

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

**BRUNEI'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT
AND THE FORMATION OF MALAYSIA: 1961-1967**

**being a dissertation submitted for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in South-East Asian Studies**

by

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I hope this study will benefit the people of Brunei in particular, and more generally those interested in Brunei's history. It illustrates the story of Brunei's political development from Tunku Abdul Rahman's announcement of the Malaysia proposal in May 1961 up to the abdication of Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddien III in 1967. The thesis considers these issues by using recently released materials from the Public Record Office (PRO) in London, and other sources in the United Kingdom and academic institutions in Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and the United States of America, as well as information from interviews with many of the key individuals involved in those events. The approach and perspective used in presenting the study is academic and without prejudice to any of the people involved within the context of Brunei's political history.

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Preface	vii
Abbreviations	ix
1. CHAPTER ONE	
Introduction	
1.1. Objectives of the Study	1
1.2. Sources: Analysis	2
1.3. Review of the Literature	3
1.4. Historical Background	10
1.5. The Borneo Federation versus the Brunei Constitution	17
2. CHAPTER TWO	
The Malaysia Proposal	
2.1. The Background to the Malaysia Proposal	33
2.2. The Malaysia Proposal	39
2.3. Brunei's Reaction towards the Malaysia Proposal	
2.3.1. A.M.Azahari	47
2.3.2. The Party Rakyat Brunei's Response	51
2.3.3. The Sultan's Attitude	60
2.4. Brunei Commission Committee on the Malaysia Proposal	68
2.5. The August 1962 Election	76
3. CHAPTER THREE	
The December 1962 Brunei Revolt	
3.1. Introduction	87
3.2. The Aims of the Revolt	88

3.3. The Rumour of the Revolt	101
3.4. The Plan for the Revolt	107
3.5. The Outbreak of the Revolt	113
3.6. The Reasons for the Revolt	121
3.7. Conclusion	127
 4. CHAPTER FOUR	
Brunei's Refusal to Join Malaysia	
4.1. Introduction	130
4.2. Meeting between the Brunei and Malayan Governments	131
4.3. The Ultimatum	142
4.4. The British Position towards Brunei in 1963	149
4.5. Final Decision	154
4.6. Conclusion	158
 5. CHAPTER FIVE	
The Limbang Dispute	
5.1. Historical Background	163
5.2. Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien's Claim	175
5.3. The Wishes of the Limbang People	185
5.4. The Malaysia Argument	192
5.5. Epilogue	196
 6. CHAPTER SIX	
Foreign Involvement	
6.1. The Revival of TNKU	198
6.2. The Philippine Connection	203
6.3. Indonesian Support	211
6.4. Confrontation	220

6.5. Reasons for Indonesian Involvement	227
6.6. Conclusion	231
7. CHAPTER SEVEN	
Political Development 1963-1967	
7.1. Internal Political Development after the Revolt of 1962	233
7.2. Malaysia's Policy towards Brunei	238
7.3. British Policy towards Brunei	244
7.4. Pressure for Political Change	249
7.5. Conclusion	261
8. CHAPTER EIGHT	
Conclusion	264
List of Appendices	
1. The Supplementary Treaty of 1905/1906	271
2. Agreement between the United Kingdom and Brunei on Defence and External Affairs 29 September 1959	273
3. The Structure of Brunei Administration before 1959	279
4. The Structure of Brunei Administration after the Proclamation of the Brunei Constitution 1959	279
5. Azahari's Family Tree	280
6. Ethnic Composition in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore (and British Borneo)	281
7. Sarawak-Brunei Agreements of 4 February 1920 and 1933	282
List of Illustrations	288
Bibliography	319

PREFACE

The years immediately following the formation of Malaysia in May 1961, were an especially critical time in Brunei's political development. The key issues connected with the Malaysia proposal, namely the Brunei Revolt 1962, Brunei's refusal to join the Federation, Communist connections with the Party Rakyat Brunei (PRB), the claim to Limbang, foreign involvement in Brunei's internal politics and lastly, the British role in ensuring the survival of the Brunei Islamic State will be examined in depth.

The main focus of this study is to trace the political development of Brunei from the announcement of the Malaysia Proposal in May 1961 by Tunku Abdul Rahman up to the abdication of Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddien III in 1967. As background, the thesis also examines the proclamation of the Brunei Constitution in 1959. However, the implementation of the Constitution did not give sufficient power for the people to voice their opinions in the affairs of the state. This led to the formation of a left-wing political party known as the Brunei People's Party or Party Rakyat Brunei in 1956. The PRB subsequently opposed any policies introduced by the government and demanded the introduction of full democracy in the state. This was the beginning of conflict between the people and the government in modern Brunei political history. The conflict intensified in 1961 when Tunku Abdul Rahman proclaimed the Federation of Malaysia comprising 11 Malayan States, Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei. The issue of whether or not to join the Federation posed a dilemma for Brunei.

