for Malayan citizenship and its accompanying privileges.

Third, we recommend that all communities, political parties and organizations should have equal opportunities to submit their opinions concerning the New Constitution, and all discussions between the Government and the people be publicized. Therefore, we do not recognize the unilateral talks between the British Government and the Sultans of various States and the UMNO.[16] We do not refute that the Sultans of various States and the UMNO have the right to put forward their demands and to make comments on the problem of the constitution of Malaya, and we also do not deny their freedom to discuss the Malayan problem with the Government. The secret discussions between the Sultans, the UMNO and the Government, have aroused much suspicion concerning the Government's intentions and may also cause inter-communal disharmony. Further, we wish to point out that the Sultans and the UMNO cannot claim to represent the majority of the Malays, as they only represent the Malay Aristocracy.[17]

This, of course, is essentially a restatement of the political line of the MCP at the time. The direct appeal to the Overseas Chinese and Indians is much more evident here. This stand, however, was not to endear the Communists to the nationalistic

[16]The UMNO, or United Malay Nationalist Organization, was a Malay nationalist group, which attempted to form the Malays into a unified political force. The Communists were among the first to recognize the threat to their own power of a united Malay organization.

[17]Cited in the *Democrat,* 1 December 1946.

Malays, and actually served even further to alienate many Malays from the Communist cause. Whether the Communists themselves were aware of this, or whether they were fully prepared again to place their faith in the Chinese alone, is not clear. It is obvious, however, that the Communists could expect little assistance from the Malays in their future struggle against the British.

While the MCP was following this course of political agitation, the colonial authorities were evidently not unaware of the resurgence of Communist power. One of the principal countermoves the British used during this period was publicly to slight the Communists. Most Leftist proposals and programmes, for example, were studiously ignored by the authorities while restrictions were placed on Communist-led front groups and high-ranking party leaders.

This policy was first evident in September 1945, when the BMA refused to recognize the legality of various 'People's Committees' set up on the local level by the Communists as civil administrative bodies shortly after the Japanese surrender. Soon thereafter, the authorities took active steps to reduce the flow of Red propaganda by means of the highly restrictive Printing and Publishing Enactment. In October 1945, two Chinese newspapers, the *Shih Tai Jit Pao* and the *Pai Ma Tao Pao,* were forcibly closed down and their editors and staffs sentenced to prison terms for sedition.

The British evidently had good cause for such action. As one observer reported, the Leftist press 'was telling their readers that "the British Fascists were worse than the Japanese", declaiming that the object of the British Government was to enslave and starve the people, and indulging in every epithet of vituperation and hatred'.[18]

Probably the most crippling British blow was made in the financial field. Apparently it came to the attention of the BMA that the MPAJA had amassed a large sum of Japanese occupation

[18]Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya,* op. cit. p. 270.

scrip in the days immediately preceding and following the Japanese surrender. No doubt this was meant to be used as the principal means of financing Communist activities in the post-war era. Although many reputable individuals were known to have Japanese money, it was decided to repudiate all occupation scrip immediately. While this move caused difficulties for many private firms, it proved especially painful to the speculators and Communists. The finances of the MCP suffered accordingly. There is evidence that this seriously curtailed many of the party programmes in ensuing months.

A series of events which occurred in early 1946 brought the struggle between the Communists and the colonial Government out into the open. From the course of events it appears that the party at this time had not yet fully agreed upon the 'moderates' policy' — for Communist actions were still militant and threatening.[19]

Following several disruptive strikes (a discussion of which appears below in the following section), the MCP apparently decided to make a political show of force on 15 February, the fourth anniversary of the fall of Singapore to the Japanese. A public holiday was declared by the MCP and plans were made to organize meetings and mass demonstrations throughout the peninsula. According to the Communists, this holiday was to commemorate 'the thousands of Malayan peoples who fell victims to Japanese atrocities or sacrificed their lives in the course of the resistance movement'. [20]

The British did not take the same view, however. The Government believed that the Communists were out to spread a wave

[19]It is possible that the extremist faction within the party was still active at this time and was not actually put out of power for several months after the January Conference of the Central Committee. This would account for the continuous militant action on a sporadic scale even after the 'moderates' policy had been agreed upon by the party as a whole.

[20]Wu Tien-wang, 'The Communist Party of Malaya' (Unpublished ms., 1947?), p. 10.

of terror. When Lin Ah Liang, head of the Singapore Branch of the MCP, requested permission to hold demonstrations in Singapore on that date, he was refused. Lin, however, declared his intention to disregard the ban. As the 15th approached. the Leftist press increased its propaganda barrage, emphasizing the British defeat at Singapore in 1942 and doing its best to humiliate the colonial authorities.

The Government acted on the 14th in an attempt to nip the plot in the bud. The Singapore police raided the headquarters of the Singapore General Labour Union, the New Democratic Youth League and the Malayan Communist Party. All party leaders were rushed off to jail and the authorities issued a brief to the effect that the raids were 'in connection with the proposed plans to hold a mass rally today to commemorate the fall of Singapore in spite of official British refusal to permit such a meeting'.[21]

Many Reds managed to escape the police net, however, and every effort was made by the party high command to stage the demonstrations in spite of government prohibition. In Singapore the police attempted to break up a mass rally at which Lin Ah Liang was speaking, but before the crowd had been dispersed, one Chinese had been killed and a number of the spectators injured. The most violent outbreak occurred in Johore where some fifteen people were killed in an armed clash with the police.[22]

All in all, however, the Communists had failed to provoke the widespread reign of terror they had expected. In fact, this marked the last violent militant action taken by the MCP until the outbreak of the civil war in 1948. The British authorities followed up this incident with the deportation of ten of the key Red leaders. On 17 February Lin Ah Liang was arrested and subsequently tried on three counts of sedition on the charge that he

[21]*Straits Times*, 15 February 1946.

[22]A more detailed account of this appears in Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya*, op. cit. pp. 274-5.

had authored a series of 'anti-British statements published in certain Chinese newspapers'.[23]

WORKER-STRIKE TACTICS

Coincident with Communist political agitation were Red efforts again to take over the field of labour organization. This movement began slowly almost immediately after the close of the war and gathered considerable momentum after the 'moderates' policy' (the central theme of which was labour organization) was adopted by the Central Committee of the MCP.

The first real evidence of Communist labour trouble centred in the Singapore Port area. On 21 October 1945, 7,000 dockers quit work but made no specific demands. Reporters noted the presence of an unusual number of 'agitators' among the ranks of the strikers.[24] In some instances, work stoppages were the result of dockers' reluctance to load ammunition and supply ships destined for the Dutch military forces in Java.[25] This same reluctance, organized and evidently a unified plan implemented by the World Communist high command, was also to become a problem in Australia, Hawaii and even in Britain itself during this period.[26]

On 25 October an estimated 20,000 labourers held a mass meeting to celebrate the establishment of the Singapore General Labour Union.[27] By this time, the Communists had gained control of most of the important labour unions in Singapore.

[23] *Straits Times*, 18 and 19 February 1946.
[24] Ibid. 22 October 1945.
[25] Loc. cit.
[26] Another clue to this close liaison with World Communism appeared in September 1946, when the Communist-led labour unions in Malaya held mass demonstrations against the Franco regime in Spain. This was 'in response to a call from the WFTU' (The World Federation of Trade Unions) which had, in many ways, taken over many of the functions of the defunct Comintern. See Lu Cheng, 'Extracts From Reports on the Trade Union Movement in Malaya', *Report of the WFTU* - 1949, p. 95.
[27] *Straits Times*, 26 October 1945.

This was followed by the establishment of the General Labour Unions (GLU), which by early 1946, dominated the entire trade union movement in Malaya.[28]

In January 1946, the Communists felt sufficiently strong in the labour field to test their power against the British colonial administration. The issue which developed was not economic, but arose over the arrest of some thirty former members of the MPAJA. The British had charged these individuals with a number of crimes including murder. The General Labour Unions, on the other hand, 'demanded the unconditional release' of all those arrested.[29] When the BMA refused to submit to Left pressure, a general strike was called on the morning of 29 January 1946. One writer gives the following account of this strike:

> It was extended by well-organized intimidation and propaganda, and by the morning of the 30th the GLU claimed that 173,000 workers were on strike. There is no exact means of checking this figure but later it was officially estimated that the number was about 150,000. The strike extended to Johore, Negri Sembilan, and Selangor. Essential services were largely affected, but electrical and water services continued to function and the police were loyal. About 3,500 intimidators operated with lorry and bicycle transport, and also on foot. Shops were forced to shut.[30]

After two days the strike ended as abruptly as it had begun. The reason for its short duration is not clear, but it may have been that the Reds sensed that public opinion was not in favour of a protracted strike. At any rate, the Communists had demonstrated their power quite clearly.

Unfortunately for the Communists, the British were quick to realize that the Red labour movement was getting out of hand.

[28]A. Shurcliff, 'The Growth of Democratic Trade-Unions in the Federation of Malaya', *Labour Monthly Review* (September 1951), p. 274.
[29]Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya*, op. cit. p. 272.
[30]Ibid.

They immediately reinstituted the 1940 Trade Union Enactment. To counter this restriction, the GLU was reorganized into the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions (PMFTU) in February 1946. According to the First Congress of the PMFTU it represented some 463,000 workers.[31] The PMFTU immediately affiliated itself with the parent organization, the World Federation of Trade Unions and in the words of one Communist labour leader, '...began a broad campaign for the education of the workers and their families, the formation of workers' cadres and the publication of trade union literature'.[32]

Following the formation of the PMFTU the Red-dominated labour movement grew at an extraordinary rate. Communist labour techniques were Machiavellian but highly effective. One writer gives an enlightening account of how the Communists went about channelling most of the union funds into their own accounts:

> The Communist methods in the trade unions were authoritarian in the extreme. It is common for example in most trade union movements for subscriptions to be paid to each union in the first instance. An affiliation fee is paid from these trade unions to some central federation to which they are affiliated. But in Malaya the Communists arranged it the other way round. All the subscriptions went to a central federation under the control of the Communists and the central federation only allowed a small amount to be given back to the union. The central federation itself paid for any clerical staff which might be required by the individual trade unions.[33]

The high tide in Communist labour organization occurred in the winter of 1947. By the end of that year, the Communist-dominated PMFTU controlled 214 out of a total of 277 registered unions in Malaya and took over the key tin, rubber, and

[31]W. Wyatt, *Southward From China* (London, 1952), p. 146.
[32]Lu Cheng, 'Report on the Trade Union Movement in Malaya', *World Trade Union Movement,* December 1949. p. 95.
[33]Ibid. p. 37.

longshoremen's unions.[34] It claimed that it controlled some 75 per cent. of all organized workers in Malaya during this period.[35]

By the spring of 1948, the tide began to turn in favour of the British: one reason being the lack of over-all strategy on the part of the Communists. Once control over labour had been effected, no concrete plans had been developed for the next step in the struggle. Furthermore, Communist labour tactics began to give rise to antagonism in the ranks of the workers, much of which was redirected at the Reds themselves. Over-zealous and over-aggressive party agitators often resorted to intimidation as a means of control, and many non-Communists began openly to resent Red domination. In other cases, the extremist strike tactics called for 'no compromise' with the employer, and a number of workers, receiving no pay but aware of favourable wage concessions offered, revolted and returned to work without union permission. Effective and sympathetic action on the part of the British Labour Government further cut into the Communist front, as a liberal and popular labour programme was instituted throughout Malaya.

A major blow to Communist labour power came at the end of May 1948, when legislation was passed which seriously reduced the range of Red labour activity. This took the form of the Trade Unions (Amendment) Ordinance which was officially brought into effect on 12 June 1948. This Ordinance provided for the restriction of office-holders of trade unions (with the exception of the secretary) to persons who had a minimum of three years' experience in the industry concerned, the barring of office to persons convicted of extortion, intimidation and other similar crimes and the restriction of labour federations to unions of similar occupations or industries. This latter provision led shortly thereafter to the forced dissolution of the PMFTU.

When the guerrilla revolt actually broke out late in June 1948,

[34]Shurcliff, op. cit. p. 274.
[35]Lu Cheng, op. cit. p. 37.

many Communist trade union officials absconded with union funds, fleeing to the jungle. As a result, a number of the unions, devoid of both leadership and money, were subsequently forced to close down. Almost overnight, Communist labour influence collapsed and the Malayan labour movement was again freed of Red domination. The extent of this sudden collapse is indicated by official British figures on the number of labour unions operating at the time. Before the revolt began, there were 339 unions registered; this number later shrank to 162.[36]

An indirect result of the ill-fated Communist emphasis on the labour front was the apparent loss of rural support during this period. It soon became obvious that too little active propaganda and organizational work had been carried on in the country regions in the immediate post-war years and that much of the wartime peasant support was now lost. As the Political Bureau of the MCP later lamented: 'Owing to the then incorrect line followed by our Party, we abandoned a major part of our peasant [i.e. 'squatters', rubber tappers, etc.] associations during the period of peace immediately following the Japanese surrender.'[37]

As a result, where poor leadership and a number of tactical errors defeated the strike line, the movement in the hinterland, long a centre of Communist strength, was lost, largely by default.

THE ABANDONMENT OF THE MODERATES' POLICY

Conditions in the early months of 1948 favoured a radical change in Communist tactics. There is some indication that the World Communist movement itself was in the process of re-

[36]Department of Information, Federation of Malaya, *Communist Banditry in Malaya* (Singapore, 1951), p. 2.

[37]Chung-yang cheng-chih-chu (Central Political Bureau, MCP), *Chung-yang cheng-chih chu tui ma-lai-ya ko-ming chan-cheng chan-lueh wen-ti ti pu-ch'ung kuan-chien* (Supplementary Views of the Central Political Bureau on 'Strategic Problems of the Malayan Revolutionary War') (N.P., 1950), Supplement.

vising its line at this time, exhorting local parties to discard their previous 'moderate policies' and pursue instead a more determined struggle. This line was probably disseminated to the Communist organs in the East at the Asian Youth Congress held in Calcutta in February 1948. Elsewhere in Asia, evidence of this new approach were becoming daily more apparent. The Viet Minh forces in Indochina and the Hukbalahap guerrillas in the Philippines were intensifying their military operations, attempting to wrest a decisive victory in the year ahead. Of profound significance were the Communist successes on the China mainland. The impending victory of the Chinese Communists was to prove a spiritual beacon for all other struggling Communist parties in Asia.

In Malaya itself there were many indications that a radical change in policy was sorely needed. The Red labour movement had reached its zenith and was now rapidly losing momentum to liberal British courtship of unions and workers alike. Communist agitators met with ever-increasing resistance in their work, and effective legal restrictions and frequent deportation of key Red leaders left the immediate future dim indeed for the revolutionaries.

Within the party itself at this time, troubles of an even more critical nature plagued the Communist leaders. Those who had pushed for the 'moderates' policy in 1945-6 were now on the defensive and under continual attack from the more militant advocates of the 'Chinese line'. Red victories in China served to strengthen the hand of the anti-moderate faction and dissension spread throughout Communist ranks. Even more damaging to party morale was the general corruption and decadence evident in the senior echelons of party leadership. There was considerable evidence of negligence in work, corruption and free spending of party funds dating from the close of World War II. A former Communist gives the following account of party leadership at this time:

...most of the important executive members of the Central Committee of the Malayan Communist Party and its affiliates stayed in Kuala Lumpur. Their quarters were set up in fine first-class bungalows along Ampang Road and Pahang Road in Kuala Lumpur Town. They moved about in private motor-cars. They employed servants and even made use of some ignorant female party members as servile menials. No concrete opinion or direction had ever been observed to have been issued by the Central Committee of the Malayan Communist Party on pan-Malayan affairs but they reprimanded subordinate members of the party for trifling matters of no concern.[38]

The internal crisis in the MCP came to a head early in 1948 when Lai Teck, then Secretary of the Central Committee and head of the MCP, deserted, fleeing Malaya with a large amount of party funds. Amid considerable confusion, a hasty meeting of the Central Committee was subsequently called at which Lai was officially expelled for, among other things, 'polygamy, leading a corrupted life and mishandling funds'.[39]

Regardless of the charges of the Central Committee, it seems probable that more fundamental reasons than the theft of money led to Lai's sudden desertion. Since Lai was the chief advocate of the moderate line, he may well have recognized the fact that the abandonment of the moderates policy would be a direct reflection on his own leadership and necessarily lead to his being purged. In that case, he merely anticipated this by deserting with what funds he could lay his hands on. It has also been suggested that possibly Lai Teck was worried that some of the party leaders were trying to collect evidence which would suggest that he might have had relations with the Japanese during the occupation. In particular, they seemed to suspect that he had betrayed the party at the time of the Batu Caves incident. However, to this writer's knowledge, this thesis has never been substantiated.

[38]Lam Swee, op. cit. p. 6.
[39]Ibid.

The expulsion of Lai Teck was followed by the convening of an Enlarged Plenum of the Central Executive Committee of the MCP at which the moderates were dethroned by the more militant followers of the 'Chinese line'. Ch'en P'ing, a trusted party leader fresh from a trip to the China mainland, was named Lai Teck's successor as party leader. With a new high command directing the course of the struggle, a re-appraisal was made of the situation and it was decided to embark on a more militant programme, including eventual civil war.

This new policy was reportedly given final agreement in a meeting of the Central Committee of the MCP held in March of that year. More positive indications began to take shape in April as the party organs began to go underground. Gradually, posters and leaflets inciting the people to bloodshed and violence appeared in public places and the number of serious arson cases increased.

British authorities began to prepare for the expected — a revolt which followed two months later, in June 1948.

CHAPTER V

THE GUERRILLA REVOLT

COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

WHETHER or not the decision to initiate the 1948 rising was dictated principally by internal Malayan Communist problems remains an open question. A number of observers, including Commissioner-General Malcolm MacDonald, believed it was inspired mainly by pressure exerted by international Communists.[1] Considering the Far Eastern situation at the time and our knowledge of Red difficulties in Malaya, it is probable that both factors were important. If so, the local tactical decision was probably left up to the Central Committee of the MCP itself.

In this respect, the moment selected for armed rebellion was most inopportune.[2] First, much of the mass support, so important in a Communist guerrilla struggle, was no longer firmly in the Red camp. A good deal of basic political rebuilding would have had to be undertaken before it could be expected again to attain its 1945 peak. Secondly, the guerrilla war was not initiated as a more advanced stage of the over-all revolutionary struggle, but rather because the previous line had failed. Attempts were made to shape it to the moment at hand, rather than to await the most favourable time. Finally, the British were then stronger in Malaya than at any time since before the war. Liberal social and economic programmes had served to wean many of the masses away from the Communist cause, and the conclusion of the Palestine police

[1] *Straits Times*, 27 October 1948.

[2] It has been suggested by some observers that the revolt was actually begun at this time to cover up the internal Party difficulties and unite its members in a militant effort against an outside enemy.

action left the colonial authorities with additional military units, most of which were well-versed in dealing with terrorist methods.

Regardless of these and other disadvantages, the MCP elected to begin the armed rebellion. Over-all strategy was now dominated by the Chinese line and patterned after that evolved in the Chinese revolution. Such texts as *Strategic Problems of the Malayan Revolutionary War,* issued at the time by the insurgents, were not much different from Mao Tse-tung's own *Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary Wars,* first written in 1936. There is little doubt that modified Peking rather than Moscow policies now dictated the strategy of the MCP. This is substantiated in part by the Central Political Bureau of the MCP which concluded, 'A study of Mao Tse-tung's military concepts...is imperative in this struggle.'[3]

The armed revolution was to go through three definite phases: (1) crippling the British economic system through guerrilla harassment and increasing guerrilla supplies and equipment by a series of raids and ambushes carried out against police stations, security forces, and so forth; (2) forcing the Government out of the hinterland and into a position where it would occupy only main supply and communication lines and strategic points; (3) establishing 'liberated areas' in the regions controlled by the insurgents, from which they were later to expand, finally taking control over all Malaya.[4]

Military policy was to be that laid down by Mao Tse-tung. The principal points were: (a) Tactical offense with strategic defence; (b) Executing tactical operations along interior lines in a strategy based upon exterior lines; (c) Effecting battles of quick decision in a strategy of protracted warfare.[5]

[3]Chung-yang cheng-chih-chu, *chung-yaug cheng-chihchu tui ma-lai-ya po-ming chan-cheng chan lueh wen-ti ti pu-ch'ung kuan-chien* (Assault Press, 1950 issue), p. 2.

[4]Compiled by this writer from an analysis of a group of MCP documents and also from certain reports issued by the Federation of Malaya.

[5]Ma-lai-ya kung-ch'an-tang, op. cit. pp. 9-10.

'Tactical offensive' to the Reds meant more than guerrilla operations conducted against enemy forces. It included what has been termed a 'war of material' and 'economic warfare'. The central theme was to cripple the national economy and, at the same time, materially strengthen the Communist military establishment. This was pointed up by the Communist command itself when it stated:

> The fact that the British Imperialists' rubber and tin centres, on which they rely for American dollars, are scattered throughout out-of-the-way areas adjacent to jungles and rural districts not merely renders it favourable to the Liberation Army in the course of the struggle to interdict the economic resources of the enemy, but at the same time provides favourable conditions whereby the Liberation Army is enabled to eliminate the enemy, to seize arms and ammunition and to expand itself.[6]

This expansion, however, should neither be haphazard nor dangerously rapid. The struggle was to be one of extermination rather than one of attrition and, although all guerrillas were to 'continuously grasp the initiative', caution rather than adventurism was the policy laid down by senior party leadership. This policy was outlined in a directive issued at the time which concluded:

> The objective of our army lies in preserving itself and in eliminating the enemy, and also in endeavouring to obtain every opportunity and every possibility to expand itself. Therefore, we must refrain from being impetuous and adventurous. We will strike only when we feel confident, we will not strike when we do not feel so. We want to strike hard to score victory in every encounter and to ensure that the enemy is eliminated and his arms seized. Thus we will train our forces, expand them and raise their quality until ultimately the position of superiority and strength of the enemy and our position of inferiority and weakness is reversed. For this reason our army is adopting the policy of a protracted war. Armed strength in a colonial revolution must gradually attain development during a long-term war. We are not afraid

[6]Ibid. p. 5.

of a protracted war; on the contrary, subjectively we seek the strategy of a protracted war.[7]

Furthermore, it was made clear that, while guerrilla warfare was the necessary expedient of the moment, all effort was to be made gradually to advance from irregular guerrilla forces to regular combat units, and from a guerrilla struggle to a regular war of manoeuvre. As the party command itself noted, 'this is the essential of our strategy — to move from the tactical offensive to the strategic offensive — from operations conducted along interior lines to those of exterior lines — from a guerrilla war to a war of manoeuvre'.[8]

Finally, the question of just what elements were to be included in the armed revolution was considered. In order to get as wide a mass base as possible, it was decided that both the petty and national bourgeoisie 'really did form a part of the spirit of the revolution', and should be courted for this all-out struggle against the colonial authorities.[9]

The Communists also attempted to ally themselves with both the Malays and the Indians, but with little success. At one time they actually managed to secure a secret accord with the Malay Nationalist Party. Effective British police action, however, soon led to the arrest of the president of the Malay Nationalist Party and the eventual dissolution of all ties between the Communists and the few sympathetic Malays.[10]

THE INSURRECTION

With the strategic doctrines and tactical directives laid out, the Communists began the civil war. A wave of terror broke out in early June. Chinese Kuomintang leaders were slain in their homes, European planters murdered, and armed raids made on

[7]Ibid. p. 9.
[8]Ibid. pp. 13-14.
[9]Ma-lai-ya kung-ch'an-tang, op. cit, p. 9.
[10]Department of Information, Federation of Malaya, *Communist Banditry in Malaya,* Kuala Lumpur, 1951, p. 31.

police stations, security forces and communications lines. On 16 June an official emergency was proclaimed by the authorities. The Government began to take immediate steps to counter the guerrilla threat.

No all-out attacks were initiated against the British military forces, but local ambushes, murders and small-force raids became the order of the day. The Communist plan was to pursue a strategy of protracted warfare — one which had proved so successful in China. This, however, may well have been one of their major mistakes. Terrain, size, and local conditions of the Malay peninsula varied greatly from those of the China mainland, and the strategy which proved so effective for the Chinese Reds could not be utilized blindly in Malaya. In his writings, Mao Tse-tung always emphasized that his strategic programme would have to be modified and reshaped according to the particular situation and place, and that no two revolutionary guerrilla wars were alike. But the Malayan insurgents appear to have failed to take account of this vital point.

Instead of mobilizing quietly and attempting a lightning coup (their only reasonable chance of victory in their present state), the Communists were content first to declare their intentions, then to mobilize slowly, relying upon the classical theory of a protracted war. This strategy only served to telegraph their punches. The British, on the other hand, mobilized immediately. Before long, the Government instituted a special static defence system, organized special police and milita forces, imported former Force-136 personnel and Palestine police to track down the Reds and, in addition, set up a national registration and identity card system.

