



The Implications of Cold War on Malaysia State Building Process

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Abstract

The Cold War has affected the communities around the world. Malaysia was no exception in being affected by the turmoil the international world, particularly after the World War 2, due to ideological conflicts. Based on the domino theory, the ups and downs of particular country in terms of its, strong ideology, brings about network impacts to each country in the world. Thus, a freedom of Malaya and the establishment of Malaysia came from the history of Cold War which influenced the international scene. The establishment of Malaysia is seen as a mechanism to stop the influence of communism. The involvement leaders from Malaya, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak as well as Brunei Darussalam in the agenda to 'build' Malaysia with the approval from democratic countries showed a very strong cooperation that communism was a threat. This contributed to the creation of a new and bigger country. The wise Malaysian leaders in negotiating and being united in facing the global threats at that time, has shown that Malaysia's 'project' in stopping the communist theory which is also known domino theory, was successfully carried out and maintained till today. Therefore, Malaysia as a case study, on how a country was 'built' on the basis of stopping the spread of communism in saving the Southeast Asia from falling into the hands of communists, is unique and its effectiveness should be studied.

Keywords: Communism, Cold War, State Building

1. Introduction

Malaya achieved its independence on 31 August 1957 in a unique way. Through unity, compromise and tolerance between Malays and the ethnic Indians and Chinese, who worked together hand in hand for an independent Malaya, it created a success story for its future. Multiracial Malaya had arisen and adopted a united front in support of self-government. With its spirit of 'unity in diversity', Malaya and later Malaysia has remained relatively stable until the present, and this in itself makes a unique and interesting study. Malaysian nation building history is packed with several concepts and significant events, which reflect internal and external influences of the region, the most amazing being the compromise and tolerance by which Malaysia has come into existence. When the Federation of Malaysia came into being

on 16 September 1963, through diplomacy and compromise with the British, it marked the conclusion of a successful cooperative venture.

The 1950s to the 1970s, during Cold War, was a period of important transition for Malaysian national politics. A study this period will give a clear view of Malaysia's significant role in the region during the Cold War era. This paper will analyze the important elements in the 'clash of ideology' between the democratic and the communist movements. This paper will also emphasize the roles played by the United States of America and Britain in the Western front, in the fight against the emerging communists in Indonesia during Sukarno's presidency, which had a significant impact on Malaya and the new Federation of Malaysia at that time.

2. The Malay Archipelago and European Expansionism

The British and Dutch, until World War II, were the dominant colonial powers in the Malay Archipelago, nowadays, includes Malaysia and Indonesia. The colonization of these two countries created several changes in politics and culture in the Archipelago. A Treaty made in the 19th century between the Dutch and the British underlined the borders of influence between these two colonial powers. The 1824 Anglo-Dutch Treaty had immense consequences for the national identity of the subject people. The Brunei and Sulu Sultanate in Borneo, together with several Malay Kingdoms in the Malay Peninsula, were placed under the influence of the British. Sumatra and Java, together with other parts of Nusantara (Malay- archipelago), were under the influence of the Dutch. (Mills, 1966). This division threw the indigenous politics of the entire archipelago into chaos, separated from the traditional sultanate influence, which formerly dominated the political and social system. For example, the Sultanate of Johor-Riau separated into two, Johor and Singapore under the British, and Riau-Lingga under the Dutch. Under the terms of the treaty, the Malay Archipelago was divided into two separate zones of influence between the two major powers.

Again, in 1909, The Anglo-Siamese Treaty significantly divided the Malay Kingdoms in the northern part of the Malay Peninsula under Siam and Britain with the British gaining control of the states of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Terengganu, (Mills, 1966). As described by Turnbull in his chapter 'regionalism and nationalism', the expansionism of European colonialism had fundamentally affected the region where previously, 'no single empire had dominated the whole region' (Turnbull, 1999:258). European expansionism created frontiers of influence in the region, which have virtually continued until the era of the Cold War. Similar crisis situations were later demonstrated in the modern world and can be studied and evaluated in the Middle East, India-Pakistan, Korean Peninsula, Vietnam in 1970's, and presently in Iraq and Palestine-Israel. The Malay Archipelago was the first region to face the problem of interference by foreign superpowers, which left the region entirely in disarray.

2.1 Formation of the Southeast Asian Region

Southeast Asia was first brought into conception by grouping the countries of the region together during World War II for military purposes. The idea was brought up by accident at the Quebec Conference in August 1943, when the Western Allies decided to introduce a regional zone of command that would make it easier to monitor during the war. South East Asia Command, (SEAC), first came into being, with the combination of Burma, Malaya, Sumatra and Thailand, which at that time were mostly under British influence. Later, at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, SEAC included the Netherlands East Indies and Indochina, south of the sixteenth parallel. Only the northern part of Vietnam, Laos and the Philippines were not included into this concept of SEAC (Turnbull, 1999:258).

