



Leon Comber

**Malaya's Secret Police 1945-60**

**The Role of the Special Branch  
in the Malayan Emergency**







*Malaya's Secret Police* tells the story of the organisation, the personnel, the troubles and the ultimate triumph of Malaya's intelligence services. Former Special Branch officer Leon Comber provides information inaccessible to most researchers, including comprehensive charts and a wealth of details, especially on personalities. Together these provide a unique insight into the world of intelligence. This book reminds us that generating good counterinsurgency intelligence took time—years not months—careful experimentation, and painstaking acquisition of knowledge of the country and its people, culture and languages.

—Karl Hack, History Lecturer, Open University, UK, Co-editor of *Dialogues with Chin Peng: new views on the Malayan Communist Party* (2004).

Leon Comber's admirable study of the vital role played by the Malayan Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency will undoubtedly become recommended reading for anyone interested in counterinsurgency intelligence. It could well provide, too, the framework for the use of intelligence in counterinsurgency operations in other parts of the world such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Dr Comber is well qualified to write it as aside from being a specialist in South East Asian affairs, he served as a Chinese-speaking Special Branch officer in the Emergency.

—Dr Leong Chee Woh, former Malayan Special Branch officer (1953–84), retired Deputy Director of Operations, Malaysian Special Branch, Royal Malaysian Police.

Other books by Leon Comber

13 May 1969:

A Historical Survey of Sino-Malay Relations

Through a Bamboo Window:  
Fate and Fortune in 1950s Singapore & Malaya  
(Singapore Heritage Society book)

The Hui: Chinese Secret Societies in  
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The Traditional Mysteries of Chinese  
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# MALAYA'S SECRET POLICE

## 1945-60



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