The Communists, meanwhile, successfully carried out their plan of chaos in the interior regions, but they failed to wrest sufficient arms and ammunition from the British to carry them into the next revolutionary stage. Rapid and effective British counter-measures served to curtail the success of small unit

raids, and the slow rate of mobilization of the Communist forces precluded the organization of units capable of executing any all-out major attack on the Government. In addition, the guerrillas lost many of their highly-trained officers in the first few months of operations, men who were killed in attempts to pursue a revolutionary policy which was in need of drastic revision.[11] Lau Yew was among the early dead, killed with eleven others in an engagement with security forces in Selangor on 16 July 1948.

PARTIAL SHIFT IN STRATEGY

By 1949 it had become increasingly evident to the insurgents that their revolutionary strategy was in need of immediate review. The earlier timetable had to be scrapped. The predicted collapse of British authority and subsequent Communist victory seemed more distant than ever. At an emergency conference held by the Political Bureau of the MCP the Red high command took cognizance of its plight. The military geography of Malaya proved to be an important contributing factor to the poor results so far realized. The relative smallness of the Malay peninsula, its compactness, and highly-developed communications and transportation lines, greatly hindered guerrilla development. As the Political Bureau deplored, 'with this advantage, the British forces were able to reach our guerrilla units with the greatest speed and cut us up into small compartments'.[12]

Tied in with this fundamental difficulty was the question of guerrilla bases. In Communist guerrilla doctrine a protected rear base is a necessity if eventual victory is to be won. Guerrilla forces use the base for training and consolidation, and every attempt is made gradually to expand the base into

[11]Deportation also proved an effective means of reducing Communist effectiveness. In 1948, for example, 606 Chinese were deported. This number rose to 10,300 in 1949.

[12]Chung-yang cheng-chih chu, op. cit. p. 3.

enemy-held areas.[13] The Communists realized that this would be no easy task when they reported as early as 1950:

> Generally speaking, at present our army is still without any base. Although our army has already under its control many rural areas, yet it has not been able to succeed to the extent of eliminating and defeating the enemy in his attacks upon such rural districts. What our army has been able to do has been to 'retreat when the enemy advances and return when the enemy retreats'. Frequently we have had to 'move elsewhere' on our own accord. The particular reason for this is because the rural districts in Malaya are both cut off and surrounded by the close network of the enemy's public roads and railways, enabling the enemy to launch a sudden attack at any time and at any place.[14]

Attempts were then made to create 'temporary bases', but effective British counter-measures held these at a minimum. Of course, in the safety of the dense jungle regions a kind of permanent base could be built, but the 'masses' essential for any effective base would be absent. As the Communist command itself concluded: 'We can withdraw to the jungle mountain ranges. But the masses do not live in these areas and we should not be able to carry out any development or political propaganda work.'[15]

In view of this difficulty, an attempt was made both to revise certain tactical concepts and to strengthen the internal organization of the guerrilla forces. Special emphasis was to be given to what was called 'relative dispersion tactics', involving swift and effective concentration for attack and equally rapid dispersion for defence. In addition, the Communists began to close ranks and set about to create a strong and integral unit, then known as the Malayan People's Liberation Army. Early that year, total mobilization was considered completed and some

[13]For a more detailed examination of the guerrilla base concept, see: Mao Tse-tung, 'Problems in Guerrilla Warfare'. Translated in Gene Z. Hanrahan, *Chinese Communist Guerrilla Tactics* (Washington, Collection & Dissemination Branch, Army G-2, classified, 1952), pp. 50-53.

[14]Ma-lai-ya kung-ch'an-tang, op. cit. p. 16.

[15]Chung-yang cheng-chih chu, op. cit. p. 3.

three to four thousand guerrillas were formed into units of the Malayan People's Liberation Army. The bulk of the Red officer class came from the old MPAJA as the veterans again took up arms on orders from the MCP. An estimated 60 per cent. of the veterans of the struggle against Japan joined the 1948 guerrillas in their revolt.

Only about 20 to 30 per cent. of the new guerrilla force were party members, however, the remainder being recruited from the local Chinese populace. Chinese squatters[16] proved most receptive to Communist propaganda, furnishing the guerrillas with food, intelligence and additional recruits.

At the end of 1949, after almost twenty months of armed revolt, the faulty strategy and tactics of the insurgents and effective British counter-measures still prohibited the Communists from advancing much beyond their first revolutionary stage. In succeeding months, the struggle continued in much the same manner, characterized by raids, ambushes, and terrorism. The British, individual planters and government forces alike, refused to withdraw from the guerrilla-infested regions and all Communist attempts to create 'liberated areas' (i.e. guerrilla bases) met with failure. Increased government efforts at relocating the pro-Communist squatter villages and restricting sources of food and supplies served further to hinder insurgent activities.

As a counter-move, the Malayan People's Liberation Army stepped up its terrorist policies and began to blackmail and terrorize local Chinese into giving them additional money and assistance. With little time available, efforts were made to exert control through the medium of fear, rather than through the slower and more costly method of political work and propaganda.

[16]These were impoverished Chinese labourers and farmers, uprooted during the Japanese occupation from their old homes and residing in small shanty villages. The squatters, for economic and social reasons, were the most prone to give assistance to the Communist insurgents; and their villages, located in inaccessible areas bordering the jungle, proved favourable liaison points for guerrilla forces.

As time passed, Communist traitor-killing groups began to reappear in large numbers. The Red high command, believing these specialists in coercion would attain success equal to that realized by these same units in World War II, ordered an increased reign of terror throughout the peninsula.

The Communists failed to realize that such methods operate effectively only as long as considerable political work with the masses is carried out on a personal basis. Control by means of terror is a delicate and difficult business at best, and overemphasis could well have disastrous consequences for the guerrillas themselves. The high command of the Malayan People's Liberation Army was to learn this lesson in the ensuing period when it began gradually to lose what active mass support and sympathy remained in the inland regions.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES ON THE COMMUNIST STRUGGLE

Early in 1950 two factors served to bolster the declining strength of the Red guerrillas. Fresh groups of Chinese Communist cadres were introduced into Malaya from China on a regular basis, infiltrating by way of the Thailand border or coming in by boat from Hainan Island. These men did much to re-vitalize the guerrilla command and spurred the insurgents to greater efforts.

Secondly, marked Communist victories in China itself and the subsequent British recognition of the Chinese Communist regime gave additional impetus to the revolutionary cause in Malaya. Guerrilla activity increased rapidly. In addition, a number of independent Overseas Chinese became increasingly more reluctant to cooperate with the British authorities. Most feared Communist retaliation against either their relatives in China or themselves if and when the Communists should eventually take over control of all South-East Asia.

At the same time, the Communist military command moved

to initiate an expanded cadre-training programme within the guerrilla establishment. Much of the early weakness in leadership and tactics was traced directly to a shortage of competent commanders. As the Political Bureau itself noted: 'Our handicap lies in the fact that our armed forces were formed without a revolutionary cadre of regular army men. None of our troops have received sufficient training before the outbreak of the struggle, nor have our commanders been graduated from any regular military academies.'[17] To rectify this shortcoming, a cadre-training programme began operation in late 1949, aimed at increasing the over-all effectiveness of the guerrilla forces.

By late 1951, the guerrillas had twelve Independent Forces operating in much the same areas as were used for guerrilla bases during World War II. The Independent Forces numbered from 200 to 400 men each and functioned along lines similar to those in existence in the MPAJA during the Japanese occupation.

The size of guerrilla units remained almost constant throughout 1952 and 1953. Total guerrilla strength is believed to have been then, as it remains today, between five and six thousand men. The British hold to the view that this size would be greatly increased if the insurgents had more supplies and arms. This is an open question, however, as both geographic and economic factors seem to indicate that the present number is, from the point of view of military efficiency, an effective force. The Communists themselves were aware of this in 1943 and 1944 when they returned a number of recruits to the local populace, largely for reasons of space and limited supplies. In the event of an all-out attack, however, this argument would not necessarily apply.

It should be noted that individual guerrilla actions never involved large numbers. Reviewing over one hundred guerrilla operations for the period 1948-50, we find that the largest action involved a guerrilla force of only 300 men, while the smallest was made up of one or two guerrillas. The average

[17]Ibid. p. 5.

guerrilla force operating in this period numbered fifty-six men.

The types of guerrilla action are interesting. The Table below represents an analysis of 200 such operations.[18]

Types	*Number*	*Per Cent.*
1. Raids		
a. Against rubber estates and tin mines	50	25
b. Against police stations	12	6
2. Road ambushes	32	16
3. Murder	31	15.5
4. Robbery	22	11
5. Sabotage	22	11
6. Grenades thrown (terrorist action)	11	5.5
7. Skirmishes with security forces	20	10
Total	200	100

Most of the raids on police stations were arms raids, and these were usually taken against smaller local precincts. Sabotage was conducted principally against railroad lines, local stations and locomotives, but a few cases were reported of telephone wires being cut and the destruction of local water supplies.

No attempt has been made to give detailed statistics on rubber tree slashings. This proved an effective means of hurting the local economy, and the number of trees damaged in this manner ran into hundreds of thousands.

The British fought a propaganda war with the Communists over the problem of rubber tree slashing for more than a year, and apparently won. (An example of a British psychological warfare leaflet aimed at Communist rubber slashing appears below in the Appendix of this study.) A Communist directive was subsequently issued ordering the guerrilla forces to desist from tree slashing because of the ill-feeling developing among the people.

[18]Taken from an analysis of the guerrilla incidents given in the Department of Information, Federation of Malaya, op. cit. pp. 29-120.

Some mention should be made here of the Min Yuen,[19] the civilian mass organization set up to assist the guerrillas in the jungle. The Min Yuen carried on auxiliary duties in the revolutionary struggle, such as furnishing the guerrillas with material assistance, intelligence on the enemy and additional recruits, and functioning as an intelligence and courier network. The leaders of the Min Yuen were, of course, trusted party members. In theory, the Min Yuen was designed to effect a close liaison with the masses. Local organizations included regional committees, peasants, unions, 'liberation leagues', women's unions, and self-protection corps. This latter organization functioned as part-time guerrillas.

In the spring of 1949 the Central Committee of the MCP decided to place the Min Yuen on a more militant footing in order better to assist their guerrilla forces. 'Traitor killing', for example, was assigned to the Min Yuen. In addition, special armed units and work groups were formed within the Min Yuen organization to give closer assistance to the Red guerrilla command.

The Reds recognized the fact that three groups of people other than the guerrillas themselves made up the masses: those not in sympathy with the Communists; those either passive or neutral; and those openly sympathetic to the insurgents. The Min Yuen was created to function on behalf of this third group and to win over as many of the passive or neutral elements as possible. Min Yuen 'killer groups' would ensure the inaction of those who sided with the Government. Much of the Communist extortion activity was also carried out by the Min Yuen.

Effective British counter-action, especially in the field of

[19]This is a contraction of Min Chung Yuen Thong (or Min-chu-yun-tung, in *kuo-yu*) which means mass or popular movement. It is a time-tested Chinese concept employed for many years by the Communists on the China mainland. It has come to mean the organization of the masses in a revolutionary movement. The term is sometimes used to refer to the movement itself rather than to the process.

squatter relocation, seriously hurt the development of the Min Yuen in later years, but a considerable following still exists. An estimated ten to fifteen thousand people, outside the regular guerrilla forces, belong to one or another Min Yuen organization even today. Perhaps a third of these are armed with some type of weapon.

After four years of guerrilla struggle, the insurgents had failed in their programme. Total guerrilla losses as at the end of 1952 were in excess of 4,000 men, two-thirds of these killed in action.[20] Many of the original guerrilla leaders were gone and a large segment of the masses was alienated by their clumsy tactics.

True, losses on the British side had not been light. The civil war cost the Governments of Malaya a huge sum of money and had succeeded in tying down over 25,000 regular troops, not to mention the police and militia recruited for maintaining law and order locally.

The British succeeded, however, not only in fighting the guerrillas to a standstill, but also in keeping the Communists continuously on the defensive. This latter point is of considerable importance, for there is every indication that guerrillas are effective only when operating offensively, and that protracted tactical defense indicates retrogression.

The Communist high command was acutely aware of its plight in late 1951. The situation called for another revision of over-all strategy and the formation of an even more positive plan for future action. This shift, marking the establishment of a new guerrilla line, was effected in the early months of 1952.

[20]Ibid. Red losses in 1953 were 846 killed, 66 captured and 370 surrendered. The total killed was 251 less than the previous year's 1,097, but the total surrenders were the highest since the Emergency began. In six years of war (as of 16 June 1953) some 6,304 Communists were reported killed, captured or surrendered; 2,848 civilians killed by the terrorists; and 1,563 members of the security forces killed.

CHAPTER VI

THE NEW REVOLUTIONARY LINE

RETREAT TOWARDS VICTORY

LIMITED retreat is consistent with sound Communist revolutionary doctrine. Lenin outlined this belief in 1922 when he wrote:

> ...there are retreats and retreats. There are times when a party or an army has to retreat because it has suffered defeat....But there are other times, when in its advance a victorious Party or army runs too far ahead, without providing itself with an adequate base in the rear....So as not to lose connection with its base, an experienced party or army generally finds it necessary in such cases to fall back a little, to draw closer to and establish better contact with its base....[1]

This was essentially the problem that faced the MCP in the winter of 1951. True, a part of this 'retreat' was brought about by military failure, but Marxists will argue that a major reason for this was revolutionary over-expansion, reaching beyond all immediate needs. This was borne out by an editorial which appeared in the 15 August 1952 issue of *Freedom News*, an official organ of the MCP. Couched in emphatic language, the editorial urged party members to make their Marxist studies consistent with reality and not to 'aim too high'.[2]

First indications of this revision in party policy came in the form of a party directive, issued on 1 October 1951.[3] According

[1]Cited in N. Leites, *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (New York, 1951), p. 82.

[2]Cited in the *New York Times*, 1 November 1952.

[3]A summary of this directive appears below in the Appendix. According to subsequent reports, it was not until late 1952 that this policy was

to this October directive, 'Party members are reminded that their primary duty is to expand and consolidate the organization of the masses, which is to take precedence over the purely military objectives of destroying the enemy.'

The policy of the moment called for considerable retrenching and the slow patient building of a sounder revolutionary base. Previous failures in carrying out mass propaganda and organizational work were to be rectified and control through the medium of terror, intimidation and murder was dropped.

The strategic concepts of Mao Tse-tung were still to be utilized, but these were modified drastically to meet the problems peculiar to the Malayan revolutionary struggle. In keeping with this new shift, the following five-point order was issued by the Political Bureau of the MCP in 1952:

1. Terrorism not of purely military consequences is to be curtailed and unnecessary loss or inconvenience to the masses is to be avoided.
2. Attacks on security forces to capture arms are always permissible unless, in the course of such action, members of the public are likely to be injured.
3. Food collection rather than the intimidation of rural populations is a prime objective.
4. Increased attention is to be paid to insuring the security of 'executives of the masses'.[4]
5. More attention is to be paid to urban organization.[5]

Coincident with this tactical retreat came what appeared to be a global Communist shift in policy towards the 'peace offensive' and reversion in part to the time-tested 'Popular Front'. While early peace moves were more specifically associated with the Soviet Union, the policy of a Popular or United Front is broader in scope, appearing in the lines adopted by a number of local

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disseminated throughout the entire Communist organization.

[4]Probably indicates here political cadres working with the masses.

[5]Urban organization means mass work carried on in the more densely-populated areas.

Communist organs, ranging geographically from France to Burma, and including Malaya.

This new line might better be called a Red Front, for it appears to be more restrictive in nature than the traditional United Front. Appeal in the Red Front is not made to all groups, but rather to other Leftist organizations and parties, 'sympathetic liberals'. In such countries as Ceylon and Burma it has included even Trotskyite factions. There is no indication, however, that any serious overtures are being made as yet to Right-Wing nationalists or to the upper classes in these countries.

In Malaya itself this pattern has not yet taken final form. We know that intensive effort has been made to introduce certain non-Communist Leftist groups into the Red Front and, at the same time, to broaden racially the 'insurrectionary appeal' of the Communist movement as a whole. Reliable reports indicate that anti-British nationalist extremists and aboriginal tribes have been openly courted by the Central Committee of the MCP.[6] Just how far the Communists are willing or able to go in this direction is not yet clear. Their successes to date along this line, however, have not been spectacular.

THE CURIOUS WAR

In recent months the war in Malaya has become a curious jungle struggle. What was originally characterized by violent armed clashes between the guerrillas and the security forces now takes the form of a war of ideas, of patrols, of strict controls and regulations, and of a never-ending struggle for food, supplies and the sympathies of the people.

The British, for their part, have been pressing the war on all

[6]As previously noted, the attempt to introduce elements other than Chinese into the revolutionary movement is not new. There is, in fact, strong evidence of this throughout the entire post-war struggle. On 1 February 1949, for example, the Malayan People's Liberation Army was officially changed in name to the Malayan Race's Liberation Army, in an attempt to attract as many 'races' as possible to the Red cause.

fronts, led by the dynamic if controversial figure, High Commissioner General Sir Gerald Templer. Marshalling a multiracial force numbering over 300,000 men,[7] British strategy has been to hit the 6,000 guerrillas, force them onto the defensive, and keep them on the run.

Direct military action is essentially a matter of patrol. Daily, specialists in stalking the enemy move into the jungle, locating guerrilla hideouts, arms caches, and personnel. Though these so-called 'hunter-killer squads' operate with precision and determination, rare indeed are opportunities of firing more than a few quick shots after fleeting enemy shadows in the dense jungle growth. It is considered a major victory indeed when more than two or three guerrillas are killed or captured in a day's operations throughout the entire peninsula.[8]

Occasionally the British forces make a thorough sweep of a jungle area in which a suspected Red camp is located. Planes are used to firebomb the Communist lair, helicopters to rush troops to key assault points, and tough jungle-wise Gurkhas or Fiji Islanders to hunt down the fleeing guerrillas. But the Communists, more often than not, make good their escape. Operating in groups numbering no more than a dozen or so men, they have become adept at dispersing suddenly, melting into the forests.

The Communists have also recently made a studied effort to win over the Sakai aborigines. With their keen knowledge of the jungle, the Sakai, according to British intelligence officers, now form a 'human radar screen' around the guerrilla strong points.

[7]The British have about 40,000 regular troops in Malaya, of which some 25,000 are from Britain. The remainder are made up of 'colonials'. In addition, there is a regular Malayan police force (comprised principally of Malays) numbering 70,000, and approximately 225,000 'home guards'. This latter force is charged with routine guard duty in the outskirts of native villages and is generally considered of rather poor quality.

[8]An interesting but somewhat unobjective and narrow account of patrol action against the guerrilla forces is given by a British major who served in Malaya during the Emergency, in *Jungle Green,* by Major Arthur Campbell (London, Allen and Unwin, 1953), p. 214.

Guerrilla ingenuity and determination have cost the British dearly in this deadly game of hide-and-seek.

Persuasion as well as force has been one of the principal weapons in the British arsenal. Indeed, propaganda and psychological warfare have been emphasized throughout by both sides. The British have developed this into a highly-effective medium and results in such problems as inciting popular resentment against Red sabotage of rubber trees, previously noted, have been remarkable. More recently, the psychological warfare programme of the Government has concentrated on fomenting unrest in the Communist camp itself. Liberal inducements to surrender and attempts to disaffect lower echelon personnel from their leaders have been employed. In October 1953, for example, some twenty million surrender leaflets were dropped over Communist-held areas by British aircraft in the largest leaflet-dropping operation in South-East Asia since the end of World War II. These leaflets urged the lower echelon cadres to desert, bring in their own personnel, and collect liberal rewards. Typical of these propaganda leaflets is one which reads as follows:

> Start a new life today with thoughts of construction instead of destruction. After four years of fighting, the war in Korea has stopped by agreement between the United Nations and the Chinese armies. After six years of fighting the war in Malaya continues without hope of victory. Certain Malayan Communist Party leaders still wish to continue to sacrifice lives. Who is for a new path of cooperation in Malaya? Armed units, work forces, Min Yuen or People's Committees, couriers, cultivators — all of you can obtain peace and have the chance to join other self-renewed youths who are helping to build a new Malaya....

More subtle attempts have been made to foment dissension and unrest among the ranks of the guerrillas themselves. Psychological warfare methods here have been aimed at the weak, the tired, the disgruntled and the weary. Often former Red officers, now in British hands, are encouraged to write their own leaflets

for dropping. Typical of this latter group is one written by Ching Kuen, a former assistant platoon commander in a Perak unit of the Malayan Races' Liberation Army. A half million copies of Ching's 'Open Letter to all Comrades' were dropped in Communist-held areas:

> Comrades. The upper ranks can make love in their secret huts, but if you want to find a lady friend then you will have to wait until there is one left over from the upper ranks.
>
> The so-called discipline of the Malayan Communist Party leaders is only a means of deceiving and oppressing the lower ranks.
>
> When the lower ranks fall sick and ask for help, they are accused of being soft and argumentative and of exhibiting bad manifestations.
>
> You can see how the political commissar of your independent platoon keeps all the new watches, the plastic cloth and fountain pens for himself and lets you have only what he does not want. Have any of you ever tasted the nutritive food he keeps for his own consumption?
>
> I advise all my former comrades to surrender!
>
> After coming out, I went to Taiping, Kuala Kangsar and Sitiawan, where I have seen many former comrades who came out before me.
>
> They are all well treated. They can meet their parents, brothers and sisters, wives and children again.
>
> CHIN KUEN[9]

Although some surrenders have been achieved, and in unusual cases junior officers have actually turned against their own leaders, the general trend has not been one of surrender or desertion — this despite intensive British psychological warfare. In fact, General Templer recently admitted '...that only a directive from their higher command can make the jungle gunmen give up'.[10]

According to official British information, a psychological warfare effort made in December 1953, involving the dropping of some eighteen million leaflets and offering virtual amnesty, was

[9] *Straits Times*, 2 June 1952.
[10] *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 December 1953.

totally unsuccessful.[11] While the British continue to make extensive use of psychological warfare in their struggle against the Communists, they are among the first to admit that it will never prove the one decisive weapon in this war.

The so-called 'war of the cadres' has been for some time an all-important war within the over-all Malayan guerrilla struggle. The steady decline of their cadres or junior leaders has been one of the most pressing problems facing the MCP in recent times. In almost six years of civil war more than 6,500 Communist guerrillas have been killed, captured or deported or have surrendered. And although some 6,000 Communists still fight on, these are principally youngsters and new recruits. Scarce indeed are political officers and junior commanders with more than one or two years of experience — scarcer still are the 'old comrades', the veterans of the MPAJA. The long-run damage of this loss of cadres to the Communist war machine is all too obvious. Leadership in general is of inferior quality, morale has suffered, and military efficiency is admittedly at a low ebb.

In the early years of the struggle, the Red high command found it expedient to replenish its leadership from a pool of specially trained Chinese who filtered into Malaya by way of the Thailand border. But co-ordinated action taken by both the Governments of Thailand and Great Britain has all but stopped this channel.[12] More recently, there is some evidence that new cadres are being trained in China and introduced into Malaya by ship from Hainan Island or by small craft from Indonesia. This method, however, is both devious and costly and will not in itself entirely solve this problem. A Communist victory in Indochina and subsequent

[11]Ibid.

[12]As early as September 1948 a 'sealed belt' about two miles wide was set up along the Thailand border by the British where all Chinese were closely checked. In September 1949 an agreement was signed between the two Governments providing for the police of the respective territories to cross the frontier in pursuit of guerrillas. Recently, joint British-Thai military units have operated in coordinated action against Communist forces located along the border.

Red pressure exerted against Thailand, however, could alter this picture appreciably.

A more direct and perhaps even more vital struggle is being waged between the British and the guerrillas over food and supplies. In certain official quarters this is considered the real key to the final solution of this struggle. British strategy has been to cut off the guerrillas from food, clothing and weapons—systematically starving them into failure. A central feature of the British plan has been to move whole squatter villages to new areas away from the edges of the jungle where the Communists could extort, buy or otherwise obtain food and supplies from them. In recent years the Government has forcibly resettled in 'new villages' about 500,000 squatters (principally Chinese) — actually one out of every eleven people in the country. There they were encircled by barbed wire, guarded by soldiers and militia and checked closely by the officials.

The Government's strategy of attrition based upon food control, resettlement and tight administrative control over the civil populace can be considered a prime factor in causing the drastic shift in the Communist line in 1952. Proof of this was given in a Communist Party directive captured in 1953, which admitted the great privations suffered by the guerrillas in the jungle and directed that, temporarily at least, food production be the main concern of the Malayan Races' Liberation Army. Based upon an order issued by the Central Executive Committee of the MCP, it read as follows:

Owing to the frantic attacks of the enemy and his rigid control of the masses and of the movement of foodstuffs there has been great shortage of food among Communist units and most of our comrades have been starving for a long time. Their physical health has suffered and work has been impeded or held in abeyance.