The situation worsened when the Sultan announced his decision to support the concept of Malaysia in principle in December 1961, whereas most of his subjects were opposed to it. As a result, a revolt broke out on 8th December 1962 led by the PRB. However, after the revolt the Sultan refused to join Malaysia, which resulted in him raising the claim to Limbang. In the meantime, the internal political conflict in Brunei intensified and led to the involvement of Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, the United Kingdom and Communist elements. The conflict spread beyond Brunei's borders and resulted in its involvement in the Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation in 1963-1966. At the same time, the British also tried to push Brunei into the Federation of Malaysia between 1963-1966 in order to hasten its independence and to ensure the survival of the Sultanate. However, the Sultan was not interested in this idea and preferred to stay out of the Federation. Eventually, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien, who depended on the British for the survival of his Malay Islamic Monarchy, abdicated from the throne in 1967 in favour of his son, Sultan Hassanah Bolkiah Muzzaddien Waddaullah. Therefore, the concept of Malaysia and its formation had influenced the internal and external political development of Brunei in the period 1961-1967. Ultimately, however, Brunei has been able to sustain and maintain itself as a Malay Islamic Sultanate to the present day.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABDB	Angkatan Bersenjata Diraja Brunei (Royal Brunei Armed Forces)
AMDB	Askar Melayu Diraja Brunei (Royal Brunei Malay Regiment)
ASA	Association of South Asia
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BA	Brunei Archive
BAKER	Barisan Kemerdekaan Rakyat (People's Independence Front)
BAR	Brunei Annual Report
BARA	Barisan Rakyat Brunei
BARIP	Barisan Pemuda (Youth Front)
BEC	Brunei Economic Council
BFSP	Brunei Freedom Struggle Party
BKB	Barisan Kemerdekaan Brunei (Brunei's Independence Front)
BMJ	Brunei Museum Journal
BNO	Brunei National Organisation
BPA	Brunei People's Alliance
BPI	Biro Pusat Inteligen
BPUPKI	Biro Panitia Untuk Persediaan kemerdekaan Indonesia (Investigating Independence Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian)
BRO	British Resident's Office
BUP	Brunei United Party
CCO	Communist Clandestine Organization
CCP	Chinese Communist Party

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CO	Colonial Office
DAC	District Advisory Council
DO	Defence Office
FCASA	Foreign Correspondents' Association of Southeast Asia
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FO	Foreign Office
GWU	Government Workers' Union
HMG	Her (His) Majesty's Government
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JSBRS	Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JSEAS	Journal of Southeast Asian Studies
KMB	Kesatuan Melayu Brunei (Brunei Malay Organisation)
KMM	Kesatuan Melayu Muda (Malay Youth Organisation)
MMD	Majlis Mesyuarat Daerah (District Advisory Council)
MMN	Majlis Mesyuarat Negeri (State Council)
MNP	Malay Nationalist Party
MSCC	Malaysian Solidarity Consultative Committee
NKCP	North Kalimantan Communist Party
NKKU	Negara Kesatuan Kalimantan Utara (United States of North Kalimantan)
NKNLL	North Kalimantan National Liberation League
PAP	People's Action Party
PARAKU	Pasukan Rakyat Kalimantan Utara

Partindo	Parti Nasional Indonesia (Nationalist Party of Indonesia)
PGRS	Pasukan Guerrilla Rakyat Sarawak
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)
PMIP	Pan-Malayan Islamic Party
PPKU	Pasukan Perjuangan Kalimantan Utara (The North Kalimantan Struggle Group)
PPM	Parti Pasuk Momogun
PRB	Parti Rakyat Brunei (Brunei People’s Party)
PRM	Parti Rakyat Malaya (People Party of Malaya)
PRO	Public Record Office
PS	Pusat Sejarah (History Centre)
PWD	Public Works Department
RAMD	Regimen Askar Melayu Diraja (The Royal Malay Regiment)
RG	Register Group
SAYA	Sarawak Advanced Youths’ Association
SCO	Sarawak Communist Organization
SFA	Sarawak Farmers’ Association
SITC	Sultan Idris Training College
SMJ	Sarawak Museum Journal
SUPP	Sarawak United People’s Party
TNI	Tentera Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Army)
TNKU	Tentera Nasional Kalimantan Utara (North Kalimantan National Army)
UMNO	United Malays National Organization

UN	United Nations
UNKO	United National Kadazan Organization
USA	United States of America
USKU	United States of Kalimantan Utara

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Objectives of the Study

The thesis aims to delineate political developments in Brunei since Tunku Abdul Rahman's announcement of the Malaysia proposal in May 1961 up to the time of the abdication of Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien III from the throne of Brunei in 1967. To place the study in context prior to the Malaysia proposal, there will be a brief discussion of the origin of the state of Brunei and its political development, concentrating particularly on the post-World War II period up to the proclamation of the Brunei Constitution in September 1959. From 1961 to 1967 many issues arose internally and externally as a result of the Malaysia Federation proposal and this study analyses their effects on Brunei politics up to 1967.