During World War II, all of the Southeast Asian countries were under Japanese influence. This was the first time in history that a colonial power, Japan, was able to form a single entity of domination in the region. The Japanese defeat of the European empire in Southeast Asia at that time significantly raised the spirit of nationalism of most of the Southeast Asian leaders. After World War II, and the surrender of the Japanese, many of the countries in the region claimed independence from their former European colonizers. Most amazingly, 'within ten years of the Japanese withdrawal, all Southeast Asia countries achieved independence', except the Kingdom of Brunei Darussalam.

3. The Cold War

3.1 The Malayan Emergency (1948-1960)

Following World War II, a new problem emerged for Malaya. After the Japanese surrendered the Malayan People's Anti Japanese Army, (MPAJA), which was supported by the British to fight the Japanese invasion, was asked to withdraw their weapons and integrate in the society as civilians. Before the British reestablished their authority however, the Parti Komunis Malaya, (PKM), or Malayan Communist Party, (MCP), tried to force Malaya into anarchy, by attempting to gain control of the police stations in order to free Malaya from colonialism. In 1948, Chinese Communist guerrilla fighters, (who had been armed by the British during the war), emerged from the jungle and under the rule of Chin Peng (Secretary General of the MCP), began their terror campaign to take over the country by force. British Military Administration (BMA) had been established by then, and the communist MCP had aggressively turned their attention to the new slogan of anti-imperialism. This had a significant effect on Malayan ethnic groups with disputes erupting among Muslim Malays and Chinese Communists. The Malayan Government at that time, along with many others in the Western

bloc, was apprehensive about the spread of international communism. Thus, an intense jungle war began, fought by the Malay forces and British Commonwealth forces, against the MCP.

During the first period after the emergency was declared, there was not much coordination between security forces. This situation continued until Lt. Gen. Sir Harold Briggs was appointed by British Malaya as Director of Operations in March 1950. Under his strategic program, called the Rancangan Briggs (Briggs Plan), by taking over the land of the Malays, he, along with his war executive committees (including Sir Henry Gurney, later assassinated by communist loyalists), coordinated emergency operations, and created 500 “Kampung Bharu” (new villages) for Malayan populations who lived in remote areas beyond government protection (Miller, 1965: 177). Under the plan introduced by Briggs and Gurney, the foundation was laid for eventual victory and political progress, which came much sooner than anyone expected (Miller, 1965: 177). Briggs Plan by the British had given 400,000 Chinese a residence (*Utusan Malaysia*, 16 January 2009). According to Raja Muda of Perak (the Crown Prince of Perak) Raja Dr Nazrin Shah, the Briggs Plan was displeased the Malay Rulers as showed by the statement of the Conference of Malay Rulers which took place on 24 Mei 1950 (*Utusan Malaysia*, 16 January 2009).

Deprived of their crucial sources of supply and information, the Communist insurgents began to attack the “Kampung Bharu”. Nevertheless, the security forces, which were now fighting on their own ground, proved to be too strong for the Communists. Under the Briggs Plan, in 1950, the pre-Federation Police had been expanded to cope with communist terrorism. More than 25,000 regulars police and 42,000 Special Constables, of which the majority were Malays were employed by the British Malayan Administration (O’Ballance, 1966:107). These forces were able to concentrate on jungle operations, thereby destroying the Communists and their camps.

The Malayan Emergency lasted for twelve years and it was declared over on 31 July 1960. That meant, for the newly independent country, fighting communism was a major priority in bringing stability among its ethnic based society. During the peak of the Cold War, this victory significantly injected more confidence into democratic Malaya and the Western Allies, that the ‘domino theory’ of communist expansion could be thrust aside. Significantly it was the only war that the West had decisively won against Communism. Deery states that the ‘Malayan Emergency’ during this period between 1948 to 1957, reflected the strategy applied by the U.S in Vietnam (Deery, 2002:29). He mentions that Sir Robert Thompson, who served in Malaya throughout the Emergency and headed the British Advisory Mission in South Vietnam noted:-

“Many Americans made studies of the British success during the Emergency in Malaya but these were largely superficial... it was never comprehended as a whole” (Deery, 2002:30).

Most important for the success in fighting communism was the lack of support given to the communist forces by the Muslim Malays, who are the prominent majority in Malaya. Most of the communist fighters were Chinese, and were influenced by Maoist ideology.

3.2 Independence in Malaya (1957)

During the first election in 1955, the Perikatan or Alliance party won 51 seats out of 52 seats. A mandate was given to Perikatan, led by Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Hajj to negotiate with the British, the idea of an independent Malaya. On 31 August 1957, Malaya was granted independence from British colonial rule and Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra al-Hajj became the first Prime Minister of Malaya, and later Malaysia, and remained in power until 1970. With independence, the country became a centralized Federation, with a constitutional monarchy. Kuala Lumpur became the capital city of the Federation. Each state has its own fully elected Dewan Undangan Negeri, (State Assembly), its government chosen from the party which has a majority of elected members in the Dewan (Assembly).