Various ideological sins have been committed and directions to grow more food are many and specific. There must have been some reluctance on the part of so-called 'intellectuals' to accept

this menial task, for we have had many reports of this nature. All comrades, especially the executives [cadres] must have the proletarian conception of manual labour. All incorrect conceptions which treat manual labour as contemptuous should be purged.

In a revolutionary campaign there is no such thing as to classify which job is respectable and which is not respectable. If it ensures a good harvest, what is the harm of handling manure? On the contrary, those who are not willing are irresponsible persons. The Government's 'starve to death' policy cannot bring about defeat but if there are no counter-attacks difficulties will increase. We must return to the attack to gain practical experience in the field and to improve morale. If small units of troops working with the Min Yuen strive hard, there will be ample opportunity for them to launch minor operations.

But the object of the party's ideological and political education is to make every member understand the seriousness of the problem of obtaining more food. For this aim they must be taught the lessons of other Communist revolutions, especially the Chinese Revolution. The *Long March of the Red Army in China* and *Three Years of Guerrilla Warfare* are required reading. Meanwhile, comrades must practice frugality and gluttons be admonished in a manner not affecting their self-respect. Harsh and disciplinary action must not be taken; instead, proper education to develop their self-restraint should be given.[13]

As late as December 1953, although the Central Committee of the MCP was calling for 'more aggressive' action by its armed forces, an estimated 90 per cent. of its political units were still fully engaged in solving the problem of food and supplies.[14] In order to gain a semblance of self-sufficiency, some guerrilla units took up active cultivation of jungle plots, but this practice left them highly vulnerable to air observation and therefore proved of little value.

An index to the plight of certain small guerrilla forces was given on 18 December 1953, when a six-man Communist squad,

[13]Paraphrased from *The Times*, 1 July 1953.
[14]*New York Times*, 19 December 1953.

armed with Sten guns and rifles, fought its way through a defence force near a small village, battled across the town, and staged a daring raid on a factory, from which they fled with flour, bread and sugar. Risky action indeed for such a limited haul, and surely indicative of the desperate straits in which the guerrillas found themselves!

According to recent reports, however, the Communists have not fared so badly with weapons. Long months of defence gave the Red high command an opportunity to reorganize its forces, to retrain them and to institute an intensive arms repair programme. British authorities now agree that the insurgent force faces no real shortage of arms and ammunition even though its food situation remains critical.[15]

WAR COSTS

The financial burden of the war has been heavy, especially since it has been long drawn-out and was for so long, indecisive. For the Communists, the six-year-old struggle has been costly, not so much in actual monetary loss as in men and material. The actual cost per man is probably minimal, as most guerrillas must learn to become self-sufficient. No doubt outright extortion of funds and forced subscription of so-called 'war bonds' from the local populace has proved expensive for the Communists in terms of alienating popular support, but such procedures are now kept at an absolute minimum. There is no way of ascertaining, of course, just how much money is being received from international Communist sources. It is probable that a regular allowance for war expenses is sent by special courier to the Central Executive Committee of the MCP.

For the Federation of Malaya and the British Government, the problem of financing the war is not easily solved. As of this writing, upwards of eighteen soldiers and police are required to counter one Communist guerrilla in the jungle, not to mention

[15]*Christian Science Monitor,* 29 December 1953.

the thousands of militia and home guards tied down in part-time guard duty. The war cost the Malayan Government about US $90 million in 1953, or almost one-third of the entire budget. As of this date, Great Britain itself had contributed the actual expenses of maintaining its own armed forces there.

The financial outlook for 1954, however, is not as bright as in the past for the anti-Communist forces. Malaya's economy rests upon the export of two products, rubber and tin. The end of American stockpiling of these materials, the armistice in Korea, and the emphasis on synthetic rubber production in the United States have hit Malaya hard. The price of rubber dropped from a high of 77 cents a pound at the peak of the Korean war to a low of 19 cents. Tin plummeted from an all-time high of $2.20 per pound in 1951 to 77 cents. While the larger rubber estates and tin mines are still relatively solvent, the smaller marginal planters and miners — mostly Chinese — are in dire financial straits.

Although the threat of a total collapse of the Malayan economic structure is considered remote, the possibility does exist that the Communists can make some capital out of the unemployed rubber tappers and tin miners — though the percentage in this group is still relatively small.

THE PEKING INFLUENCE

The history of the Communist movement in Malaya gives strong support to the thesis that the interests and methods of the Russian and Chinese Communists in promulgating the cause of World Communism have not always coincided. Rather, there is evidence that the two, at least in Malaya, have often vied with each other. With the military victory of Communism in China, however, this struggle appears to have ebbed, the hegemony of the Chinese Communists now being clear and largely undisputed.

While the MCP openly acknowledges Chinese Communist leadership in almost every official pronouncement, the actual

working of the chain of command from Peking to the Malayan jungle is not clear. No doubt the Committee on Overseas Chinese of the Chinese People's Republic has much to do with the Chinese in Malaya, as in other South-East Asian areas. But there is no indication that it has any direct ties with the high command of the MCP itself.

According to one usually reliable source, the real command of the Malayan struggle is now based in Nanning, South China, functioning under a so-called 'United Operations Department' of the Chinese Communist Party. This organization reportedly directs the activities of Communist organs in Burma, the Philippines, Indochina, and Thailand, as well as in Malaya. There is as yet, however, no official acknowledgement of this organization's existence by either Chinese or British authorities.

We do know that a Permanent Liaison Bureau of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) was set up in China in December 1949 to effect a regular liaison '...with the countries of Asia and the Far East'.[16] The WFTU, headed by Louis Saillant, now performs many of the functions formerly carried on by the Comintern, and it is reasonable to assume that the Bureau has much to do with the direction and assistance of Red labour groups in Malaya as well as in other Asian countries. Such a Bureau could serve as an excellent medium for infiltrating cadres, money and dispatching orders into Malaya.

In February 1954 the British authorities reported that the Communist high command took the drastic step of shifting its headquarters from the Malayan jungles across the narrow Straits of Malacca (fourteen miles) to the Indonesian island of Sumatra.[17] (This was heatedly denied by the Indonesian authorities and later press reports from Malaya questioned the accuracy of the story.) In any case the Malayan Communists no doubt hope to

[16] *World Federation Trade Union Movement*, No. 8, December 1949, p. 19.

[17] *New York Times*, 9 February 1954.

benefit from Chinese Communist diplomatic personnel operating with relative freedom in Indonesia. Trained Chinese Communist cadres could enter Indonesia and journey by small junk to the Malayan coast with comparative ease. No doubt the Malayan Communists also hope to draw financial and material aid from the Indonesian Communist Party, which operates openly, and from some of the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia as well.

Of critical importance in Malaya itself are the political inclinations of the almost three million Overseas Chinese who reside there. Torn between their traditional sympathies for their mother country on the one hand and their allegiance to their new-found land on the other, these Chinese are an unknown quantity in the nation's internal politics — and therefore are targets of pressure, persuasion, and force from both sides in the struggle.

Today the Overseas Chinese in Malaya is, on the one hand, attracted by the spectacular rise of modern China as a world power. He regards himself as 'Chinese', regardless of what particular political party happens to be in control. His nationalist pride burns at the exploits of the Chinese in Korea and the world-wide recognition given to Mao Tse-tung, considered by many to be, since the death of Stalin, the Number One man in the World Communist movement. On the other hand, he is repelled by the purges and mass executions on the China mainland, by the obvious extortion racket recently followed by the Government, by the ill-treatment suffered by his relatives and friends who remained in China, and by the ruthless and authoritarian Chinese Communist Government itself.

He is attracted by Malaya, where he has fared well financially (at least compared with his brother who remained in China) where he has found a new home, raised a family and in ever-increasing numbers, has decided to remain permanently. On the other hand he is repelled by the relatively small consideration shown him by the British, who in the past have slighted the

Chinese in favour of the Malays and who still continue to do so. He is resentful of his lack of civil rights — the Chinese in seven out of nine of the Federated Malayan States do not have equal citizenship rights with the Malays — and resents the continued pressure exerted upon him from all sides to contribute to the anti-Communist struggle, especially since there is little evidence that he is considered an equal partner in this struggle.

The Chinese in Malaya have notoriously failed to join the anti-Communist military forces. They remain, for the most part, 'fence-sitters', awaiting the outcome of the fortunes of the struggle. Sir Gerald Templer, with his usual bluntness, recently accused 95 per cent. of the Overseas Chinese in Malaya of sitting on the fence, but concluded that 'I'm getting more and more of them on the bandwagon'.[18] But for the typical Overseas Chinese it is not getting on the bandwagon that counts. It is where that bandwagon is going that is of the greatest importance. To date, neither side has offered the Overseas Chinese a satisfying answer to this question.

THE OUTLOOK

In appraising recent Communist strategy in Malaya, two points stand out: first, the Communists are following a zig-zag course, one in which the present line is but one phase of a protracted revolutionary struggle which is still continuing; and secondly, retreat for the Communists is not equivalent to defeat but is simply a longer and more devious road to victory. They recall Stalin's words: '...we shall act as we did in the Red Army: they may beat us a hundred times, but the hundred and first time we shall beat them all'.[19]

An indirect but no less vital consequence of present Communist Party strategy in Malaya is the growth of complacency among the anti-Communists about the revolutionary struggle. This

[18] *World Telegram and Sun,* 1 April 1953.
[19] Cited in Leites, op. cit. p. 60.

attitude illustrated by one Malayan planter who enthusiastically compared the present lull in terrorist activity with old times, 'like normalcy', concluding, 'maybe this thing is over'.[20]

Every attempt is being made by the British authorities to counteract this dangerous attitude. High Commissioner Sir Gerald Templer opened the Sixth Session of the Legislative Council in March 1953 by declaring, 'The shooting war is not over yet and we should remember there are probably about the same number of Communist terrorists in the jungle as there were two years ago.'[21] This same warning was again echoed by the authorities early in 1954.

But the pronounced desire of the local populace to relax and return to a normal existence cannot easily be altered by the Government. This is an asset for the patient and watchful Communist revolutionaries.

As matters now stand, it appears that neither side is sufficiently strong either to destroy or be completely destroyed by the other. But this is a stalemente only in respect to Malaya itself, for any radical change in the situation outside Malaya would probably destroy the existing balance of power. The MCP, as we have seen, is dependent to a great extent on outside Communist policy direction. The guerrilla war in Malaya is closely linked with the present global cold war and is but a barometer of this wider struggle.

[20]Cited in the New York *Herald Tribune,* 1 April 1953.
[21]Cited in the *New York Times,* 10 March 1953.

POSTSCRIPT

At the end of his study on the Malayan Emergency, covering the period from the early beginnings of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) up to 1954, Mr. Hanrahan draws the conclusion that neither side was strong enough either to destroy or be completely destroyed by the other and that within Malaya there was a stalemate. In fact, as events were soon to prove, there was not a stalemate. Indeed in this type of war there very rarely is and in any situation where it can be said that neither side is winning then it is normally the Government which is losing.

But this was not the case in Malaya. Within a year the main communist forces had begun their retreat to the deep jungle, thereby increasing both their physical and political isolation from the population of the country. It soon became clear, even to the MCP itself, that it was facing defeat. In these circumstances the aim of any communist party would be to save as much of its political underground organization as possible, if necessary at the expense of its armed units. Every attempt has to be made, when the 'armed struggle' had failed, to revert to a 'legal struggle' and, for this purpose, the existing political organization is of paramount importance.

On the political front, the MCP was also facing defeat. Before his departure in 1954 the High Commissioner, General Sir Gerald Templer, appreciating that the Emergency itself was no longer an obstacle to political advance, had announced that elections to the Legislative Council would be held in 1955. As a result of these elections, the Alliance Party, under the leadership of Tengku Abdul Rahman, won fifty-one out of the fifty-two elected seats, and it was also strongly supported by the majority of the remain-

ing forty-six nominated members of the Council. With self-government achieved it was clear that full Independence could only be a year or two away. The ostensible aim for which the MCP had been fighting was about to be achieved without the Party having had any hand in it whatsoever.

There was only one manoeuvre left, and that was to negotiate. Peace feelers were therefore put out and in December 1955, Chin Peng, the Secretary-General of the Party, with two other members of the Central Committee, met Tengku Abdul Rahman, Mr. David Marshall (the Chief Minister of Singapore) and Dato Tan Cheng Lock at Baling near the Thai frontier. Until 1955 the Malayan Government had offered very lenient surrender terms to those communists who were ready to surrender either as individuals or in groups, and the Alliance Party had been prepared, with some reservations, to offer a complete amnesty in order to achieve peace. No offer to negotiate had been made by the Government. The initiative for the peace talks came entirely from the MCP. There was, however, a strong temptation for the Tengku to gain a position in which he could achieve for his country both independence and peace — but not peace at any price. The military situation and his standing as leader of the victorious Alliance Party gave him a stronger hand than that.

The real issue at the peace talks revolved round the Government's refusal to recognize the MCP as a legal political party within an independent Malaya. To obtain such recognition Chin Peng was prepared to surrender all the armed units with their weapons. This was a condition which could have been enforced because by this time the Government had an almost complete record of all individuals and of their equipment. It was Chin Peng's hope that, by making this offer, he could keep the remaining underground apparatus of the Party intact before it was eradicated by Police and Special Branch operations. Realizing the great danger that the MCP would still present to a young and independent country, the Tengku refused. Instead he offered

improved terms for surrender whereby all those who so wished could return to China or, if they gave the necessary undertaking, could remain in Malaya as individuals and be taken back into the body politic but not as members of a legal communist party. This in turn was refused by Chin Peng, and the talks failed.

This was a courageous decision by the Tengku, because it meant that the country would go into independence with a continuing war on its hands. While it might not be waged at quite the same tempo as in the past, nevertheless it would be bound to take priority both in money and resources and thereby delay many of the positive and constructive programmes for which the Alliance Party stood. Politically it can perhaps be said that there was a great advantage in this decision. The true intentions of the MCP were now revealed. It had not been a party fighting for the independence of Malaya from colonial rule, though that was its declared and ostensible aim. Even in 1948 when the Emergency first broke out, the British Government's promise of independence was already explicit in its declarations and implicit in its actions elsewhere, in granting independence to India, Pakistan and Burma. The real issue of the Emergency was revealed as being no more than a bid for power in what might be called a war of the colonial succession. This made the MCP, not the colonial power, the enemy of the Malayan people to be dealt with once and for all. The continuing war in turn greatly helped to maintain unity within the country through a period which might otherwise have been critical in this respect (as it has been in so many other newly-independent countries).

The mopping-up period was to last another five years before the Emergency could be declared at an end on 31 July 1960. By 1956, the whole eastern part of Malaya had been declared a 'white' area and, in time for the Merdeka Day celebrations on 31 August 1957, central Selangor including Kuala Lumpur had also been so declared. The two remaining black spots were Johore in the south and North Perak and Kedah in the north. It was

only in 1958, as a result of continuing security force operations and Special Branch efforts, that MCP activities in these areas began to crumble with the surrender of two senior members of the MCP; who in turn succeeded in inducing the rank and file under them to surrender also. By 1960 Chin Peng and the remaining four to five hundred communist terrorists who had been able to move north were located in the jungles on the Malayan-Thai border, where they have remained ever since and where they provide more a nuisance rather than a threat.

Thus within one year of the completion of this book the war was being decisively won by the Government and within six years the MCP within Malaya was almost totally destroyed. Neither the author nor, as is clear from his introduction, Dr. Purcell, could read the signs nor did they completely understand the true nature of the war. In his account of the rise of the MCP, before and during the period of the Japanese occupation, Mr. Hanrahan does not give sufficient emphasis to the fact that the dominant cause on which the MCP's appeal had originally been based was patriotism. It was an appeal mainly to the Chinese community and derived its driving force from the long Japanese war with China. When the MCP launched the Emergency, the strength of their appeal had waned, though it was still enough to promote an insurgency. By 1948, in spite of the controversial Malayan Union established by the British Government in 1946, the MCP had almost no appeal for the Malays or for a sizeable portion of the Chinese community. Therefore the threat from the insurgency was limited in space and extent. Not only were large populated areas of the country unpenetrated by the MCP, but more than 50 per cent. of the population were firmly on the side of the Government. This has been one of the great differences between the insurgencies in Malaya and South Vietnam where the Vietcong is spread both throughout the country and through all sections of the population.

There was never really any danger as Mr. Hanrahan suggests,

that the MCP in 1945 would move straight from being the leaders of the resistance movement to being the promoters of a revolutionary war against the colonial power, because the full Allied forces necessary for the re-conquest of the country from the Japanese were landed in Operation ZIPPER immediately after the Japanese surrender. Not only were these forces too strong for the MCP to take on at that time, but the re-occupation itself, after nearly four years of Japanese rule, was welcomed with relief by the vast majority of the inhabitants.

During the next three years there was undoubtedly a continuing conflict between the moderates and the extremists within the MCP as to the correct policy to be pursued. The moderates were influenced by two strong arguments: First, that the base of the communist movement was too weak to mount a successful insurgency and, second, that as a legal political party after the war they were enjoying some success, particularly in the trade union movement. It is interesting to speculate what would have happened if the moderates had remained in control and the Emergency had not broken out. It is almost certain that Malaya would have had a much more stormy political path to independence and that after independence, greater threats to economic and political stability would have arisen. For example, the 'Confrontation' with Indonesia might not have been so successful if a vigorous and legal communist party had been in existence within Malaysia, and if there had not been the experience of the Emergency to help in defeating the new threat. All this tends to support the view that the extremists only triumphed over the moderates because of the directions passed on at the Calcutta Conference in 1948. In effect the MCP was sacrificed by Russia as a pawn in the cold war.

It was not, of course, easy at the time this book was written to judge the effect of the security measures being taken by the Government, nor to perceive the success of its strategy. No one has yet fully appreciated the great debt owed to Lieutenant-

General Sir Harold Briggs — who, in the early stages of the Emergency, laid down the basic principles and strategies which were followed throughout; nor, equally, the great debt owed to Sir Henry Gurney who, as High Commissioner from 1949 to 1951, ensured the continued functioning of the administration and the maintenance of the rule of law. Neither of these two men were the type to take panic measures which would only have increased the instability in the country. When General Sir Gerald Templer took over as High Commissioner and Director of Operations in 1952, the foundation was already laid, and it was his task to use his dynamic energy and personality to give momentum to the measures and strategy already being undertaken.

General Briggs understocd from the start that in the campaign it must be the aim of the Government to isolate the guerrillas both politically and physically from the population. The most important measure introduced to achieve this aim was the creation of the 'new villages'. The resettlement of over 500,000 squatters in about 500 new villages was a major undertaking which was nearing completion by 1954. This was not entirely a security measure designed to break the links between the communist terrorists and the rural population. Certainly the protection of the rural population was of vital importance if there was to be any prospect of winning their support for the government side. There was, however, more to it than that. It was essential to bring this scattered population, as economically and socially viable communities, back into the life of the country. Although the new villages were carefully sited and planned, there is no doubt that in their first few months they gave all the appearance, after the bulldozers had been at work and the barbed-wire perimeters constructed, of being 'concentration camps'. It took considerable imagination to realize what they could be made to look like in several years' time. By the end of the Emergency the success of resettlement could be judged, not solely by the part the new villages had played in isolating the communist terrorists from the

population, but by the fact that the great majority of them were rapidly becoming prosperous, locally-governed villages and towns with all modern amenities, none of which could have been provided for a scattered population. Only about half a dozen villages proved to be unsuccessful, generally for economic reasons. When the Emergency was over and all restrictions were removed, there was no desire on the part of the inhabitants to return to their previous locations. But for the Emergency, the whole squatter problem caused by the Japanese occupation might never have been tackled on such a scale, and the problem would undoubtedly have plagued successive governments for decades to come.

There were many other programmes in hand during 1952-4 which were to bear fruit in the near future; in particular, the retraining of the special constabulary; the reorganization, expansion and training of the Special Branch, which was to become one of the finest intelligence organizations in the world; the expansion and training of the armed forces; the recruitment and training of Malayans for all branches of the government machinery; and, most important, the opening of such recruitment to all races within Malaya.

The first steps were also being taken to deny the jungle to the terrorists as a sanctuary. Jungle forts were established in remote valleys as a means of providing protection to the aborigines and of enlisting their support in the campaign. These forts, complete with short airstrips, were later to serve as bases in the final mopping-up operations. Aborigines were recruited to protect their own community and for offensive patrolling. In the last two years of the Emergency the Senoi Pra'ak (total strength about 300) killed and captured more terrorists than all the rest of the Security Forces and became the guardians of the jungle trails leading into Malaya from the Thai border.

Meanwhile the strength and increasing efficiency of the administration and the police force enabled measures to be taken which finally broke the underground organization of the MCP within

the population. It is easy enough for a government to introduce harsh restrictive measures including detention, food control, identity cards, curfews, tenant registration, and so on. But all these will be useless, and possibly even counter-productive, unless they are effectively administered with meticulous attention to detail. It is not the measures themselves but the manner in which they are implemented which has the effect. For example, food control alone required an enormous effort. The movement of bulk supplies had to be protected by convoys and the movement of food in small quantities had to be very closely checked in restricted areas; rice had to be rationed and in some areas communal cooking was introduced so that only cooked rice was sold. Tins of canned food had to be punctured when they were sold across the counter. All these measures if ineffectively implemented would have caused great resentment among the population and would still not have prevented sufficient stocks of supplies finding their way to the guerrilla units. Because the measures were effective and were seen to be effective, they were accepted by the people, and towards the end of the Emergency, had become almost routine. The result was that the surplus energy and resources of the country were harnessed by the Government and denied to the MCP. This will always be a key aspect in any insurgency — which side out-administers the other. In Malaya it was the MCP which was out-administered. In Vietnam it was for many years the Government.

This puts the whole question of 'winning the hearts and minds of the people' into perspective. People are not going to be won merely by bribes and promises, however attractive the social, political and economic benefits offered may be. When an insurgency is at its height what the people want to know is: which side is going to win? In this respect the Government must show that it is prepared to be both determined and, if necessary, ruthless. It must show not only that it intends to win but that it can win. This was well appreciated by General Templer and accounts for

some of his more controversial measures, which were inclined to shock less perceptive members of the liberal community. A case in point, though this was after General Templer had left, was the village of Jenderam, in south Selangor. This had been a very bad area and the village was a centre of support and supply for a strong company of communist terrorists after most of the surrounding areas had been cleared. Many attempts were made to obtain the villagers' co-operation without success. The Government therefore surrounded the village one morning with several battalions and moved everyone out. All the inhabitants - men, women and children - went into detention, the village was razed and its crops destroyed. This did not cause a public outcry because the effectiveness of the measure, which led to the elimination of the communist terrorist company, silenced all criticism. Everyone understood that the Government was determined to win even if an occasional harsh measure such as this had to be employed. When the area was eventually cleared of terrorists, the inhabitants returned and the village was restored with government assistance.

Once the Government has shown its determination and proved its competence by its performance, then promises can be made good. Probably the most effective way in which this was demonstrated in Malaya was through the declaration of 'white' areas, the first of which was in Malacca in 1953. In these areas all restrictions were removed, except for the carrying of identity cards, and the social and economic benefits promised by the Government were introduced. By the time General Templer left (in 1954), this process was well under way, though naturally there was some caution as to its future extension. In fact there was no regression and in no white area did it ever prove necessary to re-impose restrictions.

Another point missed by the author and Dr. Purcell was that, while priority had to be given to the Emergency, this did not mean that the development of the country was at a standstill.

Many economic measures were already in progress, particularly the rubber replanting scheme, including that for smallholders. The Employees Provident Fund was also operating with great success. Communications were being extended and not solely as an Emergency measure; and a micro-wave telecommunications system was being introduced. On the social side a national education policy was being planned and the medical services expanded. The Rural and Industrial Development Authority had given added impetus to development of the rural areas through many minor projects, and of urban areas through low-cost housing schemes and the promotion of small industries. The bulldozers were at work in Petaling Jaya though there were few who could foresee the phenomenal growth which this new town would experience within a few years. The net result of all this was that, after independence and when the Emergency itself was over, the country was in a position to go into top gear with its development programmes with emphasis on the rural areas. In fact the organizational methods designed to deal with the Emergency were readily adapted to implement Malaya's highly successful development programme in the 1960s.

