

## **Seaweed & Soothing Words**

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No two people seem less likely to be friendly than Indonesia's President Sukarno and U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy. But on Bobby's official visit to Indonesia two years ago, he and Sukarno quickly fell into an easy kidding relationship. Hopeful that the glow from the previous meeting still lingered, Lyndon Johnson last week dispatched Bobby to Sukarno's Tokyo vacation headquarters to try to cool off the Indonesian leader in his bitter dispute with the fledgling Federation of Malaysia.

By bluff and bluster, Sukarno is determined to "crush Malaysia," which he claims is a "neocolonialist" British puppet state. Along the perilous 900-mile jungle border between Indonesian Borneo and the Malaysian territories of Sarawak and Sabah, British and Malaysian troops have fought a series of bloody clashes with Indonesian "volunteers," who dart back and forth across the frontier sacking military outposts.

Over a breakfast of seaweed, bean paste soup and pickled cabbage in Tokyo's Imperial Hotel, Kennedy told Sukarno of U.S. concern that the Malaysian crisis would flare into full-scale war. Behind Bobby's soothing words was the clear implication that the U.S. might curb its \$12 million aid program to the chaotic and nearly bankrupt Indonesian economy. Sukarno got the message, expressed a willingness to discuss the crisis with Malaysia's Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman and with Philippines President Diosdado Macapagal, who also opposes the federation. At week's end Bobby flew off to Manila and Kuala Lumpur, seeking an O.K. from Macapagal and the Tunku. Chances for a meeting of the three seem good.

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