Since independence, the Alliance party, a coalition based on ethnic groups, has governed the Federation. It combines the United Malay Nation Organization (UMNO), Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) and Malayan Indian Congress (MIC), which represent Malays, Chinese, and Indians respectively. This coalition was the manifestation of an excellent idea, which contributed to the stability of Malaysian politics until 1969. The evolution of the Alliance formula was an exercise in arriving at some sort of consensus among the principal ethnic groups in Malaya. This concept became the backbone of Malaysian politics until the present.

4. ‘Cold War’ and Political Turbulence Faced By Malaysia (1960s)

4.1 Communism and its threat

Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Prime Minister of Malaya, stated his position over a new Federation of Malaysia. This idea for Greater Malaysia was declared for the first time in public on 27 May 1961 in Singapore. With support from the British, Tunku planned to merge all five territories of Malaya, Singapore, Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah. According to McKie (1963), the success of Tunku’s plan for merger, depended on support from Britain and the reaction of Indonesia. Tunku wanted to merge because he did not want the communists in Singapore to take over the island. McKie (1963) stressed his opinion that Lee Kuan Yew and Tunku knew that the British could give Singapore total independence without joining

Malaysia, however, it was feared that it would lead to a Communist 'take over' of Singapore. The MCP Central Committee then launched a campaign insisting that this merger of Greater Malaysia was a neo-colonialist conspiracy. The same slogan was used by, the communist influenced, Sukarno during the Indonesian confrontation with Malaysia.

If the communists were allowed to operate freely in Singapore, it would significantly jeopardize Malaya. Lee Kuan Yew, the Chief Minister of Singapore at the time, stressed that if the Malaya Government under Tunku did not react in a proper manner, the communists would take over Singapore and it would be just like having 'Cuba in the heart of Southeast Asia'. This can be observed in the statement made by Lee Kuan Yew:-

'Once Singapore is independent, the Communists believe they could undermine the Federation, if necessary by force of arms' (Lee Kuan Yew, 1961:76).

McKie stated that :-

"Given independence before merger, and with control of the major unions, the Communists would be free of the security and defence restraints on the island... would be in a position to create a revolutionary situation and [Communist] take over Singapore." (McKie, 1963:239).

Tunku, having before had to fight against the MCP, now seriously considered the situation in Singapore as a dangerous threat to independent Malaya, and stated that if Communists :-

"take over [Singapore]... would force Tunku's Government to invade Singapore. Communist Singapore would call for aid. The result could easily be general war." (McKie,1963:239).

4.2 Quarrel and Triumph for The Malaysian Federation Tunku's Idea for Federation

Malaya had settled down after the communist revolution and had managed to step into a new dimension in terms of unity between the ethnic groups. Meanwhile, Singapore who faced the threat of socialist and left front ideologies in the People Action Party (PAP), had to find an alternative to secure the PAP Government. Lee Kuan Yew had urged Tunku and the British to push for the creation of Malaysia, which would combine Malaya and Singapore. This proposition did not suit Tunku's government, if Singapore alone joined Malaya to create Malaysia, it would affect the ratio of ethnicity. Malays, who were in the majority at that time, would become a minority after incorporating the Singaporean Chinese into Malaysia (Smith and Bastin, 1967:76). This would shape a new circumstance in the political background of the Federation, that would make the Malay unhappy. Tunku came up with an idea of including British Borneo in the creation of the Federation of Malaysia in order to balance the ethnic population and make sure that Malay and bumiputera (son's of the soil) were still in the majority. In 1961, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Hajj ideally brought the prospect of Malaysia into public discussion, by which he hoped to convince Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, North Borneo (Sabah), and Sarawak to join Malaya in a federal union.

Tunku was not the first to propose the union of Malay states. Before the plan for merger was idealised by Tunku in the 1960s, there were several nationalist movements in Malaya who wanted to merge all the Malay states into a single federation. In 1960s, Tunku's government again had to face certain groups that were more likely to integrate with Indonesia. This is argued by Guan who states that:-*"The Malay left, which was influenced strongly by Indonesian nationalism, also espoused the same pan-Malay nationalism that the Kesatuan Melayu Muda (KMM) did in late 1930's. That is, they envisioned the creation of Tanah Melayu (Malay Homeland) comprising of Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, Sabah and Brunei with strong links to Indonesia"* (Guan, 2001: 18).

Guan's view is supported by Professor Shamsul, which describes the position played by left wing Malay politicians during the lead up to an independent Malaya. He states that the concept of Melayu Raya, originated by left wing radical Malay politicians and promoted by radical groups, was intended to combine all the Malay Archipelago to form a Greater Malaya. Influenced by the Indonesian movement, Melayu Raya ambitiously proposed that :-

"All Malays in one region should come together and see themselves as One Race, speaking One Language, and belonging to One Nation" (Shamsul:1996: 337).