The threat, however, was not entirely over. Communist cells still existed within the population and the force of 400-500 guerrillas remained on the Malayan-Thai border. Operations had to be continued in co-operation with the Thai authorities. The extent of the Malayan success both in the Emergency and in preventing any later resurgence was clearly demonstrated between 1963 and 1965 during 'Confrontation' with Indonesia. The infiltration of small parties by land over the Borneo border and by sea and air into Malaya itself was completely thwarted because the infiltrators had nowhere to go and were not supported by the population. This was the measure of the MCP's defeat: that it was unable to provide any assistance to the infiltrators or to take any advantage of the opportunity presented by new threat.

Nevertheless the communist threat, so well exposed in its early

days in this book, will remain and, while the outcome of the war in Vietnam remains in doubt, constant vigilance will be required.

SIR ROBERT THOMPSON

Somerset, October 1968

APPENDIX I

IMPORTANT PARTY DOCUMENTS

THESIS OF THE SIXTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL ON THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN THE COLONIES[1]

The immediate tasks of the Communist Parties of the imperialist countries in the colonial question bear a threefold character. In the first place, the establishment of regular connections between the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union organizations of the imperialist centres, on the one hand, and the corresponding revolutionary organizations of the colonies on the other hand. The connections hitherto established between the Communist Parties of the imperialist centres and the revolutionary organizations of the corresponding colonial countries, with the exception of a few cases, cannot be regarded as adequate. This fact can only in part be explained by objective difficulties. It is necessary to recognize that so far not all the parties in the Communist International have fully understood the decisive significance of the establishment of close, regular and constant relations with the revolutionary movements in the colonies for the purpose of affording these movements active support and immediate practical help. Only in so far as the Communist Parties of the imperialist countries render in fact practical assistance to the revolutionary movement in the colonies, in so far as their help actually facilitates the struggle of the corresponding colonial

[1]Source: G. Safarov, *Marx and The East* (New York, Workers Library Publishers, 1934), pp. 45-48.

countries against imperialism can their position in the colonial question be recognized as a genuinely Bolshevik one. In this lies the criterion of the revolutionary activity in general.

The second series of tasks consists in genuine support of the struggle of the colonial peoples against imperialism through the organization of mass demonstrations and other effective activities of the proletariat. In this sphere, the activity of the Communist Parties of the big capitalist countries has also been insufficient. The preparation and organization of such demonstrations of solidarity must undoubtedly become one of the basic elements of Communist agitation among the mass of the workers of the capitalist countries. The Communists must expose the true spoliatory character of the capitalist colonial regime by all the agitational means at its disposal (press, public demonstrations, parliamentary platform); they must mercilessly tear aside the network of lies with the help of which the colonial system is represented as an affair of civilization and general progress. A special task in this sphere is the struggle against missionary organizations, which act as one of the most effective levers for imperialist expansion and for enslavement of the colonial peoples.

The Communists must mobilize the wide masses of workers and peasants in the capitalist countries on the basis of the demand for granting, unconditionally and without reservation, complete State independence and sovereignty to the colonial peoples. The fight against the bloody suppression of colonial risings, against armed intervention of the imperialists against the national revolutions, against the growth of the military aggressiveness of imperialism, with its new armed seizures of territory, demands from the international proletariat systematic, organized and self-sacrificing struggle. It is necessary to take into account the lessons to be drawn from the fact that not a single section of the Communist International in the capitalist countries has succeeded to an adequate degree in mobilizing the masses for active support of the Chinese revolution against the unceasing attacks of world

imperialism. The preparations for world war, the attack of the imperialists against the peoples of 'their' colonies, with a view to their 'pacification', places the task of active support for the colonial revolution in the centre of attention and struggle for the proletariat of the capitalist countries.

Striving for the immediate recall of the armed forces of imperialism from the oppressed countries, the Communist Parties must work unceasingly for the organization of mass action in order to prevent the transport of troops and munitions to the colonies.

The struggle against the colonial policy of social-democracy must be looked upon by the Communist Party as an organic constituent part of its struggle against imperialism. The Second International, by the position it adopted on the colonial question at its last Congress in Brussels, has finally given sanction to what has already always been the practical activity of the different socialist parties of the imperialist countries during the post-war years. The colonial policy of social-democracy is a policy of active support of imperialism in the exploitation and oppression of the colonial people. It has officially adopted the point of view which lies at the basis of the organization of the 'League of Nations', according to which the ruling classes of the developed capitalist countries have the 'right' to rule over the majority of the people of the globe and to subject these peoples to a cruel regime of exploitation and enslavement. In order to deceive a portion of the working class and to secure its cooperation in the maintenance of the colonial regime of plunder, social-democracy, in the most shameful and repulsive manner, defends the exploits of imperialism in the colonies. It disguises the real content of the capitalist colonial system, it wilfully ignores the connection between colonial policy and the danger of a new imperialist war, which is threatening the proletariat and toiling masses of the whole world. Wherever the indignation of the colonial peoples finds vent in the emancipatory struggle against imperialism, social-democracy,

notwithstanding its lying phrases, in practice always stands on the side of the imperialist executioners of the revolution. During the last few years, the socialist parties of all the capitalist countries have been voting for the credits which the governments of these countries demand for the carrying on of war against the colonial peoples struggling for their freedom (Morocco, Syria, Indonesia), they themselves take a direct part in the business of colonial exploitation (French socialists act as governors in the colonies at the appointment of imperialist governments, the socialist cooperatives of Belgium participate in colonial enterprises for the exploitation of the Negro population of the Congo), and they approve of the most cruel measures for the suppression of colonial uprisings (defence by the leaders of the British Labour Party of intervention in China, the activity of the Dutch Socialist Party in defence of the suppression of the insurrection in Indonesia). The social-democrat theory, alleging that the capitalist colonial regime can be reformed and converted into a 'good colonial regime', is a mask behind which the social-democrats attempt to conceal their true social-imperialist character. The Communists must tear this mask from them and demonstrate to the toiling masses of the imperialist countries that the socialist parties are the collaborators and direct accomplices of imperialist colonial policy, that they have in this sphere betrayed in the most flagrant fashion their own socialist programme and that they have become an agency of imperialist plunder in the imperialist countries and in the colonies.

The Communists must pay the greatest attention to the attempt of the social-democrats, made with the aid of the capitalist governments, to extend their influence in the colonies and to establish there their own sections and organizations. These attempts correspond to the policy of that portion of the imperialist colonizers which makes it its aim to reinforce its position in the colonies by the buying up of definite strata of the native population. The specific conditions obtaining in some colonies may lend

a certain success to these attempts and lead to the temporary development of a reformist movement in these countries under the influence of the social-democracy of the capitalist countries. The tasks of the Communists must be to wage a decisive struggle against such attempts, to expose the colonial policy of the socialists before the native masses and in this way to direct against the social democratic leaders — servants of imperialism — the same well-deserved hatred which the oppressed colonial peoples bear against the imperialists.

In all these spheres, the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries can only achieve success if they also carry on an intensive propaganda in their own ranks in order to explain the Communist attitude to the colonial question, in order to eradicate completely every vestige of social-democratic ideology in this question and to resist any possible deviation from the correct Leninist line.

CONSTITUTION OF THE MALAYAN COMMUNIST PARTY[2]

Article One : Name

The Malayan Communist Party is an affiliate of the Communist International — designated as the Malayan Communist Party.

Article Two : Qualifications for Party Membership

I. Those entering the party organization must recognize the platform and constitution of the Communist International and the party, and must also pay dues, to be assessed equally from all party members.

[2]Issued by the Sixth Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Malayan Communist Party, 6 March 1934. Translated from: *Ma-lai-ya kung-ch'an-tang chang-cheng yu-tieh ti chi-lu* (The Constitution and Iron Discipline of the Malayan Communist Party), pages 1-18.

II. New members must enter the party through one of the following procedures:

a. Workers, peasants, and soldiers must be nominated by one party member, be processed through a party cell and undergo a two-month probationary period.

b. Skilled workers, tradesmen, the intelligentsia, students and government workers must be nominated by two party members, be processed through a party cell, and undergo a probationary period of three months.

c. Petty bourgeoisie must be nominated by two party members, be processed through the highest local (state or municipal) party organ and undergo a four-month probationary period.

d. Former party members must undergo the supervision of two party members for a period of one year, be processed through the Central Committee and undergo a probatioary period as decided upon by the Central Committee.

Addenda

1. Individuals nominated are the responsibility of the nominator. However, in the event the nominator proves unreliable, he should be disciplined — even to a point of being expelled from the party.
2. During the period of probation, new party members who have not yet attained regular party status should be assigned certain duties by their cell so that their progress can be watched and so that they can fully comprehend their obligation to the party.
3. Probationary members are not entitled to vote or representation.
4. Under certain circumstances, party committees at each echelon have the authority to accept or process new party members.
5. The probationary period for new party members shall expand or contract according to their behaviour. The decision on this, however, must be agreed upon by the state (local)

or municipal committee.

e. Organizational changes: Reorganization of political organs or bodies, either those being admitted to or already in the Malayan Communist Party, is subject to the sanction of the Central Committee.

f. Party members who move: Party members who move from the jurisdictional area of one organ to another, or who move their homes from one region to another, should apply to the Central Committee for future work assignment.

g. The Problem of Expulsion of Party Members: The expulsion of Party members should be a matter taken under consideration by the entire membership of the branch, this to be acted upon by a senior party echelon. While awaiting action from higher echelons, the member subject to expulsion should not be allowed to continue in any party activities. Those not in agreement with the decision for expulsion, should submit their case to the supreme party organ. Party committees on all levels have the authority to expel directly any member engaging in anti-party activities. Nevertheless, all decisions for expulsion of a party member should be transmitted down through each party organ.

Article Three: The Principles of Party Organization and Its Organizational System

The organizational principles of the various branches of the Malayan Communist Party and the Communist International are basically the principles of democratic centralism. These are as follows:

I. Lower and higher party echelons are to be elected by a representative assembly of party members and by the National Congress.

II. Each party echelon should report its own decisions concerning the election of its own members.

III. Lower echelons must accept the decisions of senior party echelons, adhere to the iron discipline of the party, and execute the orders of the Communist International and the party leader-

ship organs.

IV. Under conditions of secrecy, where a certain type of work is necessary, the senior leadership organ can direct a junior leadership organ, with the sanction of the senior leadership organ, to accept new party members entering the party organization.

V. The Party, according to the principle of a regional division in its regulation of the organization of a region, as regards the organization of groups within said region, shall make no distinction between races and nationalities in party membership. All members entering state or municipal party organs shall be known as members of the Malayan Communist Party.

VI. Each echelon within the party organization has the authority to make independent decisions on all local issues, this within the jurisdictional bounds of the Communist International and the [Malayan Communist] Party.

VII. The highest organ of each party unit is the Party Congress, the Representative Assembly and the Plenary Congress.

VIII. The Party Representative Congress or the All-Malayan National Congress elects the Executive Committees of each party organ. During the period neither congress is in session, the executive committees of individual organizations are charged with the supervision of routine activities.

IX. All newly created party organizations must be subject to the approval of higher party organizations.

X. The organizational system of the party is as follows:

a. Factories, mines, plantations, steamships, railroads, schools, shops, streets, small towns, military units and villages shall have a party cell, a Cell Representative Committee, a Cell Executive Committee and groups (i.e. sub-divisions of cells).

b. Rural and urban areas shall have a District Party Congress or a District Representative Assembly and a District Committee.

c. Within the jurisdictional boundaries of States and cities there shall be a State or Municipal Representative Committee

and a District Committee.

d. Within the jurisdiction of Special Districts, there shall be a Special District Representative Assembly and a Special District Committee. The decision on the organization of a Sepcial District must come from the Central Committee of the Malayan Communist Party.

e. Within the jurisdiction of all Malaya, there shall be an All-Malayan Congress and a Central Committee.

XI. In order to assist in the direction of the scope of work of each party organ, the Central Committee can send special representatives from the Central Executive Bureau or the Central Committee to a number of provincial or municipal areas in accordance with the needs of existing conditions. Special representatives of the Central Executive Bureau or of the Central Committee are the direct representatives of the Central Committee and are responsible only to the Central Committee.

XII. In order to deal with the handling of special party duties, such groups as an Organizational Department, Propaganda Department, Workers Work Committtee, Women's Committee, Youth Work Committee, and a Soldiers Work Committee, etc., should be set up by local party organs and committees. These should function under their own leadership. However, in carrying out their own and the local committee's decisions, all lower organs are responsible to the Central Committee.

Addenda

In order to simplify policy, however, the highest organs set up on the state level, such as local committees, shall process the reports of all lower organs.

Article Four : Cells

I. The basic organization of the party is the party cell. Party members who work in factories, shops, mines, on railroads, on highways, in villages, and in the army, etc., should unite in a cell. If there are three or more party members in an area, they can

then set up a party cell. However, they should apply to the local committee or district committee for permission to do so.

II. Special Cell Organizations: When one or two party members work in a particular business, they can join up with the party cell organized in the nearest or neighbouring business. No matter what kind of business a party member is engaged in — but especially if he is a factory worker, a handicraft worker or a member of the intelligentsia - he should use his own neighbourhood as a model and organize street cells or, for example, if he lives in a village, he can organize cells in accordance with the small industries operating there.

III. Cell Functions. The duties of the cell are as follows:

a. To utilize the strength of party organization to increase positively the politico-economic struggle of the workers and peasants, to use the concept of revolutionary class struggle to agitate for the demands of the workers and peasants, and to organize the revolutionary force of the masses towards a total revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of all Malaya.

b. To collect dues from and educate new party members, to distribute party publications to party and non-party workers and peasants, and to carry on cultural and political education among the masses.

c. Cell Executive Committee: Depending on the number of members in the cell, three, five or seven members should be elected to the Cell Executive Committee. This committee is charged with the conduct of daily affairs, carrying out cell work, delegating work to individual party members within the cell, etc. Each Cell Executive Committee should elect a secretary to see to it that the decisions of the Party Congress, the cell and the senior party organs are carried out, etc.

Article Five: District Organization

I. District Representative Congress: Within the jurisdiction of the district, the senior party organ is the All-Party Congress

or the Representative Congress, made up of delegates from each cell. The District Party Congress or Representative Congress shall accept or sanction the reports of district committees. They shall elect district committees and be attended by the representatives of local committees or municipal representative congresses.

II. The District Committee: The District Committee shall direct party affairs within the district during the period the All-Party Congress or Representative Congress is not in session. The District Committee should meet secretly every month or so to conduct routine business. A Daily Affairs Committee should be elected from the membership of the District Committee and should meet weekly. This can be altered under special circumstances.

Article Six: Local (State) or Municipal Organization

I. State or Municipal Representative Congress: Within the jurisdiction of each state or municipality, the highest organ should be the State or Municipal Representative Congress. It should meet twice yearly. The wishes of the State or Municipal Representative Congress shall be made known to the All-Malayan Congress by elected representatives of those organizations.

II. Local or Municipal Committee: The Local or Municipal Committee is to be elected by a State or Municipal Representative Congress. In the period when the Representative Congress is not in session, the Local or Municipal Committee shall be the highest organ within the state or municipality. Such committees shall meet once every few months or every half year. A Daily Affairs Committee shall be elected to carry on routine work and a secretary should be elected to supervise routine activities. The election of the secretary is subject to the approval of the highest party organ.

III. The Organization of the State and Municipal Committee. The State and Municipal Committee should carry out the decisions of the State and Municipal Representative Congress and

the Central Committee. Such committees are to be organized with a propaganda, woman's work, and peasant movement section, etc. The State or Municipal Committee should supervise the distribution of all published party directives, administrate all party duties within the jurisdiction of the province or municipality, act as the senior party organ when the State or Municipal Representative Congress is not in session and carry out the tasks outlined by senior party organs.

IV. The State Committee: Wherever a Municipal Committee has not been established, the work of all party organizations within the municipality shall be supervised by the State Committee. Organs functioning within the sub-divisions of a given municipality shall be under the overall direction of the Municipal Committee.

V. Municipal Committee: Municipal Committees have jurisdiction over all areas within the municipality and also over cells of all villages or areas within the immediate vicinity of the municipality. All areas in which a Municipal Committee is set up, and where there is no Special District Committee, shall come under the jurisdiction of State Committees or the Central Committee of the Malayan Communist Party.

VI. The Special District Committee: In areas where a Special District Committee is set up, it shall do its party work in accordance with the regulations laid down by the all-State and municipal organizations. Special Districts shall establish a direct liaison with the Central Committee and shall function according to the regulations of the State and Municipal Committee.

Article Seven: The All-Malayan Party Conference

I. An All-Malayan Party Conference shall be convened once a year. One delegate shall be elected from each one thousand party members, as decided upon by the Central Committee.

II. The majority decisions of the All-Malayan Party Conference

are subject to the review of the Central Committee and are then to be promulgated as orders.

III. The All-Malayan Party Conference is to be convened immediately prior to the Congress of the Communist International. It should elect representatives to attend the World Representative Congress of the Communist International, subject to the confirmation of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

Article Eight : The All-Malayan Party Congress

I. The All-Malayan Party Congress is the highest organ of the party. According to standard procedure, it is convened on the authority of either the Communist International or the Central Committee. The All-Malayan Party Congress, however, can be convened on orders from the Central Committee, by direction of the Communist International, by direction of the preceding congress or by the Central Committee in the event a majority of the party members so desire. However, the convening of a provisional congress of the All-Malayan Congress must be agreed upon by the Executive Committee of the Communist International. The All-Malayan Party Congress can make decisions only when its delegates represent more than one half the total party membership. The date for convening the All-Malayan Party Congress must be decided upon by the Executive Committee of the Communist International, by the Central Committee or by the preceding session of the All-Malayan Party Congress.

II. The All-Malayan Party Congress has the authority to:

a. Receive and examine the reports of the Central Committee.

b. Make decisions on problems related to party law.

c. Arrive at majority decisions related to all problems of political policy, organization, etc.

d. Elect the members of the Central Committee, investigate the actions of the Central Committee, etc.

III. Representatives to the All-Malayan Party Congress should be elected from the Provincial, Municipal and Special District Representative Congress. However, under circumstances of secrecy, a representative of the Communist International can select the representatives from the State, Municipal and Special District Committees. On orders from the Executive Committee of the Communist International, an All-Malayan Provisional Party Congress can function in lieu of an All-Malayan Representative Party Congress.

Article Nine : The Central Committee

I. The numerical size of the Central Committee is to be decided upon by the All-Malayan Congress.

II. When the All-Malayan Congress is not in session, the Central Committee is the supreme party organ. It represents the party in its relationships with other political parties, sets up organs within the party, directs all party political and organizational work, supervises the activities of all subordinate party organs, promulgates reports according to existing conditions, has the authority to appoint special Chinese representatives in the various state and municipal organs of the party, can establish a Central Executive Bureau to carry out the publication and dissemination of party doctrine, manage party finances, policies and make special appraisals, etc., of current conditions.

III. The Central Committee will convene a Plenary Session once every three months.

IV. A Political Bureau will be elected from the membership of the Central Committee and is charged with directing the political work of the Central Committee when the Central Committee is not in session. A Routine Affairs Committee is to be elected to carry on routine day-by-day work.

V. The Central Committee will set up a department according to each type of work, such as a Propaganda Department, an Agitation Department, an Organization Department, A Work-

man's Mobilization Committee, a Women's Movement Committee, a Peasant Movement Committee, a mobilization committee for each of the national minorities, etc. The duties of each department and each committee shall be defined and carried out under the direction of the Central Committee. The Central Committee shall designate a chairman for each of the departments and committees. The chairman shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Central Committee itself.

VI. The Central Committee shall consider as standard the economic and political articles and shall determine the party organization in the various areas, and their spheres of activity shall be in accordance with the administrative areas of all Malaya and of the separate districts.

Article Ten : The Investigative Committee

In order to review the economic and political records of each party organ and the course of the work of each party organization, the All-Malayan Party Congress and the Provincial and Municipal Congresses shall have the authority to elect a Central Investigative Committee.

Article Eleven : Party Discipline

I. Obedience to party discipline is the highest duty of a party member and each party organ.

The decisions of the Communist International and the Malayan Communist Party, the All-Malayan Congress, the Central Committee and each senior echelon must be carried out with dispatch and completeness. Before decisions within the party become final, however, individual criticism is allowed.

II. Failure to carry out the decisions of a senior party organ and errors within the party organization are subject to party discipline. The procedure for carrying out party discipline is as follows: A provincial committee shall be designated, which has the authority to abrogate the party organ in question or, in the case of an individual, to expel or punish the offender.

When a breach of party discipline is uncovered, it should be investigated by the Party Congress or senior party organ. Before this, each party echelon should set up a special committee to carry on an inquiry in order to correct the breach of party discipline. The decisions of these special committees, after review by senior party echelons, should be carried out . . . .

Article Twelve: Party Economics

I. Party expenses are met by dues assessed from party members.

II. Dues for party expenses are to be collected from party members under the supervision of the Central Committee as follows:

a. Comrades employed in industry who earn $5.00 should pay ten cents monthly; those whose wages are $10.00 should pay fifty cents in dues; those whose wages are $15.00 should pay one dollar; those whose wages are $20.00 should pay two dollars; those whose wages are $25.00 should pay three dollars; and those whose wages are $30.00 should pay four dollars. Individuals earning $50.00 and more a month should contribute dues as determined by their own personal circumstances.

b. Unemployed workers, the completely impoverished, the ill and party members in special difficulty are exempted from paying party dues.

c. Failure to pay party dues for three consecutive months is sufficient grounds for expulsion from the party. Notice of this should be made before the party congress.

d. Under extenuating circumstances, the party can undertake the solicitation of special contributions.

Article Thirteen: Party Organizations[3]

I. In non-party organizations — factories, villages, social groups, cultural organizations, etc. ...where there are three or more party members, a Party Organization can be set up.

The function of such a Party Organization is to strengthen the

[3]The characters for 'party organization' are *tang-t'uan*.

influence of the party in the non-party group, to carry out the political policies of the party and to supervise the work of party members in non-party organizations.

Such Party Organizations should elect a Daily Affairs Committee and a secretary to carry out routine work. The Party Organization has independent authority to handle problems of an internal nature and all daily issues.

In the event the Party Committee and the Party Organization have a disagreement, the Party Committee should discuss the important problems and arrive at a decision with the representatives of the Party Organization. Such decisions then must be followed to the letter by the Party Organization....

IRON DISCIPLINE OF THE PARTY[4]

I. *Important Points of Discipline*

A. *Obedience*

1. Before decisions are agreed upon in a meeting, everyone is entitled to voice his own opinion; but once decisions are made final, the minority must obey the majority. If such decisions are not settled then there cannot be a unified concept, purpose within the organization will not be uniform and our mutual struggle against the enemy will certainly face disaster.

2. Lower organs must determinedly execute the decisions and orders of higher organs. At the same time, higher organs have the authority to dissolve or reorganize lower organs. This insures a uniformity of method within the party, and protects against inner-party factionalism. Without this we cannot call for solidarity and uniformity of action.

3. Party members must obey the Party Congress and the decisions of the Central Executive Committee. If the individual

[4]Decisions of the Standing Committee, Central Committee, Malayan Communist Party, 13 June 1940. *Ma-lai-ya kung-ch'an-tang chang-cheng yu-tieh ti chi-lu,* pp. 19-26.

is not at one with the Party — everyone acting independently — then we cannot assemble the many into a single mutual action.

4. If a member or lower party organ does not wish to accept the decisions of a senior party organ, the issue may be submitted to a higher organ for final decision. Until the decision is given, however, the original order must be carried out. It should be kept in mind that obedience is all-important here.

B. *Sacrifice*

1. The privilege of self-sacrifice is fundamental both in work and practice. This privilege is the highest glory a Communist Party member can attain.

2. In the struggle, each Party member must bravely stand at the forefront of the masses, directing and leading the masses, no matter how great the enemy oppression may be. Members of the Communist Party, acting as the model vanguard of the people, can lead them forward to victory in the revolution.

3. The struggle of the proletariat must continue, regardless of enemy brutality or force. No sacrifice of blood is too great in the service of the proletariat. According to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, each Bolshevik must embody the spirit of self-sacrifice, defeating the enemy with whatever means are possible.

C. *Attendance at Meetings*

1. Meetings called by the Executive Committee or senior party echelon must be attended.

2. While the meeting is in session, all requests to leave must be made to the chairman. Attendance at meetings is an important affair. At such meetings party policies and duties are explained, educational instruction and training are given, etc. Those who absent themselves from party meetings should be disciplined. Absence from three such meetings is sufficient grounds for expulsion from the party.

3. When a member is absent from a meeting, he must first go

to the secretary of that particular organization and explain fully his reasons for being absent.

D. *Paying Dues*

1. Paying Party dues is the duty of a party member. Without such dues, the party would not be able to function. At the Sixth Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Malayan Communist Party, held in April 1939, it was resolved that any member who did not pay his dues for three months was to be expelled. If a Party member can live for one day, then he can pay dues for one day. Self-interest and selfishness are anti-Communist manifestations.

