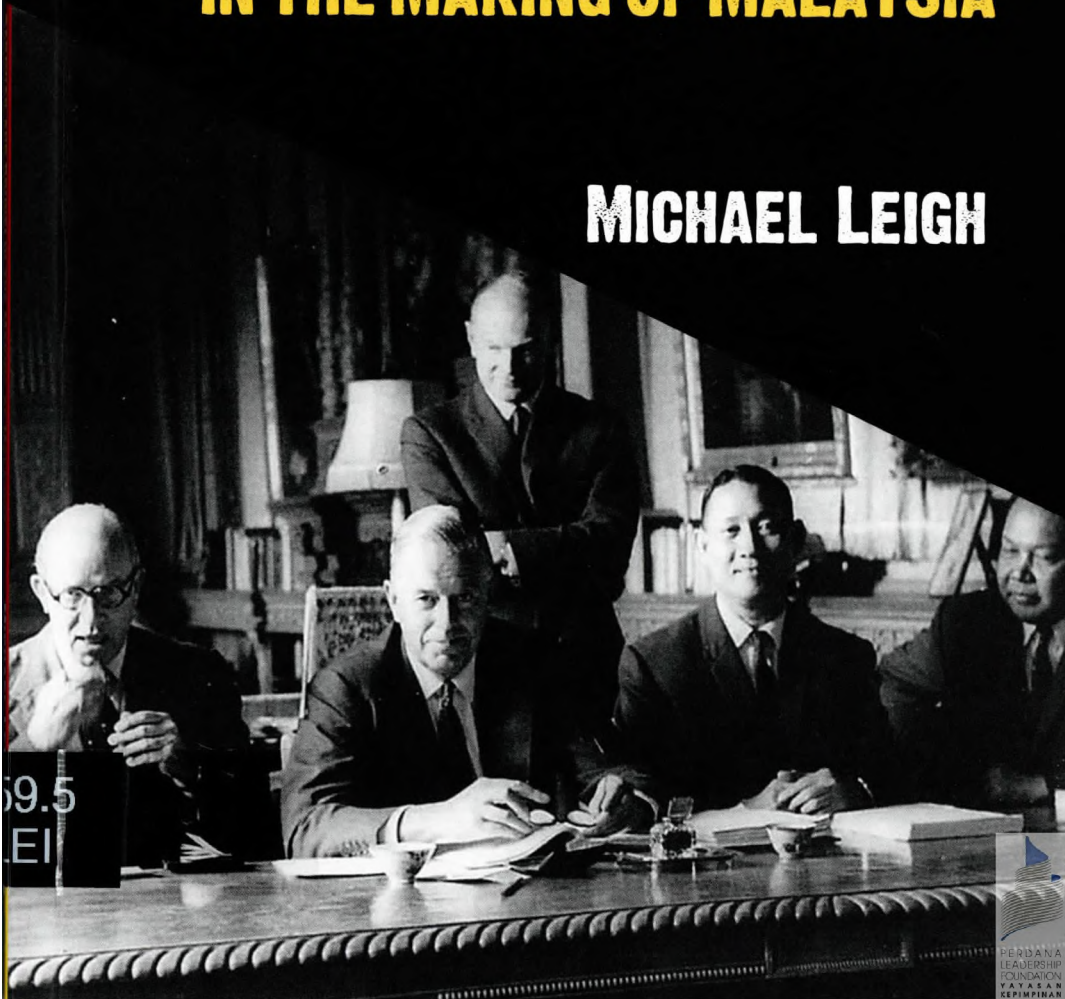


# DEALS, DATUS AND DAYAKS

SARAWAK AND BRUNEI  
IN THE MAKING OF MALAYSIA

MICHAEL LEIGH



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# **DEALS, DATUS AND DAYAKS**

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PUSTAKA PERDANA



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# Introduction

A treasure trove of the most highly classified UK records, known as the migrated archives, was progressively opened to the public, starting from 2012 until 2015. These records document the turbulent times, the heated discussions and the set of compromises that resulted in the formation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963. A second major source of newly released information comes from the files of the US Consulate in Kuching, a 'listening post' that functioned from 1964 until 1971. Those files have only recently been declassified at my request, and provide most interesting insights into the struggle to define and determine the process of integrating Sarawak and Sabah into the new nation. The third source is the declassified files from the Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, files that are progressively being made available to the public.

From these documents, it is crystal clear that the creation of Malaysia was no foregone conclusion, and whether Sarawak would form the new nation was uncertain right up to the last minute. There were also serious doubts as to whether or not Malaysia would become the third of Britain's 'failed federations'. The crucial sequence of events that ensured Malaysia's survival were the military coups in Jakarta (on 30 September and 1 October 1965), the assumption of total power by General Suharto in March 1966, and the end of Indonesian confrontation.

The first chapter deals with the concept of Malaysia and focuses upon the drivers for its formation, capitalising upon the May 1961 speech given by Tunku Abdul Rahman.

The second chapter explores Sarawak's response to the plan for a 'Greater Malaysia', comprising Malaya, Singapore, Brunei, Sarawak and North Borneo. Of particular interest are the 'thirteen points' from

This book tells the story of Malaysia's formation and its early struggle for survival. A treasure trove of recently de-classified records from the UK National Archives and the US Consulate in Kuching, demonstrate how the British, Singapore and Malayan governments seized upon the Brunei revolt, and Indonesian attacks across the Sarawak border, to justify their extensive use of coercive measures against the strongest opponents of the federation proposal, and to reinforce strong messaging that forming Malaysia was the best available future for Sarawak, Sabah and Singapore too.

Despite all of those efforts, new archival evidence shows how the political situation in Sarawak almost caused Malaysia to be aborted at the last minute. The book then goes on to document how strong international and internal pressures throughout 1964 and 1965 meant that the very survival of Malaysia was in doubt.

**Michael Leigh** arrived to commence his research in Sarawak in December 1962, at a turbulent time just after the Brunei revolt had been suppressed and shortly before the start of armed Indonesian confrontation. He has maintained an active interest as an analyst of the processes of political and economic change, and has authored some 60 books, chapters and articles on Sarawak and greater Malaysia, in particular *The Rising Moon: Political Change in Sarawak* (1974), *Council Negri Sarawak: Malaysia's Oldest Legislature* (1992) and *Mapping the Peoples of Sarawak* (2002).

He has held the position of Professor at the Universities of Sydney, Melbourne and UNIMAS, where he established the Institute of East Asian Studies.

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