This concept was manifested later by Sukarno during the konfrantasi (confrontation) and the idea of 'MAPHILINDO,' (the integration of Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia). It seems that Tanah Melayu or Malaya was to be forced to consider Indonesia as a 'senior brother' in the region. On 16 September 1963, The Federation of Malaysia (Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo [Sabah] and Sarawak) came into existence. A new dimension in the political contest had occurred. Before the formation of Malaysia Federation, Malaya, Singapore and British colonies in Borneo had to fight communist insurgency to maintain their dominance in politics. After 1963 with the creation of Malaysia, they had to turn from dealing with domestic turbulence to the international deception fabricated by Indonesia under Sukarno and the Philippines under President Diosdado Macapagal.

4.3 Malaysia: Sukarno's reaction

Afraid that the idea for Malaysia would interfere with his expansionist plans of Kesatuan Melayu Raya, Indonesia's President Sukarno launched attacks against Malaysia in Borneo and on the Malayan peninsula, all of which were unsuccessful. Sukarno's great plan to combine all Southeast Asian islander states had caught the attention of the United States of America. This can be observed in U.S President Kennedy's agreement of financial aid to the Sukarno government and the U.S sending advisers to Indonesia. Billington (2001) states that:-

"Sukarno also initiated a process aimed at the integration of the three nations composed primarily of the Malay people—Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia—to be called Maphilindo. Potentially included in the union were the three British colonies of northern Borneo: Sabah, Brunei, and Sarawak (the larger, southern portion of the island of Borneo is part of Indonesia). President Kennedy supported Sukarno's Maphilindo project, much to the consternation of the British." (Billington, 2001:5).

Sukarno was not happy with the collaboration between Malaya and the British in order to form the Federation of Malaysia. Under the influence of Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), Sukarno engineered the propaganda to destroy Malaysia with the slogan "Ganyang Malaysia" (crush Malaysia). Later, a proclamation was made by the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Subandrio, who said,

"The President has decided that henceforth we shall pursue a policy of confrontation against Malaya... We have always been pursuing a confrontation policy against colonialism and imperialism... it is unfortunate that Malaya... become tools of colonialism and imperialism" (Mackerras: 358).

Indonesia had voiced its strong opposition to the Malaysia plan and immediately severed all diplomatic ties with Kuala Lumpur, announcing that Indonesia would "ganyang" (crush) Malaysia. In January 1963, Indonesia announced a policy of "konfrantasi" or "confrontation" against Malaya and Malaysia (Tunku, 1969). Subsequently in Indonesia, the British Embassy, cricket club and countless British-owned businesses were vandalized or burnt to the ground. (Mackerras, 1995:358). Sukarno's foreign policy toward Malaysia pushed the Tunku's government closer towards a Western pact which would make Tunku feel more confident that Malaysian democracy would be able to solve problems and create a better opportunity for preserving Malaysian culture in the future.

The tension with Indonesia became worse than expected when the confrontation took the form of armed Indonesian invasions across the borders of Sarawak and Sabah from Indonesian Kalimantan (Mackerras, 1995; 358). Indonesian terrorists began landing on the coast of the Malay Peninsula but were quickly killed or captured by the security forces. British and Commonwealth forces were asked to give assistance to fight to defend the newly established Malaysia against confrontation by Indonesia. As well as the problems with Indonesia, Malaysia also faced a territorial dispute with the Philippine Government over Sabah. Their claims on Sabah as part of the Philippines stemmed from the argument that Sabah is part of the Sulu Sultanate Kingdom. Malaysia at this time faced difficult relationships with the neighboring states of Indonesia and the Philippines.

4.4 Brunei: Sheikh Ahmad Mahmud Azahari Revolt

Adding to the tension with Indonesia, Sheikh Ahmad Mahmud Azahari (A.M Azahari) the President of Parti Rakyat Brunei (PKB) or Brunei People Party, revolted against Sultan Omar Shariffuddin, or famously described by the Bruneian people as the Sultan Seri Begawan, (Funston, 2001). Azahari was one of three Southeast Asian leaders, (Sukarno and Macapagal), who opposed British-Malaya concept over the creation of Malaysia. Azahari boasted that more than 100,000 Indonesian volunteers were ready to 'fight' in the Brunei Revolution (Means, 1970: 314). The Parti Rakyat Brunei was not in favour of the establishment of the Federation of Malaysia, wanting instead to form a 'Greater Brunei' or the 'North Borneo Federation', including Sarawak and Sabah.

According to Billington, Sheikh A.M Azahari who had a good relation with the Sultan was not revolting against the Sultanate, but revolting against British imperialism. Billington (2001:9) wrote Azahari

"His (Azahari's) movement, and the December 1962 revolt, were not against the Sultan (whom they expected would support it), but against the British, against absorption into Malaysia, and for a unification of the North Borneo States. Azahari also had close ties to government leaders in the Philippines, and supported Sukarno's Maphilindo concept of close ties between and among all the Malay states."