E. *Joining Organizations*

1. Whenever a party member joins a non-political group, he should report this to the Executive Committee of his cell and await its sanction. Those elected to an organization should report their election to the party and await final party action on this matter.

2. Whenever a party member joins a political group he should first report this to the party and await the decision of the State Committee, Municipal Committee or the Central Committee. Before joining such an organization, he should apply to the State or Central Committee for permission to do so.

3. Party members should accept party direction as to joining or leaving such organizations.

F. *Moving*

Whenever a party member moves, he should report this to the local party organization and await its decision. On occasions, he can apply to the party organization in the new region for permission to transfer into it. Because the party is a revolutionary combat force, the area held by each party member is of the greatest importance and if an individual moves on his own initiative, the party will lose track of him and consequently lose part of its own potency. Such an individual would be a great loss to the party, to the proletariat, and to the masses. There-

force, he should obey the rules and accept the party's decision on this matter as final.

II. *The Discipline of Party Life*

A. The minority obeys the majority — junior echelons obey senior echelons — party privileges apply equally to all.

B. Individual duty should be subordinated to the duties of the whole group. Everyone working together can most effectively carry out the decisions of the committees. The position of the individual must always be subordinated to the will of the party.

C. The functions, feelings, action, beliefs and speech of a party member are all of concern to the party.

D. In work, the party member must always obey orders. When the decision is not yet fully agreed upon, the party member is free to voice his own opinion, but once a majority vote is taken, he must carry out such decisions faithfully.

III. *Party Discipline in Thought*

Party organizations or individuals, no matter whether they be agitating or leading a struggle or be performing a routine task, if they uncover the tendency of a comrade which is injurious to party affairs, must never compromise or keep such a discovery a secret. The moment he becomes aware of this, he should begin a determined thought struggle towards that element — whether it be a party organ or individual member. Those who oppose the principles as stated above should be disciplined.

Comrades, we know the enemy is continually attacking the party and the revolution. Not only is he stepping up his suppression of the national revolutionary struggle, but he has also hired spies, sending these running dogs out to penetrate our organization, anxiously scheming to cripple our party from within. For example, there is the enemy's recent all-out night and day training of hundreds of so-called political spies.

By this we can see that the enemy does not take the problem lightly. Therefore, the party must maintain a unified spirit to

overcome this vulnerability. If the Party of the Bolsheviks does not determinedly carry out an iron discipline, relegating Bolshevism to the status of an empty word, then the party will find no place of salvation under the continual external and internal assaults of the enemy.

IV. *Carrying Out Discipline*

In this manner, in recent times, many important party organs have been destroyed and cadres lost. There are many comrades who look down upon party discipline and foolishly betray secrets of the party organization.

The Central Committee urgently entreats all party comrades: You should commit to memory all the details of party discipline, examine closely the fundamental concepts of each principle and struggle to see to it that all comrades come to the self-realization of the need to adhere to discipline. At the same time, each and every comrade in the party should turn himself into a party disciplinarian, advancing party discipline and struggle so that if you should happen to discover a party comrade disregarding party discipline, then you should begin a relentless struggle towards that person without regard to personal ties. There is absolutely no room for individual feelings in this matter. In the struggle against deviation, where a comrade has made his first mistake, you should call him (or them) together and employ the method of persuasion and education in winning him over. If, in the course of time, this individual reverts to his old ways or does not change, then in obedience to party rules, you should point this out to the party so that this individual can be punished and then write a communique, to be circulated to all party comrades for general discussion.

The Central Committee wishes especially to impress upon the comrades of local committees, municipal committees and even cells that you are the backbone of the party and you must, therefore, set an example to the whole party in carrying out party

discipline. Today, you should instantly begin an examination movement of the whole party as to the activities of the party, discipline, the three points, and the duties of party members. We must draw up a plan to improve the preparation of new party members on these principles.

Addenda

THE NEW DISCIPLINE OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

A. *On the Problem of Party Discipline*

Arising from the establishment of the Political Committee, the Military Affairs Committee, and the Mobilization Committee in the Central Committee, we must explain the necessity of continually holding firm on the political independence of the party and strengthening the leadership of the struggle on all fronts. The party cannot forget that its duty is to gradually work to strengthen the party itself, to preserve the party, to expand the party, to mobilize the masses and to defend the masses.

Each committee has its own independent notice from the Central Committee as to its duty in obediently carrying out the following three motions:

1. Party discipline must be given added importance — so also secrecy. Comrades should have absolute obedience, gradually strengthen party activities, and maintain party discipline — thereby adding to the spirit of the party.
2. When the orders of the Central Committee are promulgated, lower echelons cannot alter them in the slightest. In the event lower organizational echelons differ, the orders must be carried out first and then, after this, such differences can be submitted to the Central Committee for examination.
3. Responsible organs should investigate fully the cause of all transgressions of all comrades receiving party discipline. Errors and failure to execute orders call for expulsion from the party. Going over to the enemy is punishable by death. This

is necessary because such activities constitute a 'Fifth Column' in our midst.

The above motions insure the success of Party policy, guarantee the solidarity of the party elements and give it the strength of steel. The Central Committee itself has already become the strongest Bolshevik model of the entire party and its decisions must be carried out. The entire party has the authority to call together a meeting to discuss or criticize the party line and the Central Committee will obey its command. Any echelon which discovers that the Central Committee is not correctly following the party line has the authority to call a meeting to submit its opinions to the Central Committee and, if desirable, the Central Committee will call a party congress to give final judgment. The Central Committee should then act according to whatever decisions are agreed upon by the Congress. The Central Committee should obey this rule which is completely in accordance with the policy of democratic centralism.

Whenever party activities disintegrate, an impartial positive struggle should be made to rectify the situation. Just as impartially, any incorrect behaviour such as disobedience should be uncovered and smashed. In destroying such evils as disobedience, the dissolution of social ties and absolute impartiality are of first importance.

B. *On the Party and Aspects of the Life of the Masses*

Interwoven with the life of the masses, the party should maintain full spirit in authoritatively conducting itself, and should be continually on the watch against suspicious attempts at sabotage. In action, the party should become a model. It should develop fully the spirit of obedience, strive to elevate its positive qualities, take full cognizance of important tasks, and assist the struggling masses in the realization of their duty in the protection of the policy and line of the party. In the event certain comrades mani-

fest their inadequate spirit, they should then be openly criticized so as to correct this condition.

Communist party members should strive to improve their own ability in the process. Old party members should especially strive to improve the good and banish the bad aspects of their character.

Further, determined spirit and absolute obedience are the essentials in our timeworn efforts on behalf of national liberation. The party should improve its own attitude and standing. Things which cannot be managed should be corrected. Party decisions should be firmly carried out. Everyone must have the spirit of obedience and duty and all must do their utmost to expose, criticize, and rectify errors.

Finally, we must be fully determined to expose ourselves to the greatest hardship of the struggle, to carry out whatever is assigned to us in the party's determined fight, to fear no sacrifice — no matter how great, never to forget our iron position, to hold fast to the party's actions, to preserve the party organization and to guarantee the right of independent political criticism.

STRATEGIC PROBLEMS OF THE MALAYAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR[5]

I. *The Characteristics of the Struggle*

In its present stage, the Malayan revolution takes on the characteristics of a new democratic revolution waged against the British Imperialists (including all their running dogs and lackeys, principally that group of feudalistic running dogs headed by the Sultans). The objectives of the struggle are: to overthrow the British Imperialists, eliminate all their political, economic and military influence in Malaya, wipe out the last vestiges of feu-

[5]Translation of: Ma-lai-ya kung-ch'an-tang (The Malayan Communist Party), *Ma-lai-ya ko-ming chan-cheng ti chan-lueh wen-ti* (Strategic Problems of the Malayan Revolutionary War). First issued in December 1948. Published by the Assault Press (place not stated), 5 November 1950, 61 pp.

dalism (including economically, the system of feudalistic exploitation and ideologically, education in feudal culture), replacing these with the formation of a Malayan Peoples' Republic and a reconstructed and expanded new democratic economy and culture. The spirit of the revolution is the proletariat which, racially speaking, is comprised of Indian and Chinese labourers and also the peasant masses which, racially speaking, are composed principally of Malay farmers; and secondarily, of urban petty bourgeoisie, especially the lower stratum (i.e. junior business executives, junior civil servants, the intelligentsia comprising principally the broad mass of elementary school teachers, handicraft workers, peddlers, drivers, etc.). When considered *en masse,* the national bourgeoisie also forms an integral part of this spirit, but its revolutionary nature is fixed and narrow. Moreover, under certain circumstances (usually at a time when Imperialist suppressive power is at its zenith while revolutionary strength is at a minimum) it is prone to become indecisive and waver — even to the extent of betraying the revolution. The leadership of the revolution rests with the proletariat. In the actual direction of the struggle by the labouring class, the course of its vanguard — the Communist Party — is taken merely as a token form.

This then is to say that the Malayan revolution is, in its present stage, under the leadership of the proletariat, whose base is the combined strength of the workers and peasants: this is an anti-Imperialist anti-feudalistic national revolution, carried out by the broad masses of the people of various races and classes. It has a national character because it opposes the rule of alien Imperialism, demands the right of self-determination and the realization of national liberation. It has a democratic character because it opposes internal feudalism and demands a popular democratic government, economy and culture. It has a popular character because its revolutionary spirit rests in the broad masses of people of many races and classes (principally the broad masses

of workers and peasants and the lowest echelon of petty bourgeoisie) and also because it sets out to protect the rights of the broad masses of people of various races and classes (especially the broad masses of workers and peasants and the lower echelon of petty bourgeoisie).

In its present stage of development, the Malayan revolution is, in brief, anti-imperialist and anti-feudalistic. It is principally anti-imperialistic in as much as Malaya is a colony governed by British Imperialists, and is secondarily anti-feudalistic because the feudal elements in Malaya have neither the right to rule nor any actual political status or economic power. In other words, economically and politically, the feudal elements constitute no real independent threat, but are merely tools used by the Imperialists in ruling Malaya. But while we shape our anti-Imperialist anti-feudal struggle along different lines, it must be kept in mind that the two are closely bound together as the Imperialists utilize feudalism to strengthen their own colonial rule while the feudalistic elements rely upon the imperialists to defend their particular sphere of influence.

The Malayan Revolutionary War, in its present stage, is expanding — especially as it is carried out under the leadership of the proletariat and broadened by the masses of various races and classes of people. Therefore, this war is a national democratic popular struggle against colonial Imperialist power and its feudal lackeys. It can be said that this is a popular war against British Imperialism.

II. *The Special Features of the War*

The Malayan Anti-British national revolutionary war possesses the following special features:

First, Malaya is a colony under the direct rule of British Imperialism. Though the area is small, communications facilities are modern. There are a number of towns, both large and small, yet the population is sparsely distributed. The proletariat of

Malaya is a product of British Imperialism which has actively turned Malaya into a centre for the extraction of raw materials (i.e. rubber and tin). The proletariat, including members of their families, makes up approximately 30 per cent. of the total population of Malaya. In viewing colonies and semi-colonies as a whole, this is a relatively large class. Racially, it is made up largely of Indian and Chinese workers. Under the greedy, brutal, cunning, and dangerous governing policy of the British Imperialists, there are still in excess of two million (including one-third of the total population) impoverished suffering peasants without land to till. Racially, these are almost exclusively Malays. Malaya is a colony under the total capitalistic monopolization of British Imperialism. As such, industry suffers and it is impossible for national capital to be concentrated to a high degree. The high proportion of petty bourgeoisie concentrated in various small towns (especially the lower stratum) is a direct result of this condition.

The British Imperialists are old hands at colonial rule. Theirs is a history of 100 years' invasion of and domination over Malaya. They have a stable, thorough system of government and possess an up-to-date regular army, complemented by a large police and secret service organization. The armed might of the British Imperialists in Malaya (including all possible future reinforcing of such might) cannot be considered overwhelming when compared to other nations, but it is superior both in numbers and armament to that of the Liberation Army. They consequently have the ability to muster this armed power to attack and suppress the people. In addition, they can still draw upon sufficient reserves to replenish their arms and material, possess modern means of transport and telecommunications, control all routes of railway communications and control the large and small towns throughout Malaya.

The feudal elements among the people of Malaya have sold themselves out to and become dependent upon the British Im-

perialists for whom they serve as a tool in strengthening the hold of British Imperialism on the masses. Malaya's economy is principally a colonial economy devoted to the production of raw materials for industry and dominated by the monopolistic capital of the British Imperialists. Industrial development consequently suffers while commercial enterprise assumes a compradore character. As a result, the national bourgeoisie is bound to suffer from serious shortcomings and is especially vulnerable to vacillation and compromise.

Following the close of World War II, the British Imperialists redoubled their plunder of Malaya's raw materials. These they exchanged for American dollars in order to relieve the economic crisis in their homeland and to increase the profits of their monopolistic capitalists. British dependence on the raw materials of Malaya in the post-war era has been greater than at any other time. Because of this, British post-war policy in governing Malaya has been one of outright plunder, more maniacal, extreme and exploratory than in any other period. In order to consolidate their colonial rule and protect their plundering interests, the British Imperialists have resorted to the waging of a colonial war aimed at slaughtering the people. They are, consequently, destined to become even more extremist, employing political, economic, and military violence in their continued all-out assault upon the masses.

This is the first special feature, one which indicates that the Malayan revolutionary struggle faces extremely complex social conditions and an enemy - the Imperialists - who are both brutal in the extreme and well versed in experiences. In sum, although the British Imperialists are already in a decadent state and are confronted with a multitude of difficulties at home and abroad, yet when compared with the strength of the revolution, they hold a superior position. This is because their military power (numerically, technically and in armament), their economics, material, transportation and telecommunications are still sufficient in

breadth and scope to cope with the revolution. In addition, they are certain to employ every means, adopting the most resourceful and brutal tactics, in their attempt at speedy annihilation of the forces of the revolution. Altering this position of superior and inferior strength and of weakness between the enemy and ourselves is not to be accomplished in one day. Such a feature also indicates that by nature the anti-British national revolutionary war will be protracted, uphill and violent.

The second special characteristic is that the Malayan anti-British national revolutionary war has begun at a time when the Imperialist bloc, led by the American Imperialists, is rapidly advancing towards a decadent stage, while the anti-Imperialist democratic camp, headed by the Soviet Union, has become a global influence in behalf of peace and democracy. The reactionary influence of the Imperialist camp is overshadowed by revolutions flaring up on a wide front in small and weak nations of Asia, especially now that the revolutionary struggle of the Chinese people, who make up one-fifth of all mankind, is rapidly being brought to a successful conclusion, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. This is an international situation which is extremely favourable to the Malayan Revolutionary War.

In the three years since the close of the war, the homeland of the British Imperialists has been plagued bv serious economic crises, which are certain to worsen daily. Aside from suffering under the illusion of American aid (while the American Imperialists themselves are sitting on top of a huge volcano of economic crisis), the principal means resorted to are wholesale plunder and brutal suppression of the colonial peoples, particularly the peoples of Malaya, endeavouring in this way to relieve the crisis in their own land. Three evils resultant from this criminal policy of the British Imperialists are sure to rebound on themselves:

a. Because the British homeland is incapable of prosecuting a protracted colonial war aimed at slaughtering the people of

Malaya, they are destined to become more maddened in their plunder of the races and classes of Malaya. Aside from their never-ending attempted exploitation of Malaya's resources to relieve the crisis in their homeland, the British Imperialists also intend to solve the problem of the daily mounting war expenses in Malaya by transferring the burden to the masses. This is certain to increase hardship in the livelihood of the people, hasten the disintegration of the Malayan economy, as well as cause the struggle to drag on. The conflict between the British Imperialists and the people (including the national bourgeoisie) is certain to become more critical by the day and such a conflict is an inevitability.

b. To gorge themselves with economic plunder the British Imperialists are certain to intensify their political bondage and oppression of the peoples of various races and classes under the guise of military expediency. It is no longer possible to proclaim to one and all the deceptions of so-called 'democracy' and 'government by law'. This kind of Fascist rule, augmented by the daily increase of economic exploitation, is bound to drive them, during the prosecution of the war, gradually into isolated pockets. Under such conditions, it is possible to drive a wedge between them and the national bourgeoisie.

c. The British Imperialists will experience great difficulty in transferring more troops to Malaya. They are certain to recruit a large force of soldiers and police in Malaya, relying upon Malaya itself for their principal source of military manpower. Because of the poor living standards characteristic of the broad masses of the lower stratum of the people in Malaya and the fact that a segment of them remain politically backward, the British Imperialists can be expected to exploit the backward, impoverished suffering Malays, employing their principal tactics of racial alienation in their anti-Communist manoeuvres and manpower recruiting schemes. But such soldiers and police will prove unreliable, especially at a time when the influence of the Com-

munist Party is expanding, when the active character of the broad masses of the population is growing, and the revolutionary struggle is moving more violently and rapidly towards a new stage of development. As a result, the essential differences between the British Imperialists and the soldiers and police will become more and more obvious and acute (a case in point is Chiang Kai-shek's troops allied with China's reactionary clique). This is because each and every soldier and policeman is himself an integral part of the very land the British Imperialists seek to destroy and because there is a basic urge in all of them for national liberation, for a people's democracy and for the betterment of living conditions.

From the point of view of the people, Malaya has already experienced some twenty years of revolutionary history, the most significant phases of which were the armed struggle during the resistance to the Japanese and the trade union movement carried on in the three years immediately following the war. Although Malaya is small in size, it still has jungles which reach from north to south, and possesses geographical conditions favourable to guerrilla warfare. The fact that the rubber and tin centres, on which the British Imperialists depend to obtain American dollars, are scattered in remote areas adjacent to the jungles and rural districts both makes it easy for the Liberation Army to slice off the economic strength of the enemy and, at the same time, puts the Liberation Army in a favourable position to annihilate the foe, seize his stocks of arms and ammunition and expand itself.

This is the second special feature, one which points up the advantageous phase of the national revolutionary war — the means whereby the Liberation Army is able, in the course of the struggle, to preserve and expand itself and is given the opportunity of securing a final victory. This special feature is of great importance.

The third special characteristic is as follows: The anti-British national revolutionary war broke out three years following the

war of resistance against Japan. During this time, the trade union movement courageously forged ahead despite the cunning and brutal oppression of the British Imperialists. But the peasantry (particularly the Malay peasantry) had only just begun to participate in the struggle but had not yet been able to effect a sufficiently broad mobilization to coordinate their action with the trade union movement. The lower stratum of urban petty bourgeoisie became panicky under the pressure of their living conditions and, although they manifested some degree of dissatisfaction with the British Imperialists, yet they continued to entertain false hopes that the British Imperialists would improve their lot. As a result, they failed to be resolute and rise to the struggle. In the face of British Imperialist threats, the national bourgeoisie compromised their position and even plotted with the British in an attack upon the masses.

The Liberation Army was bred from guerrilla troops. Its organization is simple, its troops strength small, and its equipment, methods, and strategy are in need of improvement. In addition, it is confronted with the problem of replenishing its stores of provisions and arms. Great effort over a suitably protracted period is needed for it to develop into a regular army. We still have no base, no rear area, no people's governing authority, nor any outside aid. That Malaya is a colonial area, underdeveloped and unskilled industrially, adds to these disadvantages.

This third special characteristic is indicative of our own subjective weakness. While this can be remedied in the course of the struggle — and we are determined that it will be remedied — still it will require a long, long time. A comparison of the above with the first special feature points up clearly the fact that the anti-British national revolutionary war will be protracted, tortuous and violent. Consequently it requires that the guiding principles of our Party's politico-military strategy and combat methods must be correct; it also demands that all components of the Party and Army increase their will to fight and heighten their

spirit of sacrifice, and that every effort must be made, throughout the course of the war, to learn and progress. Any thought or action which tends to underestimate the enemy and advocates hasty adventurous action must be thoroughly purged.

The fourth special feature is the course of the Communist Party as indicated in the Party Platform by which the Party acts on behalf of the various races and classes, stands for a policy of an anti-British national united front, demands the betterment of the living conditions of the proletariat and the protection of their interests and advocates an aggressive policy of 'To the tillers belongs the soil!'

This special characteristic points up the fact that although there are a number of difficulties and shortcomings inherent in the anti-British national revolutionary war, it is possible for the Liberation Army to develop and achieve victory. On the one hand, the Liberation Army is being led by the Communist Party, true to the doctrines and spirit of Marxism-Leninism, and is thus able to learn during the course of the struggle, to take advantage of the lessons of the revolutionary wars in other lands throughout the world — especially the rich experiences of the people's revolutionary struggle in China — for the purpose of directing the war. On the other hand, because the Party platform is representative of the broad masses of the people (especially the workers and peasants), protecting their interests, the Liberation Army can count on the aid of the people (especially the workers and peasants) and so has acquired incalculable strength. Finally, the warriors of the Liberation Army are all products of the trade union movement and other anti-imperialist struggles. They take part in the struggle for the sake of their own good. In addition, they have merged their own interests with those of the entire nation and populace and have become self-enlightened, gallant soldiers in national liberation, constantly striving to advance. It is because of this that the Liberation Army is powerful — despite its smallness and weakness. Not only is it

able to defend itself and annihilate the enemy in the struggle, but it is also able to expand itself. This special characteristic is the natural consequence of the second special feature. The combination of this with the second will strengthen our confidence in victory.

III. *The Guiding Principles of Combat Strategy and Combat Tactics*

The guiding principles of combat strategy and tactics in the Malayan anti-British national revolutionary war follow from the foregoing four special features. The second and fourth special features evidence the possibility that the Liberation Army both can expand and gain victory over the foe. The first and third special features indicate that the Liberation Army will experience difficulty in expanding quickly and scoring a rapid victory. Moreover, if matters are not satisfactorily handled, the possibility of defeat looms large. These constitute the two facets of the Malayan Revolutionary War. They are co-existent. It follows that even under favourable conditions there exist difficulties. This is a basic dictum governing the Malayan Revolutionary War. Many other laws follow from such a basic dictum.

Undue emphasis on the first and third special features will result in conservatism and pessimism and may even give rise to excessive fear in the face of the threatening enemy. Conversely, emphasis on the second and fourth points will introduce the possibility that the enemy will be underrated, and give rise to impetuousness and adventurism, even as far as to the insistence on adopting the strategy of a war of quick decision. The belittling or stressing of either of these facts is harmful and may result in defeat in the struggle.

In sum, it can be said that the enemy now occupies a position of relative superiority while the Liberation Army is in a relatively inferior position. In other words, this means that the enemy is strong and we are weak. However, if during the course of the struggle we can properly evaluate the special characteristics of

the war and the fundamental laws which govern it, and if our acts be based upon such special features and laws, thereby enabling us to solve other concrete problems, avoid basic mistakes and strive to the utmost, then the factors unfavourable to the enemy and favourable to us will increase correspondingly as the war continues. Then, when an advanced point is reached, a fundamental change will occur between the strong and the weak, the superior and the inferior — between the enemy and ourselves.

If this is true, we may ask what are the essentials of the strategy and tactics in the anti-British national revolutionary war?

Comrade Mao Tse-tung wrote the following concerning the guiding principles of strategy and tactics in China's revolutionary war:

It is very clear that our correct strategic direction lies in the opposition to adventurism during the offensive operations, to conservatism (or simple defense) while on the defensive, and to flight while withdrawing our forces. We are against 'guerrillaism' in the Red Army, yet we must admit its guerrilla nature. We are opposed to protracted campaigns and a strategy of quick decision, while we believe in a strategy of a protracted war and campaigns of quick decision. As we are opposed to fixed operational fronts and positional warfare, we believe in unfixed operational fronts and a war of manoeuvre. We are against simply routing the enemy and believe in a war of annihilation. We are against splitting our strategic command and for a unified strategic command. We are against holding huge rear areas and for a small rear area. We are opposed to absolute centralized command and for a relatively centralized command. We are against a pure military viewpoint and for the Red Army as being the organizer and propagandizer of the Soviets. We are against banditry and believe in strict political discipline. We are against warlordism and believe in a democratic way of life with certain limits (in consistency with the nature of a military organization) and authoritative military discipline. We are against a cadre policy based upon incorrect sectarianism and believe in a cadre policy based upon correctness. We are against isolationism and believe in winning over all possible allies. Finally, we are against the Red Army's stagnation

at its old level and believe in a struggle for its development and advancement into a new stage.[6]

All the above principles apply to the revolutionary war in Malaya. We should study them and arrive at a correct solution to the many concrete problems of strategy and tactics in the Malayan Revolutionary War.