The thesis also attempts to provide a new perspective on Brunei's history from 1961 to 1967, based on newly available primary source material. The 1960s was a period of political crisis in Brunei. Political conflicts occurred between Party Rakyat Brunei (henceforth the PRB) led by A.M. Azahari, on the one hand, and Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III and his protector, the British Government, on the other. The conflict sharpened when Tunku Abdul Rahman proclaimed the Federation of Malaysia which was to comprise 11 Malayan States, Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei. The issue placed Brunei in a dilemma over whether or not to join the Federation. The situation worsened when the Sultan announced his decision to support the proposal in principle, whereas the majority of his subjects were opposed to it. As a result, a revolt broke out in Brunei in December 1962, launched by the PRB. This crisis

became an international issue and led to the involvement of foreign powers, including Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Britain. The Brunei conflict ultimately led to British military intervention and subsequently the Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation in 1963-1966. In order to ensure the survival of the Malay Islamic Monarchy, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien, who was highly dependent on British protection, abdicated in 1967 in favour of his son, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Muzzaddien Waddaullah.

1.2. Sources: Analysis

Many important sources were consulted which have not previously been subject to detailed study. Primary and secondary sources such as newspapers, government reports and files can be obtained from institutions, in addition to the PRO, such as the National Archive of Washington, D.C; Rhodes House, University of Oxford; British Library, London; the Brunei Historical Centre; Times House, Singapore; and the Straits Times Library, Kuala Lumpur. There is also a large collection relevant to this study in the Brynmor Jones Library at the University of Hull. To obtain additional valuable information, interviews were conducted with prominent figures who had been directly involved in the events of the 1950s and 1960s; some of those people interviewed are still very active in political parties and policy-making. In Brunei, there are some leaders who were directly involved in the Brunei political scene and government administration during the period in question, and who were interviewed, for example, Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Dato Haji Marsal Maun, Pengiran Dato Haji Mohd. Yusof, Orang Kaya Lukan Uking, and PRB political leaders like Haji Zaini Ahmad, Yassin Affandy, H. M. Salleh, Ampuan Yussof Adul, Damit Salleh, Muhammad Manggol and Hapiz Laksamana. Those from neighbouring countries (including British officials) who played

important roles in South-East Asian politics in the 1950s and 1960s who were also interviewed were: General Dr. A.H. Nasution (Indonesia), A.M.Azahari (Indonesia), Roeslan Abdulgani (Indonesia), Tan Sri Ghazalie Shafie (Malaysia), General Sohearjo Padmodiwirio (Indonesia), Lim Chin Siong (Singapore), Said Azahari (Singapore), Mr. David Marshall (Singapore), Mr. Lee Kuan Yew (Singapore), Tan Sri Rahman Yaakub (Sarawak), Dato Patinggi Haji Mohd Taib Mahmud (Sarawak), R.H. Hickling (United Kingdom), Mr. E. Bevington (United Kingdom) and Sir John Peel (United Kingdom).

There is still only a small quantity of written material published on Brunei in the 1960s. In relation to that period, some major political issues have not been fully addressed and explained until the present day, including the Brunei Revolt of 1962, Brunei's refusal to join the Federation, the Communist infiltration of the PRB, the Limbang claim, the era of the Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation, and Brunei's internal political development in the 1960s. All these issues will be studied in depth, using the materials and interviews referred to above.

1.3. Review of the Literature

The modern history of Brunei, in particular the post-war period, is a relatively new area of study. Only a handful of academic works has been produced by historians. Among the scholars who describe the political, economic and social development of the Sultanate of Brunei from its origins up to independence in 1984 are Graham Saunders,¹ Ranjit Singh,²

¹ Graham Saunders, A History of Brunei, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1994.

² Ranjit Singh, D.S., Brunei 1839-1983: Problems of Political Survival, Singapore, Oxford University Press, 1984.

A.V.M.Horton,³ and B.A. Hamzah.⁴

Saunders analysed the development of the Brunei state from the time of Sultan Muhammad in the 14th century until the present reign of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. His study was based on primary and secondary sources, and provides a useful though general account of the political development of the Sultanate. Ranjit Singh's work is similar in that it traces the development of the Brunei state over a relatively long period of time between the years 1839 and 1983. However, he attempts to portray, as far as the materials allow, a Brunei perspective on its history. He highlights the importance of the Anglo-Brunei Agreement in 1888 and the Supplementary Agreement of 1905/6 which ensured the survival of Brunei until her independence in 1984. He also discusses the conflicts between the PRB and the monarchist-aristocratic group led by the Sultan in the 1950s. Ranjit concluded that these two groups competed to take control of the state from the British protector. At the international level, Ranjit also analyses briefly, on the basis of the then available material, the Malaysia proposal that resulted in Brunei declining to join the Federation.

Horton's thesis provides substantial detail on the history of Brunei from the establishment of a British Resident until the proclamation of a Constitution in 1959. He examines how a Sultanate, deficient in resources and verging on bankruptcy in the early years of British advice, survived and indeed flourished following the discovery of oil in the 1920s, and then

³ A.V.M.Horton, The Development of Brunei During the British Residential Era 1906-1959: A Sultanate Regenerated, unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Hull, 1985.