This statement can be accepted as true, because, a week after the Brunei Revolt, the Indonesian Parliament officially declared their support for A.M Azahari's movement (Means, 1970: 314). With help from British 'Gurka' forces, the revolt was easily controlled. A state of emergency was declared and the parliament was dissolved, the constitution was banned and rule was effectively based on the titah (royal decree) (Funston, 2001).

The crisis over creating Malaysia later attracted the attention of the United Nations which conducted a survey in the two states of Borneo, Sabah and Sarawak.

“The British tried by various means to sabotage the process (Commonwealth Relations Secretary Duncan Sandys, said Jones, “had determined to make it as difficult as possible”), and then, just days before the survey was complete, the British brought the Malayan leader, the Tunku, to London, where they declared that Malaysia would be formed regardless of the results of U Thant’s survey! Since it was generally acknowledged, even by Sukarno, that the survey would turn out in favor of Malaysia, the announcement had no purpose other than to insult Indonesia and the Philippines (which concurred with Indonesia in regard to the Malaysia question), making it impossible for Sukarno to concede with dignity to the results of U Thant’s survey.” (Billington, 2001: 7).

Following the finding, the UN Secretary General U Thant, declared that both states voluntarily wished to join the Federation of Malaysia which was later declared on 16 September 1963. Due to the tension and other problems involved with the unpleasant conformity, the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam was no longer interested in joining the Malaysian Federation (Funston, 2001).

4.5 Tunku’s Foreign Policies

At that time, Tunku’s foreign policy fundamentally relied on the support of the Western bloc, especially Britain and Commonwealth countries. This relationship had significantly helped Tunku’s government through the Cold War situation which affected Malaysia through the ‘Eastern bloc’ expansionist agenda.

“U.S. Ambassador Jones reviews the various theories proposed by Western sources as to Sukarno’s “real” reason for launching the Konfrontasi” (Billington, 2001:6).

One of the most popular western theories is that Indonesia and China had decided to create a ‘zone of influence’. U.S. Ambassador Jones stated that at the Bandung, (Indonesia) Conference of the Nonaligned Movement (NAM), in 1955, Sukarno and China’s Zhou Enlai two great leader in the nationalist-communist world had come to an agreement to split-up their zone of influence between China and Indonesia ‘with Sukarno getting the islands’ (Billington,2001:6).

During the 1960s, the non-aligned forces were important on the global political scene, because they emphasized the diversification of power. The 1955 Bandung Conference was attended by representatives of 29 states. Marshal Tito in Yugoslavia hosted the next major conference in 1961, and major conferences of the NAM continued in following years. Major figures in the movement at that time included prominent leaders from Africa and Asia, such as Nehru of India, Sukarno of Indonesia, and Nasser of Egypt. Chinese communist leaders also played an important role in the early years of the movement. At that time, Malaya under Tunku was not interested in joining this ‘Third World’ movement. He instead maintained his position as a ‘friend of the West’ in the East. Tunku spoke his mind over his willingness to fight the communists and was not eager to remain neutral and join the Non Alignment Movement, whose motives he questioned:-

“Those countries supported the Communists and called themselves neutrals, he said, I am at a loss to understand...in which direction their neutrality lies” (The Sunday Times, May 28, 1961).

For him, Malaya must fight the communists, he would not tolerate their ideology, and become neutral in this sense. He said:-

“Malaya had fought them [communist] and have beaten them in our country” (The Sunday Times, May 28, 1961).

The Non-aligned Movement, as describe by the Encyclopedia of World History, had become a ‘battle field’ for the U.S and U.S.S.R to fight for popular support in the everlasting conflict of ideologies, between Soviet communism-socialism and American democracy-capitalism. The non-aligned forces were important on the global political scene at that time in steering the world towards multilateralism. The Soviet Union and the United States engaged in a major competition to win the support of the non-aligned nations, using military and economic aid to achieve their goal.

For the British, Malaya was very important in ensuring that a degree of ‘British influence’ remained credible. The British, who’s Empire, had made them the supreme power of the world in the past, wished to show that the U.S was not the only dominant western power in the Cold War, but that Britain still remained in a very powerful position, especially in the Southeast Asian region. That is why the idea for the creation of Malaysian federation attracted the British to help Tunku, when at that time, the U.S, under President Kennedy, had decided to support Sukarno’s idea for the formation of MAPHILINDO, the joining together of Malaya, Brunei, North Borneo states, Indonesia and the Philippines into one confederation. At that time, all the states in North Borneo were still under the British colonial administration. To create MAPHILINDO, the British must be invited to join in an agreement to bring Sukarno’s idea into reality. However, the British were more enthusiastic toward Tunku’s idea to federate the North Borneo states into Malaysia. Sukarno, as mentioned in the memoir written by the former U.S Ambassador to Indonesia, U.S. Ambassador Jones, who wrote that Sukarno:-

“was sincerely and legitimately concerned about British colonialism: He was ready to fight for people’s freedom anywhere, at any time; he was highly suspicious of British motivation.” (Billington, 2001:6).