IV. *Concrete Strategic Problems*

The Malayan anti-British national war of liberation faces a host of concrete problems in strategy. There are at present eight problems which deserve our particular attention:

1. The first concerns the general strategic plan for the Malayan Revolutionary War. In view of the previously mentioned special characteristics of the struggle, it is obvious that the enemy's strength is relatively great and that he occupies a position of relative superiority. Our Army, on the other hand, is relatively weak and it occupies a relatively inferior position.

Taking advantage of his relatively greater strength and superior position, he adopts the strategy of offensive warfare, thereby attempting continually to harass our forces, wear them down and, finally, annihilate them. At the same time, the foe is fully aware of his own inability to wage a protracted war. Consequently, he employs a strategic line aimed at a war of quick decision, suffering from the delusion that our army can be eliminated in a brief space of time. Experiences in the past half-year's struggle serve to emphasize the fact that our Army is weak, occupies a defensive position and employs a strategy of defense. Our Army's objective, then, is self-preservation, attrition of the enemy and, also, continued striving for expansion. We must, therefore, refrain from hasty action and adventurism. We will attack only when we are confident and will not attack when we do not feel so. We want to strike hard to gain a victory in every action and to ensure the

[6] *Translator's note:* Passage quoted here from Mao Tse-tung's *Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War* (First published in Yenan, China, in 1936).

annihilation of the enemy and the capture of his arms. In this way we will train our forces, expand them and so improve their quality that the superior position and strength of the enemy and our position of weakness and inferiority are reversed. It follows that our Army is adopting a policy of a protracted war. Armed strength in a colonial revolution must develop gradually in a drawn-out struggle. We counsel no fears for such a long-term struggle; on the contrary, we subjectively welcome the strategy of a protracted war. Speaking of the line of combat (referring here to combat areas or battlefronts), our Army finds itself completely encircled by enemy bases in towns, his public roads, and his railroad communications. Making full use of his superior military power, the enemy always attacks along exterior lines in a policy of encirclement. While it is the strategy of the enemy to fight on exterior lines, our Army pursues a strategy of fighting along interior lines.[7]

In sum, the enemy's strategic doctrine aims at a quick, decisive offensive war fought along exterior lines, while our strategic doctrine is to wage a protracted defensive war along interior lines. Of course, in the final stages of the struggle, when the basic change between the enemy's and our position has been brought about then our strategic doctrine will be that of the counter-offensive.

2. The second concrete problem of strategy in the anti-British national revolutionary war is one which points up the fact that the concrete strategic doctrine is nothing but the combat doctrine of operations and individual engagements. The concrete strategic line in the Malayan revolutionary war consists in:

a. Tactical offensive operations and engagements in a strategy of defense.

[7] *Translation note:* In military terminology, a force operates along exterior lines when it holds the principal communications and land in a given area and, although stronger, is relatively dispersed. A force operating along interior lines, on the other hand, is usually encircled by the enemy, holds less space, but is relatively centralized and can concentrate its forces on a given point more rapidly than the enemy.

b. Operations and engagements of quick decision in a strategy of protracted war.

c. Operations and engagements fought along exterior lines in a strategy of interior lines.

First, let us discuss offensive operations and engagements in a strategy of defense.

Our Army's defensive strategy is not a passive one, but both active and aggressive in nature. To hold continuously to the defensive and to refrain from aggressive action is no real defense at all. Not only is it impossible for such a defense to eliminate the enemy and expand ourselves, but it may eventually threaten even our very existence for only in the effective annihilation of the foe can we ensure our own self-protection. The attack is the sole tactic to be employed in annihilating the enemy and preserving ourselves. Passive defense is futile. Although the enemy has demonstrated his military superiority, he still evidences a number of shortcomings and weaknesses which we can exploit. For example, the foe controls all facilities of communications and transportation and can easily utilize these to call up reinforcements, maintain close contact and transport troops. Yet, inherent within these very advantages are exploitable defects. For example, the troops of the enemy are continually on the move along his many roads, providing our forces ample opportunity for ambush, harassing him continually. Again, although the enemy boasts some mechanized units, for the purpose of waging his strategic offensive operations he still must devote considerable energy to defense, protecting his production centres and his strong points located in the large and small towns. The widespread activities and elusiveness of our guerrilla units throughout Malaya have caused the enemy to leave one big loophole in his strategic planning, i.e. he has of necessity employed an equally widespread defense of his production centres and strong points. Our Army must make capital out of this weakness, seizing the initiative in offensively striking at his various production centres and bases

in individual actions. Yet, for example, the enemy continues his encirclement operations of our own bases. In launching a counter-encirclement on the enemy our Army must capitalize on every opportunity and every favourable position (i.e. good terrain) and take the initiative in ambushing the enemy, annihilating part of his force, seizing his arms and smashing his schemes of encirclement. These are, of course, but a few methods of countering the foe.

If we consider offensive warfare to be the strategic doctrine for the entire war, we would be committing a fundamental error. This would call for us to employ our entire small force in engaging the enemy, resulting in our own attrition in seeking a war of quick decision. It would also mean that we only seek to advance and never consider retreat; that we do not judge the possibilities of victory in each particular action, but rather fail to estimate our ability to seize weapons or decide whether this particular action be advantageous to the course of the entire war. To accept battle without due deliberation will result only in the total attrition of our own strength (in the form of unit strength, personnel, arms ammunition, and so forth), and as the enemy has the ability to replenish his strength while we have not, defeat becomes a strong possibility. When this happens our struggle becomes nothing but a military adventure.

Let us now examine the operations and engagements of quick decision in a strategy of protracted war.

The necessity for engaging in quick decisive tactical operations in a protracted war is all too obvious. As the enemy advantageously holds the lines of transportation and communications, he can draw upon reinforcements quickly once a battle is on. If we fail to deal with the enemy quickly and decisively, our Army faces defeat upon the arrival of his reinforcements. In addition, as our Army has insufficient ammunition, it is absolutely impossible to engage the enemy in a drawn-out action. Quick victory in a war of decision will never be achieved by wishing. It must be con-

tingent on complete preparation, taking advantage of the most opportune moment, the concentration of superior military force, superior combat tactics, securing an advantageous position (i.e. favourable terrain) and assaulting the enemy either when he is on the move or garrisoned in weak positions. Battles of quick decision cannot be equivocated with impetuousness, for this would result in opportunities lost and would develop into adventurism and hasty action.

If we believe that individual operations of quick decision are the same as a strategy of a war of quick decision (i.e. hoping to wrest a quick decisive victory in the anti-British national revolutionary war), we make the same mistake. The result would be the exhaustion of our own force and the risk of facing a decision which would end in our own defeat.

Finally, we should discuss individual operations conducted along exterior lines in a strategy of interior lines.

When the enemy attacks a particular unit in our Army he is sure to muster a superior force in order to spread out and encircle our Army. In this way, the enemy operates along exterior lines, we along interior lines; the enemy is strong while we are weak. If we were to employ our whole force in an all-out struggle against the enemy, we would face probable defeat. We would face a similar fate if we should deploy our forces along separate routes and await the enemy there. There is only one way to wrest victory: our Army must concentrate its entire strength against the weakest part of the enemy force, ambush or encircle it and completely annihilate it. Related to concrete strategy this particular operation actually affords us the opportunity of operating along exterior lines; here we become the strong and the enemy the weak — our forces are many while the enemy's are few.

We would also be committing a fundamental mistake if we considered individual operations conducted along exterior lines to be the same as a strategy of exterior lines. That is to say that to spread out our own strength and encircle and assault the enemy

everywhere will only result in the diminishing of our own strength in direct proportion to the degree of over-extension. When this happens it will not be we who are surrounding the enemy but rather we who are besieged and, one by one, annihilated by the enemy.

The above three problems of basic strategic doctrine are closely inter-related. We need to wage aggressive, quick and decisive individual operations, concentrating superior force and pursuing a policy of tactical operations conducted along exterior lines (i.e. encircling or raiding the foe). Only the combination of these three will secure for us the final victory. Although at first the strategy of a protracted, defensive war conducted along interior lines appears to be in conflict with quick, decisive tactical operations conducted along exterior lines, yet they actually complement each other, constituting the two facets of an entity; and as such they cannot be mechanically separated.

3. Is our third problem one of a war of attrition or of annihilation? The correct answer to this problem is that it is one of annihilation and not of attrition. This is related to the problem of the course of the aim of the struggle. The aim of our Army in fighting a battle is not merely to preserve itself and eliminate the enemy but, more important, to seize arms and expand our own forces. In order to capture weapons it is necessary completely to neutralize enemy resistance (i.e. the killing, wounding or capture of the entire enemy force). Further, as our Army is short of ammunition and sources of reserve ammunition are difficult to come by, we cannot afford to waste what we have. Because of this we must resort to a war of annihilation, the object being to replenish our own arms and ammunition by capture. It is logical therefore that merely to rout the enemy and wound a few, failing to capture his weapons, cannot be considered a true victory.

4. The fourth problem deals with the type of war waged: is it to be positional warfare, a war of manoeuvre or guerrilla warfare? The correct answer is to wage guerrilla warfare now and a war of

manoeuvre in the future, but to refrain from embarking upon positional warfare. This relates to the problem of the type or method of war. What is guerrilla warfare? In brief, it is a kind of attack (ambushing in the form of a surprise attack, encirclement, or assault from the rear); it embodies aggressive action and surprise of the foe. This type of combat is suited to a small guerrilla unit, simply organized, comparatively poorly equipped, with elementary combat techniques and relatively little centralization. Its advantages lie in its flexibility, lightning elusiveness, while its disadvantage is as follows: to rely solely upon guerrilla units and guerrilla warfare means that to set up and defend bases will be an impossibility. Without such bases the guerrillas will have neither a rear area nor a people's governing authority, making a protracted, difficult and brutal war an impossibility. If we depend upon guerrillas and guerrilla warfare alone, it will be impossible to realize our revolutionary tasks, to drive the British out of Malaya and to establish a Malayan People's Republic. What is a war of manoeuvre? A war of manoeuvre means that regular forces engage in individual, quick decisive actions along exterior lines. At the same time, a mobile defense is utilized whenever practicable. At times, when they serve a particular purpose, a positional attack or defense can also be employed.

It is fully possible to develop from a guerrilla unit into a regular force and from guerrilla warfare to a war of manoeuvre. But it requires that our Army proceed gradually and methodically during the struggle, the most important requisites being the waging of offensive tactical actions in an over-all defensive war, quick decisive operations in a protracted war and exterior line attacks within interior line warfare and a war of annihilation aimed at seizing arms, in order to develop and better our own position as a prerequisite to engaging in a war of manoeuvre.

In addition to the capture of enemy arms in order to expand our own forces and intensifying the training of our own forces in a trial by combat, the problem of advancing to a war of manoeu-

vre and into a regular force necessitates the paying of close attention to the raising of the quality of the units. In connection with this problem Comrade Mao Tse-tung writes:

> Qualitative improvement requires changes for the better in political, organizational, equipment, technical, tactical, and disciplinary aspects, gradually approximating to the standard set by regular armies and eliminating the guerrilla style of work. Politically, commanders and fighters should be made to realize the importance of the transformation from guerrilla detachments to regular army, encouraged to strive together for this objective and afford guarantees for such achievement by political work. Organizationally, there should be gradually established necessary institutions for military and political work for a regular army corps, provided with adequate political and military personnel and methods of work, and regular systems of supply and health. In the matter of equipment, arms should be increased, both in quality and in category, and additional necessary instruments and materials for communication acquired. Tactically and technically guerrilla technique and tactics should be elevated to those required for a regular army corps. In the matter of discipline, there should be an advance to the stage of uniformity and strict enforcement of orders and prohibitions and the elimination of licentious and sporadic conduct. Achievement in these aspects cannot be expected overnight and must require strongest efforts. But such efforts must be exerted, and only thus can be created the major force of an army corps for a guerrilla base which will then deal more powerful blows against the enemy in a war of manoeuvre. The achievement of such an objective will be facilitated in the regions where there are detachments or cadres dispatched from a regular army; therefore, all regular armies must be conscious of the obligation to aid the advancement of guerrilla units.[8]

Positional warfare has less value in the current Malayan Revolutionary War. Our Army annihilates the enemy by manoeuvre. If positional warfare is treated as a subsidiary of guerrilla warfare or of a war of manoeuvre, however, then it may have application at

[8] *Translation note :* Passage from Mao Tse-tung's *Problems of Strategy in Guerrilla Warfare* (Yenan, 1938).

certain times. For example, the selection of a favourable position to carry out an ambush, the utilization of favourable terrain for rear-guard action, and so forth.

5. The fifth problem is one of initiative, cunning and planning. Initiative embodies action in the attack and in the withdrawal. Cunning involves cunning in the concentration and dispersal of combat strength and in altering the direction of that strength. Both guerrilla warfare and a war of manoeuvre require initiative and cunning. Once initiative and cunning are not applied, offensive individual actions, quick decisive exterior line operations, rapid concentration of a superior force to seize enemy arms — all become impossible. It is also impossible to withdraw quickly from an unfavourable enemy assault and to alter our course, or to annihilate one enemy force here, then change direction eliminating another foe there. Therefore, the institution of initiative and cunning in our forces is an extremely vital and pressing problem, one which all comrades are required to solve.

6. The sixth problem is one of seizing the initiative in war. In all operations both sides, the enemy and ourselves, attempt to gain points of vantage, favourable battle positions, good combat areas and even to seize the initiative in battle, because the initiative embodies freedom of action. When the power of initiative is lost, a force becomes passive and loses its freedom, facing the risk of annihilation and defeat.

We do not say that, because the enemy is strong while we are weak, it is not possible for us to seize the initiative in war; nor because our Army holds the strategic defensive and strategic interior lines, that it is imposible to gain the initiative in war; nor that by guerrilla warfare are we unable to seize the power of initiative in war. On the contrary, striving for initiative is an important and serious problem in guerrilla warfare. If there is no initiative, there is no way of determining the correct strategic course. It is also impossible to wage offensive actions in a defensive war without initiative, cunning and methodological plans.

It is also not possible to wage a quick decisive campaign in a protracted war nor an exterior line action in a war conducted along interior lines.

Passivity comes easy in a defensive war — the power of initiative, hard. But it is possible to advance from a passive to an active position in defensive warfare. For example, a thoroughly-planned strategic retreat appears on the surface to be one which has been forced by pressure, but in actuality it really is to preserve combat strength, awaiting a favourable moment to annihilate the enemy, lure him deep into our territory and launch a counter-attack against him. Therefore, although it means that we appear to lose the initiative, yet in actuality it means that we gain the initiative.

Initiative is not something ready-made. It requires subjective effort by our Army to achieve it. The power of initiative is acquired through the proper realization of the circumstances between the enemy and ourselves and the proper political and military preparation. Equipped with these we can then exploit the weaknesses of the enemy, at the same time rectifying our own shortcomings. We can arrive at a correct strategic doctrine, carry out individual operations of quick decision along exterior lines, concentrate superior strength in the annihilation of the enemy, seize his arms and ensure final victory. In the course of future victorious campaigns and battles we will strive to wrest the power of initiative in the war.

If we forego the above and seek merely to gain the power of initiative through careless haphazard action we would be committing a fundamental mistake. Such action, conversely, would end in the total loss of the power of initiative. It would be a manifestation of adventurism. If we believe that we should strive only to wrest the power of initiative in individual campaigns and battles and not in the entire war, subjectively abandoning all efforts to strive for initiative in the whole war, our action would eventually lose its active, methodological aggressive character

and we would be forced into a position of passive defense. Then our forces would be unable to operate with either initiative or cunning in individual campaigns and actions. This would be a manifestation of 'conservatism'.

7. The seventh problem is concerned with the massing of superior force. If we wish to strive for the power of initiative, the preservation and concentration of the largest and most powerful force is of first importance. According to the doctrines of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, the concentration of combat strength is important because it reverses the positions between the enemy and ourselves in the course of individual campaigns and actions; that is to say:

a. To reverse the circumstances of the enemy's advance and our retreat into our advance and his retreat.

b. To reverse the circumstances of the enemy's attack and our defense to our attack and the enemy's defense.

c. To reverse enemy operations conducted along exterior lines and our interior line operations, to enemy operations conducted along interior lines and ours of exterior lines.

This also means that, in a strategy of defense, our Army must wage offensive action in individual campaigns and battles. Basically it is necessary to concentrate a superior force before it is possible for our Army to change from a position of weakness to one of strength, to move from a disadvantageous position to one of an advantageous nature, to refrain from passivity and become active, and to alter our present position from one of inferiority to one of superiority.

There may be some comrades who understand the necessity for the concentration of combat strength. However, the practical means of carrying it out are frequently subjected to and misled by the confusion of existing conditions, resulting in a loss of the power of discretion, the dispersion of combat strength and the loss of cunning in combat. The lack of a sound strategic doctrine leads to this.

There may well be other comrades who understand the necessity for the concentration of troop strength but believe that it has disadvantages as well as advantages. The disadvantages lie possibly in the difficulty of maintaining a large force and also in the obvious vulnerability of such a force to enemy attack. Because of this no positive action has been taken to concentrate this combat strength. While we concede the possible difficulty in maintaining such a large concentrated force, it is one which is not totally unresolvable. First, it requires detailed planning and preparation. Secondly, it must be determined by the relative chances for gaining victory in battle. If victory is certain, the problem of maintenance is of less import. We need only to enhance the prestige of the Liberation Army with the masses to secure greater support from them.

8. The problem of bases. A base is a rear area in guerrilla war. It is used for the purpose of carrying out the aims of guerrilla strategy, of preserving and expanding ourselves, of annihilating and driving out the enemy. The necessity and importance of establishing guerrilla bases arise out of the protracted and violent nature of the conflict. Without bases, it is impossible to wage a protracted, difficult and relentless revolutionary struggle.

In order to establish a base, it is first necessary to inflict continual violent blows on the enemy through a series of guerrilla actions. Following this it is necessary to foster, set up and consolidate popular anti-Imperialist organizations. Finally, it is necessary to establish people's armed self-defense organs and a people's governing authority. Only then can a base be considered established. To destroy the enemy's attack it is first necessary to have a force equal to the situation. That is to say, it is necessary to have a regular force — a vital determining factor. It follows that the establishment of a base cannot be realized overnight, but must be the result of a long-term struggle.

Of necessity, the base must be unstable and fluid in the early period, hard-pressed by the enemy and so forced to be constantly

on the move. It can then gradually develop into a more stable, less changeable one, finally becoming a permanent base. The problem of establishing a base (including the formation of regular forces and the realization of a war of manoeuvre) cannot be solved, therefore, without a plan and gradual method; it requires the mobilization of the strength of the entire Party and the entire Army, striving objectively, methodically and gradually for its realization.

Generally speaking, our Army is at present still without a base. Although a number of rural districts are now under our Army's control, it has not yet succeeded in beating off enemy attacks on such rural areas. What our Army has been able to do has been to 'retreat when the enemy advances and to advance when the enemy withdraws'. We are frequently forced to 'move off elsewhere' on our own account. This is because the rural districts in Malaya are both cut off and surrounded by a close network of public roads and railroads, enabling the enemy to launch a sudden attack at any time and place, thereby making such areas unstable and changeable. Under such subjective and objective conditions, we can only attempt to be closely coordinated and cunning in our manoeuvring, taking full advantage of the cover afforded us by the hills and jungles. Because of this, it is yet too early to discuss the establishment of a popular governing authority and people's armed self-defense units in such rural districts (for they now serve little purpose and are open to attack). Even in the consolidation of popular anti-Imperialist organizations and fostering of mass participation in and support of the armed struggle, there are restrictions. Therefore, such rural areas cannot be called bases. We can, at best, only call them 'temporary bases'.

There are many such bases located throughout Malaya. Our future considerations must deal with the problem of a basic strategy in the formation of these bases in the various provinces. For the present, however, we will let this matter lie dormant. Yet it is clear that we need to preserve our 'temporary bases' in

the various provinces. These temporary bases remain a necessity for the continued effective independent action of small guerrilla units and we consequently must exert every effort to maintain them. Temporary bases, of course, should never be considered fixed and immobile. In the case of larger guerrilla forces engaged in independent actions, it is necessary for them to adopt combat techniques wherein they will manoeuvre throughout the length and breadth of the country, frequently taking the initiative, altering their course and area of operations. In this way the enemy will find no target to encircle and annihilate, facilitating the actions of larger guerrilla forces and enabling us effectively to preserve our strength. Further, such mobile techniques will permit our guerrilla forces continually to extend their areas of activity, securing additional opportunities and possibilities for waging offensive campaigns in a defensive war.

V. *Laws Governing the Development of War*

A correct appreciation of the laws governing the development of war will make possible, on the one hand, the proper direction of the struggle, giving impetus to the expansion of the war; and, on the other hand, will increase the fighting spirit of the entire Party and Army, strengthen their confidence in victory and ensure continual courage no matter how difficult the conditions nor how many reverses we face.

Generally speaking, a revolutionary war waged in a colonial or semi-colonial region is divided into two stages; the first is the enemy's strategic offensive and our strategic defensive. The second stage consists of our strategic counter-offensive and the enemy's strategic withdrawal. This distinction follows from the strategic policies of the enemy and of ourselves. In general, the first stage is a difficult and prolonged one. This is because during this stage we must not only preserve ourselves and annihilate the enemy, but must also expand, until a fundamental change occurs wherein the comparative strength between the enemy

and ourselves is reversed. The Malayan anti-British national revolutionary war makes no fundamental departure from such laws of development.

China's war of resistance against the Japanese consisted of three stages: The first was the enemy's strategic offensive and our strategic defensive. The second stage was the enemy's strategic consolidation and our preparation for a strategic counter-offensive. The third stage was the enemy's strategic withdrawal and our strategic counter-offensive. The principal reason for this was the vastness of the Chinese mainland, her tremendous population and her inexhaustible resources; China was gradually advancing from weakness to strength. Japan, on the other hand, was a small but powerful Imperialist state. Because she lacked sufficient military force and faced a resolute Chinese resistance, Japan was forced to limit her strategic offensive. When that point was reached, she ceased her strategic offensive and shifted the policy of holding her areas of occupation. China, on the other hand, was an industrially backward nation and therefore unable immediately to implement the strategic counter-offensive, forced instead to make detailed preparations. The fundamental conditions of the Malayan revolutionary struggle and China's war of resistance to Japan are dissimilar. Ours is a war between the people of a small, sparsely-populated colony governed by direct British rule. Unless our Army's strength excels that of the enemy and we are on the path of a strategic counter-offensive, compelling the foe into a strategic withdrawal, the enemy will never cease his strategic offensive, nor will he find it necessary to adopt a strategy of conservation at a certain fixed point.

It is impossible fully to consider the fundamental development of the two stages of the Malayan anti-British national revolutionary war because the course of the struggle promises to be extremely diverse and fluid. But it is both possible and necessary to evaluate some of the more salient features of this development. Only then shall we be able to direct the war. All these problems

are directly related to the basic strategic doctrines of our Army. These principles have already been fully enumerated in the preceding chapters. We do not propose to discuss the problems of a fundamental plan here. The effect of the various favourable international factors on the development of the Malayan revolutionary war and its ultimate victory will be great. These favourable factors lie principally in the expansion of the strength of world peace and the democratic camp led by the Soviet Union, in the decline of the Imperialist camp and in the rising tide of the armed revolutionary struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the Orient, more particularly in the victory scored by the people's revolutionary war in China. These, however, are merely assisting factors and not the principal determining ones. The most important determinant is the effort of the peoples of Malaya themselves.[9]

SUPPLEMENTARY VIEWS OF THE CENTRAL POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE [MCP] ON 'STRATEGIC PROBLEMS OF THE MALAYAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR'[10]

I. *Supplementary Comments on the Disadvantageous Features of the Characteristics of the War*

The Malayan anti-British national war of liberation is being waged under unusual circumstances. Therefore, it has a number of special characteristics of its own — these being the characteris-

[9]*Translator's note:* Some editions of this work have an additional section entitled, 'Current Military Principles'. This is generally a restatement of much of what has gone before and is not included here.

[10]Translation of: Chung-yang cheng-chih-chu (Central Political Bureau), *Chung-yang cheng-chih-chu tui ma-lai-ya ko-ming chan-cheng chan-lueh wen-ti ti pu-ch'ung kuan-chien* (Supplementary Views of the Central Political Bureau on 'Strategic Problems of the Malayan Revolutionary War). (First issued 12 November 1949, Assault Press, N.P. 15 December 1950), 85 pp.

tics of war. Failure to take cognizance of or to fully comprehend these features will result in a lack of complete mastery over the laws of the development of this war and lead necessarily to a failure correctly to direct the war.

A study of Mao Tse-tung's military concepts as well as full cognizance of the laws of development of the characteristics of the war are imperatives in the course of the struggle. In other words, by capitalizing upon the combat experiences of thousands of comrades, we shall be in a position to improve our knowledge of the laws of development of the characteristics of war and gradually learn and apply the military concepts of Mao Tse-tung. These will eventually form the basic military theory of the Malayan Revolutionary War. Our Party's military doctrines will then advance in the course of the war.