⁴ Hamzah, B.A., The Oil Sultanate: Political History of Oil in Brunei Darussalam, Mawaddah Enterprise Sdn. Bhd., Kuala Lumpur, 1991.

embarked on a period of social and economic development during the first years of the reign of Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien in the 1950s.

B.A. Hamzah, on the other hand, focuses on the political economy of oil in Brunei. His study is an attempt to investigate politics in an oil-rich colony. His main concern is the role of Brunei Shell in local politics and its impact on national development. He tries to show to what extent oil politics hindered the process of independence up to 1984 and contends that it was British policy to try to delay the independence of Brunei to maximize the economic benefit from oil revenues. Indeed, it is not far-fetched to suggest that Great Britain continued to overshadow Brunei into the late twentieth century, primarily because of its oil riches.⁵ Hamzah tries to relate Brunei's oil economy to her political development, which was influenced and controlled indirectly through the State Financial Officer⁶ up to the 1970s and the British High Commissioner; as he said:

The State Financial Officer of Brunei has always been British. The incumbent has been in office since January 1963. As head of the Treasury, he advises the Sultan on all fiscal and monetary matters, including revenue collection. As such, the State Financial Officer becomes the natural link between Brunei-Shell and the state. In that role, he advises the Sultan on terms of royalties and other forms of economic rents payable by the Company or any other oil company operating in the state. The incumbent wields enormous influence in the state.⁷

⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

⁶ Mr. John Lee was appointed as the State Financial Officer of Brunei in January 1963. As Head of the Treasury, he advised the Sultan on all fiscal and monetary matters, including revenue collection. In 1967, he was blamed for the loss of Brunei money, about \$117 million, from the devaluation of British sterling. See Straits Times, 15th December 1967.

⁷ Hamzah, pp. 71-71.

The above-mentioned studies, though together covering much of Brunei's nineteenth and twentieth century history do not examine in any detail either internal political events or the foreign relations of Brunei in the 1960s. However, the period between 1961 and 1967 is of crucial significance in understanding modern Brunei, as developments within the period largely determined the structure and sustainability of the modern polity.

Other useful published works on the history of Brunei include those by Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad,⁸ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri,⁹ Husseinmiya,¹⁰ and Eussoff Agaki.¹¹ Lastly, there is a doctoral thesis that was submitted at the London School of Oriental and African Studies in 1995 by Dr. Yusof Damit,¹² although this focuses solely on Brunei's constitutional development from 1945 to 1962. The study was based on research in the PRO. At the time Dr. Yusof completed his thesis many of the post-1959 records were still not accessible, and at the time of his research, the PRO had released its documents only up to 1963.

My study begins by examining briefly Brunei's origin and its political development from its formation as a state in the thirteenth century up to the announcement of the Malaysia proposal

⁸ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Pertumbuhan Nasionalisme di Brunei, Yee Lian Printing Co., Selangor, 1984.

⁹ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Liku-Liku Perjuangan Pencapaian Kemerdekaan Negara Brunei Darussalam, Pusat Sejarah, Brunei, 1992.

¹⁰ Husseinmiya, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III and Britain: The Making of Brunei Darussalam, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1995.

¹¹ Eussoff Agaki, Brunei Darussalam: Its Re-Emergence as a Sovereign and Independent Malay-Muslim Sultanate (1959-1983), unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of Hull, 1991. This thesis examines the political development of Brunei from 1945 to 1984. Agaki does not touch on the issues of the Limbang claim and foreign involvement in Brunei internal political conflict in relation to the era of Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation. The thesis also does not discuss in detail the Malaysia issue, the Brunei Revolt and Brunei's refusal to join Malaysia, based as it was on the then available data, and without the benefit of accessing PRO materials.

¹² Yusof Damit, Brunei Darussalam 1944 - 1962 Constitutional and Political Development in a Malay Muslim Sultanate, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, School Of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS), London, 1995.

in May 1961. The main focus of this initial discussion is the plan for the creation of a Borneo Federation in 1953 and the proclamation of the 1959 Brunei Constitution.¹³ Differences over the two issues occurred between the PRB, the British and the Sultan, who was supported by the monarchist-aristocratic faction within Brunei society.¹⁴

Chapter Two traces the origins of the 1961 Malaysia proposal and analyses its impacts on Brunei's internal political development up to the period of the rebellion in December 1962 in particular, and on external relations in general. The discussion examines the reasons for the formation of the Federation and the Brunei response to the proposal, not only from the Brunei people but also from the other inhabitants of the British Borneo territories. This chapter focuses on the triangular relations between the PRB, the Sultan and Tunku Abdul Rahman, in seeking support for their ideas. Even though the issue has been studied by Ranjit Singh, Graham Saunders, David Leake, Eusof Agaki, Husseinmiya and Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil, none of them have discussed it in depth, particularly the comments of the Brunei Commission Committee on the Malaysia proposal. Husseinmiya and Pehin Jamil highlighted the Sultan's agreement in principle to the Malaysia proposal but did not consider the Malayan leaders' relations with A.M. Azahari when they tried to co-opt Azahari and other PRB leaders in order to remove their opposition to the proposal.