The Cold War did not allow Sukarno’s idea to survive and MAPHILINDO faded into history while Malaysia which was formally declared in 1963 still survives. Jones in his memoir, reports on a discussion held with the British Deputy High

Commissioner in Singapore in June 1963, on a 'konspirasi' or conspiracy to overthrow the Sukarno's 'guided democracy government'. The British Deputy High Commissioner in Singapore:-

"wanted to know whether there was a possibility of a breakup of Indonesia owing to the antagonism between Sumatra and Java" (Billington,2001:7).

At the same time, he indicated that:-

'the British had no plans to topple Sukarno' (Billington,2001:7).

Sukarno's 'zone of influence' theory, which was described by Ambassador Jones, strongly disagreed with Tunku's idea to coordinate North Borneo states into the new federation. Sukarno's attempted sabotage of the future Malaysia was based on this expansionist theory. Sukarno at that time was seen as a great leader by third world countries and used his image to influence many third world leaders to give their support in confronting 'Western neo-colonialism'. This neo-colonialism, according to Sukarno, was created by the 'clash of ideologies' during the Cold War period, and had to be rejected by every independent nationalist-socialist country in order to extinguish the 'remote influences of the west'.

The U.S Department of State had taken a serious view of this veiled threat of communist expansionism in Southeast Asia. Under Dean Rusk, as the Secretary of State, the U.S had responded:-

'Security of SEA nations will depend on presence in area of sufficient Western power to contain Communist Bloc until such time as SEA nations are able provide their own defense, which still in remote future...until such time as British and Malaysians themselves freely determine that its presence no longer necessary'

U.S Secretary of State Dean Rusk also stressed that the:-

'Indonesian assaults on Malaysia in form guerrilla incursions and terrorist activities must be abandoned',
and the,

'sovereignty and territorial integrity Malaysia must be preserved'.

Despite the tension caused by Sukarno's aggression in order to 'ganyang' or 'crush Malaysia', Dean Rusk stated that the U.S President:-

"could not make a determination to proceed with aid in the face of Indonesian guerrilla action against Malaysia. On the other hand to discontinue aid would lead to complete rupture with Indonesia, seizure by them of major US investments, and firm implantation of ChiCom[China Communist] influence in Indonesia through PKI"

In 1966, President Sukarno was ousted from power and the new government under Suharto's 'New Order' was not keen on continuing the *konfrantasi*. Tun Adam Malik, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, at that time was strongly motivated to improve the bilateral relationship with Malaysia. Later, a signed peace agreement between Indonesia and Malaysia ended the *konfrantasi*. Under pressure from the US according to the Dean Rusk, the Philippines recognized Malaysia and entered into an, 'Agreement on method of disposing of the Philippines claim to Sabah once and for all'.

Malaysia, under Tunku, was in favor of joining the western bloc under its 'democratic umbrella'. This was a strategic political decision made in a period of transition from colonial British administration to the self-governance of Malaysia. Under the 'democratic umbrella', Malaysia, in order to form a democratic government, had decided to implement the British Westminster system as a basis to the Malaysian bicameral parliamentary system. This system directly replicated the British parliamentary system. Until today, this system is still in practice as "Demokrasi ala-Malaysia" or "Malaysian Democracy". In the fight against communist expansionism, Tunku has to be looked upon as an important actor in the 'clash of ideology' that had to be faced by Malaya and Malaysia in the first era of the Cold War, in the Southeast Asian region. Since Tunku's forming of the Alliance Coalition Party in the 1954 to 1970 he was an important figure and a key factor in the development of a democratic multiracial Malaysia. For his endeavours, Tunku became an icon for the Malaysian people.

4.6 Singapore under Lee Kuan Yew

After the arduous struggle to bring Malaysia into existence, political differences and disagreements slowly built-up between Malaysia and Singapore. Lee Kuan Yew's People's Action Party (PAP), under the theme "Malaysian Malaysia," proposed to downgrade the bumiputera status, originated by Tunku and the Malaysian Federal Government's Alliance ruling party. The Malaysian Government, especially UMNO, became discontented with Singapore. According to Dr. Mahathir, the PAP's Government in Singapore under Lee Kuan Yew, hoped to be accepted as a part of the central government in Kuala Lumpur,

"but the Alliance Government refused to share power with the PAP" (Mahathir, 2000:1).

The refusal was due to PAP status as a non-member of the Alliance parties. PAP's disappointment was reflected in their campaigns over "Malaysian Malaysia" (Mahathir, 2000:1). On 9 August 1965, Singapore under Lee Kuan Yew was forced by Tunku to leave the Federation and it became an independent country. Tunku's decision to separate Singapore

from the Federation disappointed most of the Malay UMNO and Parti Islam se-Malaya, (PAS or PMIP), members. In Singapore, a year after the separation, Lee Kuan Yew's government was forced into chaos and ideological dispute. This happened in October 1966 when 13 oppositions MP's from the Barisan Sosialis (Socialist Front) boycotted the Parliament. However, despite the boycott it made Lee Kuan Yew's ruling PAP party the dominant party in the Parliament. In the 1968 general election, the PAP won all the 58 seats in the Parliament, and Lee Kuan Yew created an authoritarian Singapore state, ruled exclusively by the PAP government. The 100% PAP win in the general election lasted for four terms until 1984 with no opposition MPs in the Singapore Parliament for 15 years. (Funston, 2001). This achievement of Lee Kuan Yew had effectively disposed of Communist aggression in Singapore politics.