Last year, when the anti-British national revolutionary war was but six months old (December 1948), our Party made a complete examination and analysis of the special features of this war in *Strategic Problems of the Malayan Revolutionary War*. Now, after a year's experiences in war, we are in an excellent position to verify the correctness of that analysis, but to note that it suffered from a lack of detail. Because it was valid, our year-long strategic direction has also been basically valid, the war is progressing satisfactorily, and our revolutionary strength is growing. But, because it lacked detail, we failed correctly to deal with certain independent problems of the nature of war, resulting in a bad approach to certain conditions. Last year, we lacked experience in war and were unable to give a full analysis of the characteristics of the war. A year of combat experience has improved our awareness of the characteristics of the war and we therefore submit the following supplementary views on the characteristics of this war:

First: Malaya is a small narrow land with highly-developed communications such as highways and railroads. Except for a few regions in the north and east, any part of Malaya can be

reached from the centre of the peninsula...Kuala Lumpur...is no more than one day distant. This is a marked asset for the enemy forces in changing their position and securing reinforcements.

Second: There are many towns and cities both large and small in Malaya. Enemy production centres located in the hinterland regions are also numerous. [Note: the word hinterland regions, as used in this document, refers to squatter camps, rubber estates, mining areas, coconut, oil palm, pineapples, and betel-nut plantations as well.] Such areas all furnish us with bases, but at the same time they are the object of enemy protective measures. In such a region, i.e. small in size but with many bases, we will have bases in every nook and corner.

Third: In view of the fact that all hinterland regions in Malaya are criss-crossed by a network of roads and railroads and are surrounded by many military installations in both the towns and in the production centres, the locale of our activities must be adjacent to the roads and railroads and in the neighbourhood of the enemy's military bases. Under such circumstances, the enemy is in a position to attack our hinterland bases at any moment and also to conduct regular raids, patrols and ambushes on such bases. (Such enemy operations are as frequent as once a day or even many times a day when they have lost their senses.) At present, our Army is still not in a position to control (or even partially to control) certain parts of the roads and railroad lines. Nor are we able to destroy completely (or to destroy to such an extent as to compel the enemy to abandon such bases) certain small towns, production centres or bases. Nor are we in a position to annihilate the enemy's patrols in the hinterland regions. (But if we make an all-out attempt at present we are able to destroy an enemy patrol to a certain extent. Admittedly, however, we are unable to destroy a large enemy patrol within the immediate future.) Therefore our hinterland bases remain in a most precarious position. Speaking frankly, there is practically no such thing as an isolated spot in

Malaya. Hence, in such a small region, with highly-developed communication lines and scattered squatter camps, our Min Yuen activities will be seriously endangered. Under such conditions, we must maintain a strong force of relentless and daring Min Yuen cadres who are prepared to work under difficult conditions for the sake of maintaining, expanding and consolidating Min Yuen bases. Only by so doing can the Min Yuen support the Army which, in return, will carry out widespread operations in coordination with the Min Yuen.

Fourth: There is an unbreakable chain of jungle ranges throughout Malaya. This appears to be the best hide-out for our Army. However, because there are no masses or residents in these jungles (with the possible exception of a scattering of sakais) on whom we can rely for supplies of food and information, it is necessary for us not to penetrate the jungle regions too deeply, but rather to establish ourselves in jungle regions located close to populated regions. That is why our Army is often extremely susceptible to enemy raids. Under these conditions, heavy concentration of our forces will put us in a disadvantageous position for withdrawal in the face of a large-scale enemy assault. Because of this, we must utilize the tactics of 'Relative Dispersion', to be adopted by all units in our Army. The aim of these tactics is to enable our Army to concentrate and to disperse swiftly and smoothly.

Fifth: After a protracted period of British rule, the Malaya of today is both agriculturally and industrially backward. All hinterland regions must rely upon the larger towns for food and material, including even the daily necessities of life and daily rations of foodstuffs. At present, the uncertainty of these hinterland regions and the tightened control over towns and cities by the military and secret-service agencies of the enemy are becoming a problem, restricting our forces' ability to get supplies. We must build up our strength to such an extent as to become a direct threat to the enemy's bases in the small towns and villages,

so that the enemy will be forced to withdraw from these small towns and villages and concentrate his forces in the larger centres, before we are in a position to solve the problem of obtaining a regular flow of supplies for a larger unit of our forces. This again underlines the need for our Army to adopt 'Relative Dispersion Tactics'. The chief aim of any concentration of our forces must be to organize an operation of much larger magnitude. Such concentrated forces will be quickly dispersed after a major operation.

Sixth: Malaya is a colony ruled directly by the British imperialists for almost a century. The British have already created a totalitarian, complete, penetrating system of administration, from the Federal Government down to small towns and Malay kampongs. Malay feudal chieftains, from State Sultans down to Ketuas of kampongs, are to all intents and purposes, lackeys paid and employed by the British imperialists. Hence, in Malaya we have nothing like feudal provincialism to exploit. Nor is there any weak link in the enemy's administrative system for us to probe. With all these factors as stated above (i.e. small territory, highly-developed communication lines and widespread administrative centres) our hope of wiping out the enemy's rule in a certain region and thereby setting up a permanent base still faces many objective difficulties and obstacles.

Seventh: The present military strength of the enemy in Malaya is estimated to be approximately one hundred thousand men. Over half of these are Special Constables and regular policemen. The efficiency of British and Indian troops is little better than that of any reactionary nation, and much worse than that of Japanese troops. Outwardly, its air arm has been extremely active in conducting its mad operations. But according to our reports, only one of our comrades was killed and another wounded (some time between August and September of this year) as a result of one and a half years of enemy air action. This is the best its so-called powerful air force could do! Nevertheless, as a whole, the

enemy's troops are able to maintain their present strategic offensive position and will continue to maintain such a position in the immediate future. This is due to the following factors: First, enemy troops are undoubtedly superior in number, and to a certain extent such superiority will continue to grow (though in this process the enemy will certainly encounter difficulties). Second, the enemy's forces are much better off in armament, especially in ammunition. They put the greatest reliance upon overwhelming fire power in both defensive and offensive operations. Third, the enemy is in a most advantageous position for bringing up supplies and reinforcements by reason of his widespread military bases, communication lines and telecommunication facilities. Finally, the enemy is undoubtedly stronger than we in terms of supplies. However, through our correct strategy and tactics, his superiority has failed to check the existence and expansion of our Army. As a matter of course, the enemy's superiority will be gradually weakened and changed by our Army in combat. But it will take us a long, long time to effect a complete change in his strategic superiority.

At present, our Army is only a guerrilla force. Our lack of experience and low standard both in methods and tactics have not, however, been our chief shortcomings. Our handicap lies in the fact that our armed forces were formed without some revolutionary members of the regular army to form its backbone. This is different from the revolutionary forces of other nations. None of our troops received sufficient training before the outbreak of the Emergency. Our military commanders are not graduates of any military academy. None the less, all these defects have not affected our Army seriously. According to the aim of our present operations (i.e. seizure of arms, killing of the enemy, sabotage and harassing raids) as well as the form of our operations (i.e. ambushes, raids on patrols, attacks on small bases, and so forth), such defects are immaterial to us. Moreover, the fighting standard of our Army is being improved in the course of the war

as evidenced by the accomplishments achieved during the anti-Japanese period as well as in the last one and a half years. These are vital facts which must be correctly realized. It is only with such a realization that our comrades will find confidence in the bright future of improvements amongst themselves, the growth and expansion of the forces of liberation, and the final victory in this struggle. We come to the question: what is the main difficulty facing our Army? Our problem is the question of firearms and, in particular, supplies of ammunition (i.e bullets, grenades and explosives). We must know that the only source of firearms and ammunition for our Army is the battlefield, and that this demands sacrifice on our part; that is to say, in this war, not only must we expend a minimum of ammunition in defensive and offensive operations, but we must also do our best to seize arms from the enemy to replenish and expand our depleted stocks. Generally speaking, our policy is to use less but to seize more from the enemy. We are now in no position to compete with the enemy in fire power. Furthermore, our Army is in possession of only light arms at present. We must make every attempt to improve our techniques and tactics in order to offset the enemy's superiority in fire power. This also means that we can build up our strength only through a gradual, protracted, bitter and planned struggle. Any foolish thoughts of short-cuts must be dismissed. All colonial and semi-colonial revolutionary wars have such common hardships.

II. *Supplements to the Advantageous Aspects of the Characteristics of This War*

The above supplementary views on the disadvantageous factors of this war are expressed for the sole purpose of assisting our comrades in a fuller comprehension of the difficult and protracted nature of this war and in order to dispel certain incorrect 'left bias' and hot-headed speculations. However, we shall fail to conduct and direct this war correctly if we are conscious only of

the disadvantages of this war without taking a further step to study thoroughly all factors in our favour.

The following are supplementary views on the advantageous factors:

1. The source of the strength of our Party comes from the tremendous strength of the masses. Facts in the past year have proved that organized masses (with the majority of labourers and peasants), irrespective of any race, have had full political confidence in our Party and armed forces. They place implicit faith in the leadership of our Party and regard our Party and Army as a most strong and reliable Party and Army of the people. The policy and principle of our Party have been strongly supported by them. This is undoubtedly the fruit born from the struggle of our Party in the past twenty years in which many of our comrades have sacrificed their lives and shed their lifeblood. During the ten years prior to the Japanese invasion of South-East Asia, the trade union movement, under the leadership of our Party, added many glorious pages to the history of the struggle of labour (such as the 1935 incident when a few thousand workers in Batu Arang, Selangor, staged a heroic strike climaxing with the occupation of the whole coal mine for a brief period). From 1939 to 1940, the labouring masses established widespread contact with our Party's trade-union movement, developing widely in all states throughout Malaya. During the Japanese Occupation, our Party maintained close contact with a large number of Chinese labourers and peasants in squatter camps. Our Party's organizations in Chinese squatter camps and small towns and villages penetrated into every part of Malaya. The influence of our Party and our Malayan Anti-Japanese Army has been broad and penetrative. In the later stages of the Japanese Occupation, mass organizations were also set up in Malay kampongs throughout Malaya. Owing to the then incorrect course followed by our Party, we abandoned a major part of our peasant organizations during the period of peace immediately following the Japanese surrender. However this loss

was replenished by our huge successes in the field of trade-union activities. In the course of our struggle for better living standards and democratic rights, our Party has succeeded in establishing close liaison with the workers of various races throughout all Malaya.

Towards the beginning of 1948, the reputation of our Party loomed large in the picture of both the Malayan youth movement and the Malayan peasant movement. All these accomplishments serve to prove that the full confidence placed in our Party by the masses is no mere coincidence. This faith is built upon the foundation of close contact between our Party and the huge masses of workers and peasants, nurtured during many long years of struggle. Such confidence, based upon their own personal experiences, will forever remain firm and reliable. This is the chief reason for the development of our bases in many of the squatter camps immediately after the outbreak of the Emergency. This also accounts for the chief cause of the total support of our Party by the masses in the face of fantastic attacks by the enemy.

2. The strength of the masses is continually developing. Although its development often takes a complicated and uneven course — its direction is forward. In this anti-British war, the position of squatters is most difficult and precarious. They are constantly subjected to the threats and dangers of being killed, arrested, forced to relocate their homes, assaulted, insulted and raped. In spite of these adversities, they stand firm and united side by side with our Party and Army. They support us with money, food-stuffs, material supplies, etc. thus enabling our Party and Army to exist and expand in the face of fantastic attacks made by the foe. The position of the masses became more serious daily with the increased attacks made by the enemy during the last year. However, the masses did not desert us. Instead, they clung to us even more closely. Male and female youngsters were joining us one after the other. They became our most determined supporters. The enemy's atrocities did not cause them to retreat from

the struggle; on the contrary, it only served to increase their hatred and awareness of the cruelty of the foe. This is a basic proof that the strength of the masses is ever developing.

3. The progress of the masses in the course of their struggle depends to a great extent on the resolute firm leadership of the Party, through the leadership of the Min Yuen cadres. Such leadership is especially required after all-out raids made by the enemy. The development of the strength of the masses never takes a spontaneous course. It requires constant promotion of our Min Yuen activities, such as organization, indoctrination and mobilization. It requires that tension and ill-feeling be reduced, as well as attacks launched by our Army with which to stir up the spirit of the masses. Our experience gained from the struggle during the past year has made us fully conscious of this truth. This indicates that the foundation of such progress is firm and reliable. Therefore, in the course of the struggle, the contact between our Party and the masses will become closer as time goes on and likewise the mass organizations will become stronger.

4. The progress of the masses depends upon our subjective endeavouring to accomplish the above. Here we must add that our subjective endeavour must function in coordination with objective reality and should never depend upon subjective aspiration and empty ideas. Objective reality regulates the law of the progress of the masses (i.e. its complete course of progress). Any subjective demand which tends to over-estimate reality is a mere whimsical thought which breeds disappointment. According to our experience, gained during the past year of conflict, it is evident that we have further improved in consciousness towards the objective reality of mass movements in squatter areas. The principal realities are as follows:

a. That the masses have full confidence in our Party and Army, and that they have already formed a correct opinion of the quality of the British bandits. This is due to the fact that Malaya has a revolutionary experience of more than twenty years, es-

pecially her experience gained from the anti-Japanese war and the post-war widespread trade union movement. This is the progressive aspect of the masses.

b. That the masses, with their experiences gained from three years and eight months of anti-Japanese struggle as well as from the present anti-British struggle, will be in a position to face the test of armed struggle and will continue to make progress in the course of this war under the leadership of our Party.

c. Generally speaking, at present the masses are still lacking in the determination to sacrifice their jobs, homes, families and personal safety. They are also lacking in confidence in their own strength. They have not fully realized that their own strength and unity and determination are an unconquerable force. Instead, they pin their hopes for victory in the successes of our Party and Army as well as the successes of foreign revolutionary forces. This is the retrogressive aspect of the masses. Such backward ideas have their origins in the people's society and class backgrounds. It can be overcome only in the throes of conflict. The course of progress of the masses takes a form of gradual improvement in the course of realistic struggle. In short, the stronger the leadership of our Party, the more acute will this struggle become and, likewise, the greater the progress made by the masses.

d. At present, we are being conditioned by the environment of a guerrilla struggle. The mobilization of strength will be invariably restricted. Particularly, our mobilization and indoctrination activities directed towards the masses residing in the enemy's production centres will be greatly hampered.

5. On the whole, it is a certainty that this revolutionary war will continue to exist and develop with the support of the masses in the light of their present rate of progress. Facts in the past year indicate that the longer this war drags on the more fantastic will be the attacks launched by the enemy. As a result, the masses will make more progress and become more consolidated in their or-

ganizations. All we have to do is to strengthen the Party's hold on them through more efficient Min Yuen mobilization. We should set up more new bases while consolidating our original ones. We should maintain close liaison with the masses during an enemy attack. Under such circumstances, the strength of the masses will invariably grow as this war continues. It had to be like this before and it will continue to be like this as the war goes on. The British Imperialists can destroy a certain squatter camp but they are in no position to destroy all squatter areas; especially and certainly they can never hope to destroy all the rubber plantations. The British domination of Malaya depends chiefly on ruthless exploitation of the masses. The more areas they destroy, the less exploitation will they be able to accomplish. The greater the hatred of the people, the more our revolutionary strength increases. Their policy of ruthlessly killing the people and forcing their relocation is nothing but a desperate and suicidal gambit. The decisive factor of whether or not the strength of the masses will grow in this war derives from our subjective endeavours and not from the attempts of the British imperialists. Facts in the past year have proved this to be a correct assumption.

6. The position of the Liberation Army is difficult — but its strength is formidable and lasting. This truth has been proved by the events of the past year. First of all, the war criminal, MacDonald, bragged that our Army would be annihilated within three months. Then came the butcher, Boucher, who also claimed that he would wipe out our armed forces within 15 months of October 1948. Today they are forced to admit that the chance of ending this war is very remote. Even Gray, Commissioner of Police, said in reply to reporters that any prediction of the conclusion of this war would be preposterous. All these admissions the enemy was forced to make after the lessons he learned from our formidable army in the past one and a half years. The intrigue in the enemy's move in offering surrender terms, as well as its policy of forced relocation of the civil populace, will also serve

to prove that they have come to the realization that our Liberation Army can never be suppressed by military force.

7. At present, our Liberation Army is but a guerrilla force. Therefore, it has to adopt the tactics of surprise attacks, featuring the ambush as its form of operations. Also it must adopt swift and mobile manoeuvre, especially in the face of fantastic attacks made by the enemy. Thus far, these are our good points. It is only with such good points that we have been able to train and expand our Army with arms seized from the enemy and have also been able to inflict casualties on the enemy with a minimum expenditure of our ammunition. This has made it very difficult for the enemy to locate or to wipe out our Army. We have difficulties in obtaining ammunition. But we possess the assets of existing on and expanding our own resources. Generally, we have only light fire arms. Our standard in tactics and techniques is considered poor. Nevertheless, this has not affected us in our view of the present type of operations (i.e. surprise attacks featuring ambushes), and the object (i.e. seizure of arms from the enemy) of our operation. Moreover, our fighting standard has been improving rapidly. There will be a day when our fighting standard will rise to such a degree that we shall be in a position to seize heavy arms from the enemy, thereby enabling our Army to switch over to a better form of operations. Although we shall not be able to fulfill our revolutionary mission in Malaya solely by means of guerrilla warfare, yet we are confident that we shall continue to exist and develop. We will develop from guerrilla warfare into a war of manoeuvre until finally a basic change of strength between the enemy and our armed forces comes about. Generally speaking, our Army has been doing quite well with its ambush tactics. The enemy admits that this form of operation is proving difficult to counteract. A few of our units have even attempted outflanking tactics on a limited scale, combined with surprise raids on small enemy bases for the purpose of seizing arms. It is evident that our Army has made strong improvements both in regard to

tactics and methods when compared to our operations of a year ago.

If we continue to strive to make the most of our experiences in combat, to better our training, and to organize attacks on a larger scale, we will improve our ambush tactics, seize even more enemy arms, better our outflanking techniques, and improve our tactics in raiding garrison forces stationed in the smaller enemy bases. We will then be in a position to overcome our shortcomings (such as the enemy's employment of highly-developed communication lines and a multitude of small bases), turning the enemy's strong points into his liabilities. We shall also be able to seize more arms and to compel the enemy to disperse his forces to an even greater extent. In the past year, we have inflicted serious casualties upon the foe. According to as yet incomplete reports, a ten-to-one ratio exists between enemy casualties and those suffered by our own forces. If we can inflict even greater losses on the enemy, at the same time expending a minimum of ammunition, his morale can be expected to suffer correspondingly. No figures as to the ratio of loss of arms between the enemy and ourselves exists, but it is safe to assume that his losses greatly exceed ours. This is but added proof that our Liberation Army will continue to exist and develop.

8. The great strength of our Liberation Army comes chiefly from the high political consciousness of its members. This is a singular advantage which can never be realized by the enemy and which is of great value to our Army. All officers and men in our Army hold complete faith in the Party and in the mission of the Army. Their hearts are filled with hatred for the foe. This is because both the officers and men of our Army were born and bred from the labourers' and peasants' struggle and from the people's democratic movement. Without such a high political standard we could never carry on this bitter life-and-death struggle. It is not unusual that we have had deserters in the course of the war. This is because some comrades have been too careless

in recommending and recruiting new members for the armed forces, or possibly because a few of the deserters were actually enemy spies who had originally infiltrated our ranks. Therefore, desertion and mutiny of this type have not harmed the quality of the Liberation Army. On the contrary, it actually enables the Liberation Army to become even more powerful, reliable and purified.

9. An additional important feature is the widespread and deep-rooted Party, Liberation Army and Min Yuen organizations ranging throughout the length and breadth of Malaya. Our activities cover every district and state in Malaya. The enemy hopes to concentrate his mechanized elements in strategic operations against our forces. However, such widespread activities compel him to disperse his units in protecting production centres located in the large and small towns. This has undoubtedly weakened his employment of mechanized forces and diminished the momentum of his strategic offensive operations, although the enemy still maintains an offensive position. In addition, our widespread activities have given the enemy trouble in the selection of targets for concentrated attack. Against this background, our Army remains in a position to expand to an even greater degree.

10. Victory in this struggle depends on the strong and experienced leadership of the Malayan Communist Party. Our Party can claim over twenty years' experience in Party organization and Min Yuen development, including the leadership in the anti-Japanese War, and, of course, the leadership in the past one-and-a-half years' anti-British war. A few of our comrades look down upon our past struggles, regarding these as useless and of dubious value. Such an attitude is wrong. The history of our Party in the past twenty years, especially in the last ten years, is rich in experience, awaiting our utilization. It should be pointed out that our Party has had more than five years of experience in guerrilla warfare, especially the guerrilla war now being waged under peculiar circumstances in Malaya. A majority of our Party's

leaders and members can boast participation in the anti-Japanese war, undergoing at that time the test of a ruthless struggle. Our highranking officers have all exhibited confidence and courage in such difficult periods as the initial stage of the Japanese Occupation, the brutal attacks launched by the Japanese and the serious condition resulting from the 'Comrade Wright Incident'. In all these they continued to lead comrades of all states in building up the armed forces, expanding the Party, and developing the Min Yuen organizations. The present leaders in the Central Committee are all heroes of three years and eight months of the anti-Japanese war in which they fought without an army, with few weapons, and without an early Min Yuen organization. But by the close of the war they had succeeded in laying a strong and virile foundation for struggle including a military, Party and Min Yuen base. We should therefore have complete confidence in the experience and leadership of our Party.

11. Malaya has dense, lengthy jungle ranges extending from south to north. The jungle is disadvantageous because it is devoid of masses. However, it can also prove advantageous for our Army in providing cover for its movements and regions for safe bivouac. The jungle also renders the larger enemy weapons and bombing useless. It is more difficult for the enemy to launch a concentrated attack upon us; at the same time, it permits our Army to manoeuvre about swiftly. Although there are no people in the jungles, it is true that many squatter camps are adjacent to the jungle regions. This is why our Army makes use of the jungle for camps to work from in organizing Min Yuen activities and mobilizing the masses in nearby squatter areas, eventually turning these into temporary bases or rear areas for our Army. In other words, extensive Min Yuen and Party organizations, coupled with a topography of long jungle ranges, have proved to be most advantageous to our Army in establishing temporary bases as well as in conducting guerrilla operations throughout the various districts and States in Malaya. The shortcomings of

these temporary bases are evident in their vulnerability and in their impermanent nature. However, they have proved a great boon to our Army in the period before permanent and consolidated bases could be established. In spite of their difficult and uncertain position, temporary bases have proved, during both the anti-Japanese war and the past one-and-a-half year's struggle against the English, to be adequate to support the growth of guerrilla warfare.

12. In the past year, a number of advantageous international factors have been rapidly developing. These factors accrue chiefly from the firm leadership exhibited by the Soviet Union in the peace-loving democratic camp of the world. The near-completion of Russia's post-war five-year plan, which will bring further advancement towards the goal of Communism, the rapid advancement in the field of economic reconstruction towards Socialism made by all the new democratic countries of Eastern Europe with the support of the USSR; the unmasking of the American, British, and their stooge, Tito's spy ring in Eastern Europe; the growth of the World Peace Movement, fostered principally by the toiling masses of the world; the serious set-back of the Imperialists in their plot for waging war; and on the Asian side, the tremendous victory of the peoples of China; the liberation of 90 per cent. of her own soil by the Vietnam Democratic Republic; the establishment of a base for resolute armed struggle by the masses in Burma; and the growth of guerrilla forces both in the Philippines and in Indonesia.

Basically, as with the revolutionary war in China, the present struggle in Malaya promises to be a long and bitter one. However, current world conditions are entirely different from those in 1928 when the Red Army was created in China. Twenty years ago, the strength of world peace and democracy was at a low ebb, whereas today it is definitely on the rise. Twenty years ago, we had only one friend with political power and military might. Today, we have at our side many friends, such as the Soviet Union, China,

all the new democratic nations, the people in the colonies and semi-colonies, the democratic elements and working class in Imperialist nations, among whom a few can claim strong political power, while others are well equipped with arms to wage a life-and-death struggle against the Imperialists. We are in no way isolated. Our struggle has been the chief concern of our allies throughout the world. The Soviet Union supports us both in her propaganda and publications. Our successes in this struggle were cited by the World Federation of Trade Unions, the World Federation of Democratic Youths, the World Students' Federation, the World Federation of Women's Unions, and the Communist Youth League in Britain. The WFTU, the Asian and Australian Trade Unions' Conference and the Asian Women's Representative Conference also voiced support for us. In his address at the World Federation of Trade Unions' Conference, Liu Shao-ch'i, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Republic, pointed out that the armed struggle waged by the people in colonial and semi-colonial areas was the chief form of the current struggle, Liu has served to strengthen even more the determination of the Malayan peoples in their present struggle.