Chapter Three discusses in detail the Brunei Revolt of 8th December 1962. In this chapter the intention is to provide a detailed study of the factors and events that led to the Brunei Revolt

¹³ The most recent study of the Brunei Constitution of 1959 is by Husseinmiya, The Brunei Constitution of 1959, Brunei Press Sdn. Bhd., Bandar Seri Begawan, 2000.

¹⁴ Ranjit Singh, p. 125.

and its consequences which subsequently were crucial in determining the survival of Brunei Darussalam in its present political form as a Malay Islamic Monarchy. Brunei's refusal to join the Federation of Malaysia is examined in Chapter Four. The study of Brunei's rejection of merger is important because it directly influenced its foreign relations, specifically with Malaysia and with Great Britain. The chapter covers the process of negotiation between the Brunei delegation and Malayan representatives on the conditions of entry into Malaysia, as well as the reasons for Brunei's rejection of the Federation.

Chapter Five discusses Brunei's relations with the British and Malaysian Governments. The subject is especially important because there are still unresolved issues which could strain the diplomatic relations between Brunei and Malaysia at the present time and in the future. The discussion begins with the background of the Limbang annexation and continues with the Sultan's claim to Limbang.¹⁵ The discussion focuses in particular on the 1960s, when Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien formally announced his claim to Limbang territory at a Legislative Council meeting in 1962.¹⁶ Suggestions and proposals for the resolution of the problem are presented. The issue has been discussed by Ranjit Singh,¹⁷ B.A. Hamzah¹⁸ and Husseinmiya,¹⁹ but again not in any great detail and certainly not in relation to the Malaysia proposal.

¹⁵ Charles Brooke annexed Limbang (Pengkalan Tarap) on 17th March 1890. See Straits Times, 18th April 1890.

¹⁶ According to R. Haller-Trost there was no contemporary claim from the Brunei Government registered. Furthermore, he said "the newspaper article states that in 1963, before the formation of the Federation of Malaysia, Brunei submitted her claim over Limbang to the UK, an assertion which, however, could not be verified". (See R. Haller-Trost, Maritime Briefing, Vol. 1, Number 3, University of Durham, 1994, p. 20).

¹⁷ Ranjit Singh, pp. 81-88.

¹⁸ Hamzah, pp. 38-48.

¹⁹ Husseinmiya, pp. 277-280.

Chapter Six is concerned with the regional and international linkages of the Brunei internal conflict, with Indonesia, the Philippines and the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party or Partai Komunis Indonesia) and Barisan Sosialis in Singapore. It can be said that the Malaysia issue and the rebellion of 1962 were events which encouraged the involvement of foreign powers such as Great Britain, the Philippines, Indonesia and communist elements inspired by the PKI. An attempt is also made to trace how the PKI and the Communist Clandestine Organization (CCO) infiltrated the PRB and to analyse the reasons for Indonesian involvement in the Brunei conflict during the era of Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation. Eussof Agaki, alone out of all the writers referred to above, has directly addressed this subject, although only in general terms and his study on internal conflict mainly concerned the relations between Brunei and Great Britain after 1965. No studies have been undertaken of Brunei's internal political conflicts in connection with the Philippines, Indonesia and the communist movements in Sarawak, Singapore and Indonesia.

Chapter Seven explains the development of internal political reform. During the period from 1963 to 1967 the Brunei government faced a new political movement that demanded the introduction of political reforms in preparation for independence. Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien had to address this issue carefully in the face of pressure from Britain as well as from local political parties. Ultimately, the Sultan abdicated as a strategy to safeguard the survival of the Malay Islamic Monarchy.

The concluding chapter draws together the main points raised in the preceding chapters. The most important issue is to assess how far and in what ways the Malaysia proposal influenced

Brunei's internal and external political development in the 1960s. At this point it is fair to say that the Malaysia proposal certainly contributed to the outbreak of the Brunei Revolt which in turn became a factor in the Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation. Furthermore, we can argue that the failure of the Limbang claim, and the postponement of Brunei's independence in 1965 were also significant consequences of forming a Malaysian Federation from 1961. There are three important modern issues relating to Brunei that have not been researched in-depth by historians, namely, the Limbang claim, Brunei during the era of Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation, and political development after 1963, especially in term of Brunei's relations with Great Britain. These issues are examined in this thesis, which is organised chronologically in order to provide an adequate basis for the analysis of these crucial transitional impacts on Brunei's internal and external political development.

1.4. Historical Background

Before considering the Malaysia issue, it is important to provide a historical context by examining briefly the origin and political development of the Brunei state from the time of its formation until the Malaysia proposal in 1961. Historically, Brunei was known from the tenth century in Chinese chronicles under the name P'o-ni.²⁰ Though Brunei is currently a tiny state on the north-west coast of the island of Borneo, it had once been the centre of a large trading empire before the coming of the European powers, especially during the reign of Sultan Bolkiah in the fifteenth century.²¹ As the fifth Sultan of Brunei, he was one of Brunei's greatest leaders and was well known as an experienced traveller. Under his reign, the Brunei

²⁰ Jaafar Muhammad Sab, 'Kampung Air', *Pusaka*, Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, 1988, p. 7.