4.7 The Malaysian Racial Dispute (1969)

In 1957, when Malaya achieved full independence, Tunku Abdul Rahman's Alliance Government ruled the country on the basic premise that the Malays should have the majority of the political power and the Chinese should be satisfied with their economic and commercial monopoly. On this foundation, an highly structured system of economic advantages was extended to the Malays. Under this scheme, Malays were provided with loans, scholarships and jobs in public sectors. However, this premise did not actually fit with the reality of the Malaya situation at that time. Malays actually still remained in poverty without much reorganization achieved by the Tunku's Government. After independence, Tunku had to face many criticisms as many Malays still remained illiterate, with a low average in educational participation, and most remained in rural areas without any public facilities. Dr. Mahathir in his book "Malays Dilemmas" reveals the reality of Malay dissatisfaction over Tunku's attitude 'to wait and see'.

Racial friction and tension escalated over the next decade because of the Tunku's lack of positive action in creating a multiracial economic balance in Malaya. This situation later brought political tension during the Federal election in 1969, which culminated in riots. On 13th May 1969, the day after the Federal election, riots broke out in Kuala Lumpur because of the simmering racial tension between Malays and Chinese. Essentially, the tension occurred because of the increased influence of communism in most of the opposition political parties at that time. Parti Buruh or Labour Party, which was a predominantly Chinese based, opposition party was strongly influenced by the MCP, and the Parti Progresif Rakyat, (PPP), together with the Malay Muslim opposition, Parti Islam se-Malaya, (PAS or PMIP), at that time gained strong momentum. This gave the Alliance Party a tough fight in the 'clash of ideology' of the 1969 election. After the opposition party won a momentous victory, riots swept through Kuala Lumpur and it was a painful moment in the newly independent nation that most Malaysians prefer to forget about.

In order to get support from the voters, Islam and ethnic sentiment had been manipulated, misused and misinterpreted into a more extreme form by PAS, rather than the moderate, pragmatic and progressive Islam implied by UMNO. Chinese, which before were loyal supporters of MCA, had turned to an opposition based on socialism and chauvinism, which was reflected in the Communist proposal to boycott the election (Tunku, 1969). As a result of the tension, the Alliance ruling party was defeated in Kelantan and Terengganu, won by PAS and Penang, won by the Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia, (GERAKAN), party. In Kedah, Perak and Selangor, PAS, PPP and Parti Buruh (Labour Party) narrowly defeated the Alliance's State Government. This meant that Alliance, the ethnic based coalition party, faced a humiliating defeat over its concept of consensus, compromise and cohesion.

Tunku emphasised the Communist influences by stating that the Chinese and Indonesian Communists were directly involved in the aggressions that occurred during his period of premiership. He also mentioned the role played by the Indonesian PKI in training and assisting the 'students' movement in Malaysia to overthrow Tunku's Alliance Government. Tunku himself stated in his memoirs that certain Chinese dominant opposition party also reflected Moist ideology. Tunku wrote:-

"...Communist China is the force behind the disloyal Chinese elements in Malaysia. I know that they are helping too the Malay parties opposed to UMNO." (Tunku, 1969: 195).

This clarified the incident of the May 13, violence, which killed hundreds of people and caused considerable property damage. Law and order was restored after 4 days, but for 2 months after the incident communal violence persisted, and ended only when the government threatened to take severe action against the militant Malay groups, especially those calling for the Tunku's resignation.

This domestic violence may be a result of Tunku's administrative difficulties in his struggle to solve certain issues at that time, which took so much of Tunku's time and concentration that it gave him very little time to analyse and resolve the racial tension. Firstly, for the creation of the Malaysian Federation for example, Tunku had to fight Communist subversion. Secondly, at the same time, the international turbulence of Cold War brought Sukarno's aggression to Malaysia during the 'konfrantasi' over 'neo-colonialism'. This put Tunku in a 'double period of strain'. Nevertheless, it is most important that the world should acknowledge Tunku's success and the fact that Tunku was one of the leaders who were really keen in fighting terrorism and communism that was set to dominate the Eastern world at that time. If Malaya and Malaysia had been defeated by the communists, then at that time, from the Soviet Union to China, and Indochina to

Indonesia would geographically make the communist bloc a great super power in the whole Pacific-Asian region, a disastrous situation for the democratic world at that time. With the defeat of communism in Malaya and Malaysia, Thailand and Malaysia became a 'bumper zone' that cut the geographical connection between a 'Greater Indonesian Communism' and a 'Greater China-Soviet Communism'.