13. The close of last year witnessed a clearer picture of the increasing decline and isolation of British power. The following are a few simple self-evident facts: The finances of the Federation Government were exhausted at the beginning of 1949. Excluding expenditures for British and Indian troops, the enemy has had to spend $300,000 daily and more than $100,000,000 yearly. In a brief year and a half, the enemy was forced to shift the burden of resettlement of the squatters from the Government to the Malayan Chinese Association, an organization of Chinese traitors who again conveniently transfer their burden to the common masses (by means of operating lotteries). The people's livelihood becomes more difficult and the number of unemployed increases following the devaluation of the British pound, which caused an even higher

cost of living but held down wages. The above facts point up the economic plight of the foe.

On the political side, the prestige of the enemy is now at an all-time low because of its repeated extension of the period of the Emergency, thus plunging all Malaya into an unending war. The true face of the enemy is now evident in the eyes of the people who are now totally disillusioned. As a result of the momentous victory in China, the enemy has increased his political assaults against the Overseas Chinese. The enemy's true colours will soon become apparent to the naked eyes of the people residing in the larger urban areas. The Chinese bourgeoisie and the reactionary cliques are beginning to waver following the huge successes in China.

On the military side, the enemy is confronted with many difficulties in obtaining reinforcements for Malaya because of his commitments in Hong Kong, Africa, Palestine (where he concentrates on instigating clashes amongst the native peoples), West Germany and Greece in Eastern Europe (where his aim is to practice anti-Russian, Anti-Communist, anti-popular, and anti-democratic policies of Imperialism).

Note: Sections three to six in this study deal more particularly with purely military topics and are of only secondary interest here. They have, therefore, not been translated. The interested reader is referred to the original source noted in the bibliography.

VII. *Studies in Over-all Strategic Problems*

The Party's analysis of over-all strategic problems, which appeared in Chapter IV of the work, *Strategic Problems of the Malayan Revolutionary War,* having weathered one year's severe, cruel experience in practical combat, has verified some of the problems as being completely valid (i.e. general strategic principles, over-all strategic principles, frontal battles, a war of manoeuvre or guerrilla warfare, and so forth). The analysis of a few other problems, however, needs to be examined more closely

in order to forestall the growth of bias in the actual execution of these methods. Some even need to be amended.

What are those features that need explanation or rectification?

1. In 'Problems of Battles of Annihilation and Battles of Attrition', we advocated battles of annihilation and not battles of attrition. As battles of attrition bring us no spoils, we are very much against their use. In general, our aims in this war should be annihilation rather than attrition — maximum gains with a minimum of losses. Each platoon and each company should strive to achieve this goal; each battalion and each regiment should follow suit. All individual units should endeavour to obtain a maximum of gain with a minimum of losses in each operation. If we did not follow this method, then we should soon be cut off from our sources of ammunition, face a shortage of arms, and eventually be forced to cease fighting altogether. Of course, any attempt to realize such ends at all costs in each separate battle, is unwise. This would not permit us to employ other means of sabotage and annihilation operations. This is why the statement, 'Routing the enemy by inflicting heavy casualties on him, but failing to seize his arms, is in effect a defeat', is a biased statement. Because we must adapt the general strategic aims of our operations to local conditions, we must pay closest attention to the ramifications and effects of our actions. Strengthening 'the seizure of arms' is, of course, a proper goal, and should be the chief aim of all our soldiers. But to make 'the seizure of arms' our one and only aim, neglecting all others, is a cardinal error.

2. Our analysis of 'initiative, cunning and planning' is fundamentally correct. But the explanation of decentralization is inadequate. At present every one of our units is acting separately and independently, but this is not absolute decentralization, it is only a kind of relative dispersal. Therefore, all those normally systematically dispersed units should reassemble to a certain degree to obtain larger successes and to deal bigger blows against the foe. This is the correct course. But when we are finished with

such operations at the time when the enemy starts his large-scale counter-offensives, we then find ourselves lacking suitable ground for retreat and our main force should then be ingeniously redispersed, to avoid furnishing a massed target for the foe. At present, it is difficult to bring off successive major operations. After we find the completion of each large-scale operation, if conditions do not warrant another immediate operation, our main force should be dispersed and ordered to carry on minor operations. When times and conditions permit, we should again mass and embark upon another major operation. As soon as this is completed, we should again disperse. In this manner, we should continually rotate our actions. Only through this system can we make fullest use of our capabilities.

3. The documentary analysis concerning 'seizing the initiative in combat' is rather biased. According to the conditions of the Malayan Revolutionary War, in order to seize the power or initiative, apart from concentrating and massing superior strength in campaigns, we should also keep in mind the need for action while dispersed, assaulting continuously in many minor operations. These two methods appear inconsistent and yet they are interrelated. If repeatedly employed, these two combine to gain us a kind of initiative in continual and successive victories. It is an error to neglect either of these methods.

4. We should now discuss the massing of superior force. In the earlier analysis, it was not made clear that it is a concentration of highly efficient and well-trained troops which is equal in importance to tactics employed. It was also not clearly explained that until we can create permanent bases in the Malayan Revolutionary War, the tactics of relative dispersal are of first importance. This type of dispersal is not absolute, it is relative. It is considered relative because we disperse our forces only after adjusting the concentrated movements of each individual dispersed unit in accordance with certain patterns and scales. Furthermore, each individual dispersed fighting unit should, at

certain periods, preserve that pattern and not scatter in a disorderly way or without plan. Finally, due consideration should be given to redispersal. Throughout the whole period prior to the establishment of permanent bases, each dispersed independent active unit is capable of expanding its own region, daily increasing the scope and area of its activities. Speaking in general, the tactics of relative dispersal should be employed throughout all Malaya, differing only slightly because of problems in numerical strength or local conditions. Basically, however, it is still relative dispersal. The lessons of the past year have taught us the error of such statements as: 'If an all-out assault upon the enemy is ineffective, it will have the result of wasting our own strength and permitting the enemy to eliminate us individually', and 'such attacks only result in our defeat and separate annihilation by the foe'.

5. The analysis of the problems of bases also needs clarification. First the sentence, 'no bases means that we cannot possibly carry on a protracted, hazardous and cruel revolutionary war', deserves note. While it is precise and in general a valid assumption, it is and remains a broad interpretation. We might better say through experience that temporary bases can also accomplish this purpose. However, without permanent bases, we recognize the impossibility of driving the British imperialists from Malaya. Because the nation-wide temporary bases are capable of partly shouldering the responsibilities of permanent bases, we must continue to resort to guerrilla warfare, and are not yet able to bring the revolution to a successful conclusion. At the beginning of our civil war, vast numbers of temporary bases were already in operation throughout Malaya. But before they could be considered permanent in nature, they would have to undergo a certain period for development. Second, regarding the question of a popular political power and a people's government, the outlook of our original statement is a bit too academic. Although the materialization of a people's government takes place only at the completion of the

establishment of permanent bases, the gradual realization of a popular governing authority is also possible through Min Yuen organizations which gradually conduct their activities along the lines of a governing body. Third, regarding the question of a people's armed self-defense organization, i.e. our partisan forces, our original statements tended to magnify the difficulties and distorted the possible employment of these forces which, prior to the establishment of bases, are admittedly restricted but not altogether without their uses. Regarding the question of arming these partisans, it should be realized that they also can gain the protection afforded by the jungle, which will serve to make up for a deficiency in armament. Finally, we should discuss the question of temporary bases. It was not previously made clear that in addition to maintaining the existing temporary bases, every State should strive to create more and more such bases. Then our armed forces would have more bases to operate from and would have more people to employ in their support. Thus our operations could expand more quickly, spread more widely and function more universally.

A year ago, the Party's analysis of the overall strategic problems was insufficient and, in some parts, in error. This was because the Party failed to take full cognizance of certain special points. At that time, the Party's recognition of combat peculiarities was basically sound. Therefore, the Party's ruling on all-important and basic guiding principles at the time was also sound, as was the fundamental spirit of the whole document. But because of a lack of combat experience, the document was then incomplete. Hence, some of the more salient special features which were biased or incorrect have been pointed out.

VIII. *Intensify Study of the Party's Resolutions in Actual Practice*

Through the actual practice of warfare our Party's military doctrines are continually developing. Before the struggle began, or in the earliest stages of hostilities, it was absolutely impossible

for us to have a ready-made and complete set of theories on both strategy and tactics, or to have found it unnecessary to make any modifications and alterations through the process of actual combat. Such behaviour would have been basically counter to the theories of Marxism-Leninism. In the earlier periods of the struggle our ideas and theories were simple and crude and on many individual problems we held incorrect or biased opinions. Now we should strive to achieve progress by continually improving upon our concepts.

There is one final vital point. The reason we have discovered our errors today is because we have carried out the Party's resolutions faithfully all throughout this past year. Only by faithfully executing the Party's resolutions could we study and improve upon our revolutionary course. Without such faithful service to the Party, we should not have been able to recognize the real truth nor to tell the difference between right and wrong. Therefore, each member, each comrade, especially those holding official status, should continually and repeatedly study the substance and spirit of all documents, acquainting themselves thoroughly with the contents and fundamentals of all Party doctrines.

PARTY DIRECTIVE OF 1 OCTOBER 1951[11]

I. *Past Errors*

Serious errors have been committed in the past by state organizations, and many working methods have been diametrically

[11]Directive issued by the Political Bureau of the Malayan Communist Party on 1 October 1951. This translation is adapted from that which appeared in the *London Times*, 1 December 1952, p. 5. Limited modifications have been made for reasons of greater clarity. The original Directive was captured from a Communist courier who was taking it to Singapore. It was reportedly fifty-seven typewritten pages (in translation) and covering such points as penetration of labour unions 'on a guerrilla basis'. The entire text has not been made available by the authorities.

opposed to accepted principles. Party members are reminded that their primary duty is to expand and consolidate the organization of the masses, which is to take precedence over the purely military objective of destroying the enemy. This is to be attained by creating a united front of all communities and classes by acquiring the support of the bourgeoisie and capitalists and avoiding violent tactics which have antagonized peasants and workers. Attempts are to be made to penetrate into the police, Home Guard, the Malay Regiment, and the civil service.

To win the masses the party must (i) stop seizing identity and ration cards; (ii) stop burning new villages and coolie lines; (iii) stop attacking post offices, reservoirs, power stations, and other public services; (iv) refrain from derailing civilian trains with high explosives; (v) stop throwing grenades and take great care, when shooting running dogs found mixing with the masses, to prevent stray shots from hurting the masses; and (vi) stop burning religious buildings, sanitary trucks, Red Cross vehicles, and ambulances.

II. *Explaining Motives*

Rubber trees, tin mines, and factories must not be destroyed because of the resentment of the workers who lose their employment, but, to improve their living conditions and warn capitalists to attend to their grievances, limited destruction can be carried out with the permission or at the request of the workers. The motive must be carefully explained to them and alternative employment found.

The task of controlling the masses is delegated to the Min Yuen over which control can be exercised by enforcing any resolution that has been carried by a majority. Stricter discipline is to be imposed, and members must understand their responsibility for consolidating the organization and protecting its working principles, secrecy, and security. Those who fail must be punished but there is to be no killing or thrashing; only advice, criticism,

fines, and education. If the masses do not accept the Party's opinions, its standpoint must be re-orientated and Party leaders should examine the relationship between the Min Yuen and the masses and use their discretion in applying fundamental principles to avoid difficulties. Understanding of the condition of the masses should be an important item for every party meeting.

To involve the masses in revolution, the party must exploit lawful disputes and demand concessions from the Government and the capitalists.

III. *Lawful Means*

These activities must not appear to be designed to create dissension or to overthrow the Government, and they should be carried out in accordance with government regulations, though they will occasionally digress from them. At other times the party is to be more compromising to gain the sympathy of the middle and upper classes. The Malayan Chinese Association should be used to present the party's demands to the Government and negotiate and settle its problems.

Many government measures that the Communist Party evidently finds embarrassing are to be exploited rather than attacked. No new villages are to be destroyed, but reasonable and acceptable conditions to protect the interests of resettled Chinese squatters are to be put forward, and whenever possible their demands are to be fulfilled by lawful means. The formation of the Home Guard units is to be delayed, obstructed, disabled, or exploited. Stubborn reactionaries are to be killed, but others are to be persuaded to help the party or remain neutral.

If the masses are conscribed, propaganda must point out that they have been enlisted to fight in China and Burma as well as Malaya, and others should avoid conscription by escaping to China or India. Should they decide to join the Communist bands, they must first save food; otherwise a sudden rush of recruits will create an insoluble food shortage.

IV. *Food, Not Terror*

The self-protection corps, in which the young recruit serves before graduating to armed units, is to infiltrate new villages and collect food instead of committing acts of terrorism. Stricter security is to be enforced, and cell leaders are to restrict their activities and attendances at party meetings to avoid suspicion.

Political activity and education are to be increased in large towns. The international and Malayan situations must be analyzed to strengthen confidence in the revolution, and morale must be raised by instilling class hatred against the British and the capitalist system. Grievance meetings, at which people will describe their sufferings, are to be encouraged, and the widespread belief that the Chinese peasant is worse off than the Malay must be corrected. More 'know more characters'[12] classes are to be held, and the military and civilian reader published by the press of the Malayan Race's Liberation Army will be used.

Yellow trade unions[13] are to be penetrated and their leaders and members may be assassinated if the masses can be made to recognize their treachery to the class struggle. Where there is access to estate-workers, secret cells are to be set up to control so-called yellow unions.

V. *Warning Attacks*

To unite the bourgeoisie of all races, small and middle capitalists are to be urged to join the movement or to give material support. If they do not pay subscriptions to party funds, neighbouring estates can be attacked as a warning. Big capitalists in areas dominated by the party are to be ordered to improve working conditions, and they can be eliminated if it is considered necessary. Wage cuts are to be opposed if the price of rubber falls, and if estates close down demands must be made that their control be transferred to the workers.

[12]Reference is made to the Communist Party's drive against illiteracy in its ranks.

[13]Yellow or non-Communist unions, as against Red or Left-dominated trade unions.

A table of subscriptions to the party to be paid by big and small planters of all communities has been prepared. Estates of less than twenty acres are to pay 50 cents an acre when rubber is selling at between $30 (Malayan currency) and $60 a picul,[14] and estates of more than five hundred acres are to pay $9 an acre when rubber is selling at more than $90 a picul. A similar scale has been laid down for tin mines, but ample protection is to be given only to owners of small concerns.

Enemy personnel who surrender in battle are not to be killed, except traitors, British and Gurkha troops, senior civil servants, and police officers. Corpses will not be burned, stripped, or dismembered, and gold teeth will not be extracted. Asian officers are not to be assassinated, unless they are police or resettlement officers, and Home Guards and auxiliary policemen are to be paid for weapons seized. IOU chits can be used. British officers and managers of production centres can be killed, but not British health officers and engineers.

VI. *Changing Conditions*

Members of the Kuomintang and the Malayan Chinese Association are liable to assassination, but not members of the United Malay Nationalist Organization and the Independence of Malaya Party, because many Malays still believe that these bodies protect their interests. Police and civil servants are to be urged to join the Min Yuen or to provide information. For this task propaganda is considered to be especially important, and the greatest attention is to be given to publicity and its distribution.

While military action is recognized as necessary for the morale of the Malayan Race's Liberation Army, priority is to be given to reorganization to meet changing conditions. Whether a band should continue to fight or should withdraw for retraining and redeployment should depend on local conditions.

[14]A picul is a measure of weight which, by tradition, a man can carry on his back. In Malaya, it is 133 1/3 pounds.

APPENDIX II

EFFECTIVE BRITISH PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE LEAFLET

Leaflet No : 642
Languages : Chinese & Tamil
Request By : SEIO, Johore

Translation

COMMUNIST BANDITS SLASH RUBBER TREES
CLAIMING TO DESTROY ENEMY ECONOMY

CARTOON

We old-hundred-surname fellow-workers depend upon rubber-tapping to maintain our parents, wives and children, working hard

and praying to the gods and buddha for a stable livelihood, secure and felicitous.

We tap more rubber, fetch better price, and have a happier life.

BUT THE COMMUNIST BANDITS SLASH RUBBER TREES

The Communist bandits say this is to destroy the economy of the enemies.

This saying is very true.

Because by so doing the Communist bandits break our fellow-workers' rice-bowls, to destroy the economy of our fellow-workers completely.

The Communist bandits, with their wolf's heart and dog's lung, treat us, the innocent people, as their enemies — forcing us into unemployment, even into starving our whole families to death!

IS IT NOT TIME THAT WE UNITE TO STRIKE THE COMMUNIST BANDITS FOR REVENGE?

APPENDIX III

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ON MALAYAN COMMUNISTS

CHANG CH'I Deputy Commander, Seventh Independent Force, MPAJA.

CHANG CHIH-CHING Born of Chinese parents in 1916 in Johore. Graduated from a junior middle school in Singapore. Member of the MPAJA in Johore during the Japanese Occupation. Attended the inauguration of the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions in Singapore in February 1946 as a representative of the Johore branch of the MCP. Chang left Singapore shortly after the guerrilla revolt in the spring of 1948, and is believed to have gone to the China mainland. There is some indication that he was one of the principal liaison officers between the MCP and the Chinese Communist Party.

CHANG T'IEN-HO Deputy Commander, Fourth Independent Force, MPAJA.

CH'EN CHIA-KENG Reported to have been the head of the anti-Japanese movement directed by the MCP in 1940-1.

CH'EN KUANG Commandant of the Military Academy of the MPAJA during the Japanese Occupation.

CH'EN P'ING (alias: Chin Peng; Wong Ping; Wong Mun-wah) Born in Perak about 1922, of Hokkien parents. Attended secondary school in Penang. Believed to have joined the MCP in the thirties, possibly under the tutelage of Lai Teck. Junior officer in the MPAJA during World War II. Travelled to London with the 'Victory Contingent' of the MPAJA in the fall of 1945. Awarded the Order of the British Empire for his military ser-

vice against the Japanese during the war. Believed to have made several trips to the China mainland in the years immediately following the Japanese surrender. In 1947-8, publisher of an official communist party organ, *The Democrat,* a weekly newspaper distributed in Kuala Lumpur. Elected Chairman of the Political Bureau of the MCP following the 'Wright Incident' in 1947. Ch'en speaks English as well as Malay, and several Chinese dialects. He is five feet seven inches tall, of slim build, with a fair skin but with a pimply complexion. He walks with a slight limp in his right leg. As leader of the MCP, he has a reward of $80,000 on his head.

CH'EN TA-CHIH Deputy Commander, The First Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

CH'EN T'IEN Commander, The Fourth Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

CH'EN YANG-CH'ING Reported to have been elected head of the Chinese Anti-Japanese Mobilization Society in Malaya in December 1941.

CHOU YANG-PIN Commander, The First Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

CHUANG CH'ING Commander, The Seventh Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

FU TA-CHING Reported to have been the organizer of the Nan Yang (South Seas) Communist Party in Malaya in the twenties.

HUANG CHIEH Deputy Commander, The Sixth Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

HUANG LI Deputy Commander, The Fifth Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

LAM SWEE (Lan Jui) Joined the MCP in 1940. Party liaison officer in Johore. Officer in the MPAJA. Member, South Johore Regional Committee, MCP. Acting Secretary-General, Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions in 1946. Active in the trade-union movement in 1947 and 1948. After June 1948, named Political Commissar of the Fourth Independent

Force, Malayan People's Liberation Army. Served concurrently as a member of the South Johore Regional Committee, MCP. Deserted the party in 1950.

LIEW YIT FUN (Liu I-fan) Born in Jamaica, BWI, in 1915. His father was a Hakka and his mother either an Australian or an American. Left Jamaica at the age of four. Spent his youth and received his education in Hong Kong. Came to Malaya in 1934. Served as a rubber tapper in Selangor. Entered the MCP in Selangor and carried on Party work there for several years. Named Representative of the Negri Sembilan Headquarters, MCP in 1940. Guerrilla leader of MPAJA units operating along the North Johore-Negri Sembilan border during World War II. Elected member of the Negri Sembilan Committee of the MCP in 1944. After the war, became manager of the *Min Sheng Pao,* purchased by the MCP as an official organ in 1948. Reported to have been one of the three top leaders of the Party prior to the 1948 guerrilla revolt. Arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department of the Federation of Malaya in June 1948.

LAI TECK (Lai T'e alias Mr. Wright) Believed to be a French-Annamite, in his 'forties. Reported to have received extensive revolutionary training in the Soviet Union; lived for some years in China. Sent to Malaya (probably in 1937) to reorganize and lead the MCP. Elected Chairman, Central Committee of the MCP before World War II. Directed Party activities during the Japanese Occupation. Directed party strategy in the early post-war years. Held post of Secretary of the MCP in 1946-7. Purged from the party late in 1947. Believed to be in Burma at the present time.

(See also: Huang Na-Lu)

LAM TAT (alias Ah Tin) Member, Political Bureau, MCP.

LAU MAH (alias Kah Sin) Born in Perak between 1910 and 1915. Educated in British schools in Singapore. Served as a guerrilla officer in Perak under the MPAJA during World War

II. Regarded as one of the party's leading guerrilla commanders. Elected member of the Perak Executive Committee of the MCP after the war. Reported to be a forceful speaker with considerable energy and drive. Regarded as one of the twelve most important Communists in Malaya.

LEE ONG-TUNG Member, Political Bureau, MCP.

LIAO WEI-CHUNG Commander, Fifth Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

LIN CHIANG-SHIH Reported to have been a pre-war leader in the MCP.

LIN T'IEN Commander, Third Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

LIU YAU(Lau Yeh; Lau Yew) Born in 1918. Commander-in-Chief of the MPAJA and Chairman of the Central Military Committee of the MCP during World War II. After the liberation, went to London with the 'Victory Contingent' of the MPAJA. Reported to have been one of the military leaders in the 1948 guerrilla revolt. Killed in action in a skirmish with government forces on 21 July 1948.

LU CHENG Communist labour leader in Singapore in 1945-6. Arrested by the British Military Administration in April 1946 and deported to China. Now believed to be one of the leading representatives of the MCP in China.

MENAP JEPUN (Also known as Menap 'The Jap' Jepun) Born in Pahang of a Malay mother and Japanese father. Attended secondary school in Kuantan. Joined the MCP after the close of World War II. Appointed Commander, the Tenth 'Malay' Force of the Malayan Race's Liberation Army in 1949. Killed in action in an engagement with British-Gurkha troops in May 1952.

MIN KEONG (alias Then Liang; Liew Min-chiang) Born in 1922 of Kheh parents. Speaks Kheh, Mandarin and a little Hokkien and Malay. Junior officer in the MPAJA during World War II. Military Commander in the Malayan Race's Libera-

tion Army in 1950. Considered to be one of the senior officers in that force at the present time.

SHANG CH'IN Deputy Commander, The Second Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

SHAO CHANG (alias Soon Ming) Member, Political Bureau, MCP.

SIU LAU Secretary of the Malacca Provincial Committee of the MCP in 1945. Reported to have been a close friend of Lai Teck. One of the leaders who advocated the 'moderate policy' in 1945-6. Disagreed with the Central Committee regarding the guerrilla revolt of 1948 and was reportedly expelled from the party at that time. Has been called the 'Malayan Tito'.

TENG FU-LU Commander, The Second Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

WANG CH'ING Commander, The Sixth Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

WANG HSIANG-FU Deputy Commander, The Third Independent Force, MPAJA (1945).

HUANG NA-LU Reported to have headed a group of Chinese Communist revolutionaries sent to Malaya from Yenan in 1937. May be an alias for Lai Teck.

HUANG SHAO-TUNG Reported to have been the leader of the MCP in the early thirties.

WRIGHT, COMRADE (See: Lai Teck)

WU TIEN-WANG Born in Perak in 1915 or 1919. Completed secondary English and Chinese education in 1937. Active in the organization of the anti-Japanese movement and labour in the pre-war period. Arrested by the British in 1939 for seditious activities, but released in the general amnesty for Communists after the outbreak of the war. Guerrilla leader in the MPAJA during World War II. Chairman of the Perak Committee of the MCP in September 1945. Named Chairman of the Singapore Municipal Committee, MCP, in November of the year. Active in British-Communist liaison groups such

as the Singapore Advisory Council to the British Military Administration in 1945-6. One of the three representatives of the MCP to the Empire Communist Conference, held early in 1947 in London. Returned to Malaya in June of that year. Was considered the 'unofficial spokesman' of the MCP in the post-war era. Believed to have gone underground with the out-break of the 1948 guerrilla revolt.

YONG KO Member, Political Bureau, MCP.

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