²¹ Ranjit Singh, p. 20.

empire held sovereignty over most of the coastal margins of the island of Borneo, as well as the islands of Palawan²² and Luzon²³ in the Philippines. It also controlled much of the hinterland trade of these islands. Brunei was once rich and powerful, as mentioned by the Portuguese adventurer, Goncalo Pereira in 1530:

This king of Borneo (Brunei) is rich and powerful and is served with great ostentation.... (His) is a land rich in flesh-meat, rice and other provisions and in local merchandise of great worth.²⁴

By the end of the nineteenth century, Brunei had been weakened by the progressive intervention of European powers, mainly the British. The first European powers to arrive at Brunei were the Spanish²⁵ and Portuguese.²⁶ In 1578, Brunei was attacked by the Spanish from Manila,²⁷ which led to its occupation for nearly three months. By the end of the nineteenth century, Brunei could no longer defend itself from foreign incursions, and the Sultanate could not compete with the advancing European powers, especially the British, who established their sphere of influence in North Borneo and Sarawak. In 1839, an English adventurer, James Brooke, arrived at Kuching and was officially appointed by the Sultan of Brunei as governor of the territory of Sarawak in 1842 after suppressing a revolt against local Brunei overlordship by the native Dayaks and their Malay leaders. This appointment of the

²² Hughes Hallett, H.R., 'A Sketch of the History of Brunei', JMBRAS, Vol. 18. Pt. 2, August 1940, p. 23.

²³ Blair E.H., and Robertson, J.A., The Philippine Islands, Vol. 33, Chachos Hermanos Inc., Manila, 1973. pp. 213-231. See also Ranjit Singh, p. 20.

²⁴ Robert Nicholl, European Sources for the History of the Sultanate of Brunei in the 16th Century, Brunei Museum, 1975, pp. 25-26.

²⁵ The Spanish first came to Brunei in 1521. In his report about life in the Brunei Water Village; Pigafetta mentioned that about 25,000 households lived there. (See Blair and Robertson The Philippine Islands, pp. 213-231. Also Nicholl, European Sources..., Brunei Museum, 1975.

²⁶ The Portuguese came to Brunei in 1524, when Jorge d'Albuquerque sent a mission to Brunei under the leadership of Antonio de Pinta from Malacca. See Ranjit Singh, pp. 21-22.

²⁷ Ranjit Singh, pp. 23-24.

first “White Rajah of Sarawak” was recognized by Pengiran Muda Hashim, the Brunei Governor of Sarawak, through the Agreement in 1841²⁸ which was confirmed by the Sultan in 1842. The development of the Brooke dynasty, though initially established under Brunei tutelage, later became a security threat to Brunei’s political survival, because of its expansionist policy,²⁹ as it progressively took over Brunei territory.

In 1847, the Sultan of Brunei entered into a treaty with Great Britain for the furtherance of commercial relations and the mutual suppression of piracy, with an additional clause providing for extra-territorial jurisdiction over British subjects in Brunei,³⁰ a provision modified by the Agreement of 1856. However, the agreement did not mention the protection of Brunei from foreign encroachment. Both Sarawak and the British North Borneo Chartered Company, which was established in the northern territories of the island in 1878, continued to encroach on the Sultanate.³¹ In 1888 Brunei signed a Treaty which placed Brunei under the protection of Great Britain. Under the agreement, the Sultan agreed that the foreign relations of the State should be conducted by Her Majesty’s Government. This agreement still could not protect Brunei from further loss of territory.³² The Rajah of Sarawak continued to try to

²⁸ Ibid., p. 49. (The Agreement had been signed by Pengiran Muda Hashim (the Chief Minister of Sarawak) on behalf of the Brunei Sultanate, with James Brooke).

²⁹ Ranjit Singh, pp. 59 and 42-43.

³⁰ Brunei Annual Report, (BAR), 1946, Appendix 2, pp. 75-79. Also hand-written copy from Den Haag National Archive, Holland, document No, 320. (Ref. PS/A/FH/1/91).

³¹ Owen Rutter, British North Borneo: An Account of its History, Resources and Native Tribes, Constable and Company Ltd. London, 1922. p. 125.