4.8 Political transition after 1969's conflict

After the communist insurgency and political turbulence of the 1960s, a new dimension in politics and economic orientation took place. In order to stabilize the political scenario, martial law and a state of emergency were declared by the Yang Dipertuan Agong (the King). Following this, the parliament and the cabinet were dissolved. MAGERAN (Majlis Gerakan Negara or National Operation Council) was established to control the government. Tunku decided to leave his position after law and order was restored and the Deputy Prime Minister at that time, Dato' Abdul Razak Dato' Hussein was appointed to be in-charge of MAGERAN, in order to restore stability to the country. On September 1970, Tun Razak succeeded Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra as the second Prime Minister of Malaysia. The transition from Tunku to Tun Razak gave a new dimension to Malaysian politics. The country was placed in a state of emergency for two years. MAGERAN was later renamed the National Security Council which deals mainly with the security matters of the country. The military was strictly ordered to perform only in a military role. The National Security Council was in charge until 1989, to deal with communism insurgency. (Cheong, 1999:101). No more riots or emergencies occurred, based on ethnic discontent, after the incident of May 13, 1969. Only minor demonstrations were held occasionally, to show support for their political leaders, especially those who had been sacked from the government, and who were not competent in winning seats.

The new Prime Minister, and the "second generation" of Malay politicians, saw the need to tackle vigorously the economic and social disparities which had fuelled the racial antagonism. This new generation came with ideas to transform economic and social development programs. Firstly, under Tun Razak, the Malaysian Government launched the New Economic Policy (NEP) or Dasar Ekonomi Baru in 1971, as an affirmative action to balance the socio-economic inequalities among the ethnic groups. The NEP set two basic goals: to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty, and to reduce and eventually eradicate identification of economic functions with ethnic groups. Secondly, to ensure political stability, Tun Razak set up the Barisan Nasional (National Front) on June 1, 1973, to replace the ruling Alliance Party. He increased the membership of its parties and coalitions in an effort to establish 'Ketahanan Nasional' (National Resilient) through political stability.

The 1974 general election generated the strongest government ever witnessed in Malaysia, which saw most of the seats, won uncontested by Barisan Nasional candidates. The Malaysian Government today is based on this 'absolute national resilience' introduced by Tun Razak. Thirdly, Tun Razak had changed the principles of Malaysian foreign policy. During the period of the Cold War, Malaysia under Tun Razak had introduced multilateralism as a part of its relations towards the 'emergence of the ideology' in South East Asian region. Under this approach, the Commonwealth is still of great importance to ensure the security and sovereignty of the states. Despite the tension in Vietnam in 1971, Malaysia was still relied on by the Western pact to ensure a collaborative security. In this sense, Tun Razak's Government had joined the Five Power Defense Arrangement, (FPDA), involving Malaysia, Singapore, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia.

Fourthly, Tun Razak came up with an improved 'look east policy'. In 1974, after Tun Razak successfully stabilised the country, the Barisan Nasional's Government approached China to establish closer ties. This began in the early 1970s, when Beijing had introduced a new approach to the 'open door' policy. It became the 'cornerstone' for the process of normalisation of the relationship between Malaysia and China. Foreign policy initiated during the second paradigm under Tunku Razak remains as the greatest example of the Malaysian approach to world politics.

"Malaysia was the first ASEAN country to establish diplomatic relations with China in 1974, followed by the Philippines and Thailand in 1975". (Mackerras, Taneja and Young, 1998: 222).

The Barisan Nasional, which was set up by Tun Razak, is still in power and is still in an excellent position to give the best government, ruled by the same coalition-based philosophy manifested by Tunku and Tun Razak. Under the leadership of the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr. Mahathir, who succeeded Tun Hussein Onn in 1981, Malaysia is in her best performing era. Under Dr. Mahathir, Malaysia has acquired one of the most prosperous and dynamic economies in Southeast Asia, with a burgeoning manufacturing sector, an expanding middle class, rising literacy rates, and increased life expectancies.

5. Conclusion

As a conclusion, the Cold War was a great significance in the formation of the Federation of Malaysia and Malaysia has played an important role in South East Asia during the period. It fundamentally shaped the dimensions of Malaysian politics, from pre-independence Malaya through the Communist insurgency, to the new reorganization in the era of Tun

Abdul Razak. Fighting domestic and international Communism, during the crisis over the 'clash of the ideology' has significantly made Malaysia more mature in performing its role in the world arena.

The Cold War clearly had changed Malaysia's outlook by allowing it to play a strategic role in world politics. The achievement of winning over the Communists and the development of the new dynamic system of Tun Razak's 'absolute national resilient' allowed Malaysia to declare and reinforce its pro-western democratic principles. No matter how difficult the circumstances, in arriving at its present position were, Malaysia has achieved a significant accomplishment, and exists as a sovereign and respected country, accepted by the world. Malaysia has performed as a model for developing the concept of 'unity among diversity'.

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