³² The 1888 Agreement did not protect Brunei from foreign threats, (See Ranjit Singh, p. 100) for example in 1890 Limbang was annexed by Charles Brooke which contravened Article III of the 1888 Agreement which stated that “The relation between the State of Brunei and all foreign States, including the States of Sarawak and North Borneo, shall be conducted by Her Majesty’s Government, and all communications shall be carried on exclusively through Her Majesty’s Government, or in accordance with its directions...” When Charles Brooke annexed Limbang he was acting neither through Her Majesty’s Government nor in accordance with its directions. Thus he broke the treaty. Her Majesty’s Government approved the action by suggesting that compensation be

expand his territory and even wanted to take Belait and Tutong districts from Brunei rule.³³ Under the advice of Frank Swettenham, High Commissioner to the Malay States and Governor of Singapore, and resulting from a report presented by M.S.H.McArthur, British Acting Consul, in 1904,³⁴ a Supplementary Agreement was entered into whereby the Sultan undertook to accept a British Officer to be styled Resident,³⁵ who would be the agent and representative of the British Government under the High Commissioner for the Malay States (from 1948, the Sarawak Governor). His duties were to give advice to the Sultan on all subjects other than the 'Mohamedan' religion.³⁶ The period 1906-1909 was a transitional one which saw British administrative practices supplanting the traditional administrative system. Very shortly after the Treaty, a form of Government was set up under the Sultan-in-Council and the British Resident. In reality, from 1905 the British Resident exercised real power in the State of Brunei,³⁷ especially during the reigns of Sultan Muhammad Jamalul Alam³⁸ (1906-

paid to the Brunei Sultan. See W.G., Maxwell and W.S., Gibson, Treaties and Engagements affecting the Malay States and Borneo, Truscott, London, 1924, p. 195.

³³ Ranjit Singh, p. 100.

³⁴ McArthur, M. S. H., Report on Brunei in 1904, Introduced and annotated by A.V.M Horton, Athens, Ohio University, Monographs in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 74, 1987, paras. 98-146. See also Ranjit Singh, pp. 96-101.

³⁵ J. De V. Allen, A.J. Stockwell, and L.R. Wright (ed.), and appendix 1.

³⁶ Interview with Sir John Peel (British Resident in Brunei July 1946-January 1948), Cambridge St, London, 14th August 1995.

³⁷ See Appendix 3 of the structure of the Brunei Administrative System during the British Residency 1905-1959. MacBryan had referred to the power of the British Resident in the State Council in that "a State Council of 12 members was established, which included the Resident but whose president was the Sultan. The Council legislates in the name of the Sultan-in-Council. But the Sultan complained that if the views of himself or any member of the council conflicted with those of the Resident he was grimly reminded that the Resident's advice must be taken." (See, RG59, Decimal File 1950-54, 'Question of Right of Accession to Throne of Brunei...', Telegram from Johannesburg to Dept. of State, Washington, D.C., 25th April, 1951, National Archive of Washington, D.C.).

³⁸ He was still young when he came to the throne, and the task of administering the State was undertaken by two traditional Ministers, - Pengiran Pemancha and Pengiran Bendahara - until the Sultan reached the age of 21 years in 1914.

1924) and Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin³⁹ (1924-1950). This was clearly evinced by Sir John Peel, a former British Resident:

Brunei was a protected State and the treaty provided that he (the Sultan) should accept a British Resident and his advice on all subjects other than the Mohamedan religion and Malay customs. So the Sultan had to accept my advice on all other subjects and that was just how it was before the war. So that I had very wide powers indeed. I was really responsible for the general affairs of the state. In the State Council which was presided over by the Sultan, I was sitting next to him to advise him, because actually I did the paper work of the meeting. Absolutely, I ran the government.⁴⁰

This system continued after World War II. Although it had gone through economic and political changes, compared with other countries in Southeast Asia Brunei was politically backward. Nationalist movements which were active in several Southeast Asian countries during and after World War II, brought about the independence of Indonesia, Burma, Vietnam and the Philippines in the late 1940s. In Malaya, political development accelerated in the context of the counter-insurgency campaign known as the 'Emergency' from 1948 onwards. However, neighbouring countries political development began to affect Brunei, to a certain extent, in the sense of stimulating political consciousness among a few educated members of the younger generation.⁴¹ They began to realise that they wanted to administer their own country. A movement emerged in 1946 led by Barisan Pemuda (BARIP),⁴² composed of

³⁹ The power to administer the State was again in the hands of two traditional Ministers until 1933 when the Sultan reached the age of 21 years. It meant that during Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin's reign and that of his father (Sultan Muhammad Jamalul Alam) in reality the power to rule the State was under the British Resident. The traditional ministers could not perform their duties in the modern system of administration because "their general ignorance and inexperience made it impossible to entrust to them any very important duties". (Refer to BAR, 1907).

⁴⁰ Interview with Sir John Peel, Cambridge St., London, 14th August 1995.

⁴¹ Muhammad Hadi Abdullah, 'Kesedaran Semangat Kebangsaan Brunei', Jurnal Darussalam, Pusat Sejarah, Brunei, Bil. 1, 1992, pp. 140-154.

⁴² Ibid.

young teachers who had studied at Sultan Idris Tanjung Malim College, Perak, Malaya. The aim of the movement was to achieve independence for Brunei. Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin lent his support to it. However, it failed to achieve this objective due to the death of the Sultan on his way to London to discuss the future of the Brunei polity.⁴³ Nevertheless, elements of BARIP⁴⁴ continued this struggle in the 1950s in the shape of the PRB. Important changes in the political system in the state, initiated by Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien (1950-1967),⁴⁵ and the successor of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin (Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien's older brother), led people to question the future of their country and to lend their support to the PRB.

Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien and his government played important roles in changing the political environment by encouraging people to take an active part in the state's internal politics through the introduction of a guided democratic system with the promulgation of the first written Brunei Constitution in 1959. The Sultan realised that he could not maintain his own traditional system of administration without making changes to adapt to a modern system of government. The desire to grant a Constitution to his people arose largely because he envisaged that Brunei's position, governed by a British Resident, was increasingly out of step with other Southeast Asian countries. It was also partly because he did not want criticism, both from within and outside the country, to be directed towards Brunei and its monarchy.

⁴³ The Sultan's death occurred on 4th June 1950 at the Singapore General Hospital, six days before he was due to sail for England. The body was brought to Brunei from Johore through Labuan, and arrived at Brunei on the afternoon of 6th June, 1950. See Straits Times, 5th June 1950.

⁴⁴ BARIP was founded in April 1946, headed by H.M. Salleh. Its main objectives were to gain independence from British protection and also to maintain the rule of the Malay Islamic State in Brunei. This movement was supported by Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin and his brother Pengiran Omar Ali Saifuddien (Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien). In 1939, Kesatuan Melayu Brunei (KMB) or the Brunei Youth Society was also formed. The Chairman was Pengiran Muda Omar Ali Saifuddien.

⁴⁵ Muhammad Hadi Abdullah, 'Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien: Raja Berjiwa Rakyat', Beriga, Brunei, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 30, 1991.

Therefore, to meet the demands from his own subjects and also in order to adapt to the new era of modern government, the Sultan felt obliged to share power, albeit to only a limited degree, with his people.⁴⁶ Finally, he foresaw that the only way he could ensure the survival of the Malay Islamic Monarchy, was to have a tool that could be used to protect his family's political power.⁴⁷ In particular, he was trying to avoid any future struggle for political power within the royal family itself. He had experienced such a conflict in June 1950, when Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin's family wanted to install his daughter, Tenku Eshan, as Sultanah of Brunei after her father's death.⁴⁸ At the same time the British had a plan for the Borneo territories (North Borneo, Sarawak and Brunei) under which they would become a Borneo Federation. The Sultan was not especially interested in this idea and so he continued with his plan for the development of the Brunei Constitution. Therefore, the early 1950s was a crucial period for Brunei as it saw the beginnings of a political crisis in the early 1960s which was to involve the Sultan, the British and the PRB.

⁴⁶ Generally speaking, the proposed Brunei Constitution had a great impact on Brunei society, particularly the rise of political consciousness. The people started to demand participation in state affairs. Gradually, the Sultan had begun to share his power with his people by allowing them to give their views about public and local matters, through the creation of District Advisory Councils (DAC) in 1954. For example, nearly half of the members of the Brunei-Muara DAC were representatives nominated by the local people. See Husseinmiya, Sultan Omar Ali ..., p. 152.

⁴⁷ Brunei had been a Malay Islamic Monarchy ever since the formation of the state under the rule of Sultan Muhammad in the fourteenth century. (See Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Tersilah Brunei: Sejarah Awal dan Perkembangan Islam, Pusat Sejarah, Bandar Seri Begawan, 1990). Her Majesty's Government supported the existence of the Brunei Sultanate as a Malay Islamic State as mentioned in the meeting between Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in September 1957. (See C.O. 1030/460, Minutes of Meeting between Secretary of State and the Sultan of Brunei, Colonial Office, 11th, 27th and 30th September, 1957).

⁴⁸ According to Sir John Peel, before Sultan Ahmad died, he (Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin) asked him (Sir John Peel as British Resident) to recognise his daughter as the heir to the Brunei throne. But Sir John declined to do so because there was no precedent in Brunei's history for a woman to become the ruler. It also contradicted the Islamic laws. Furthermore, he was quite sure that the people would not accept it. (Interview with Sir John Peel, Cambridge St, London).

1.5. The Borneo Federation versus the Brunei Constitution

The idea of the unification of the British Borneo territories as a Borneo Federation was first mooted in 1930 by Sir Cecil Clementi, the Governor of the Straits Settlements and the British High Commissioner to Brunei. However, it was received coolly by the Colonial Office and was left in abeyance.⁴⁹ But the idea was revived after World War II, when the British Government planned to unite all Britain's protected territories in Southeast Asia, under one single administration.⁵⁰ The intention was to implement this policy before any of these territories gained their independence, and was revealed as a general approach to decolonisation by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Oliver Lyttelton, in a statement to the House of Commons on 14th November 1951:

We all aim at helping the colonial territories to attain self-government within the British Commonwealth. To that end we are seeking as rapidly as possible to build up in each territory the institutions which its circumstances require.⁵¹

The proposed Federation of British Borneo was again suggested in 1953 by the ambitious Governor of Sarawak and High Commissioner for Brunei, Sir Anthony Abell.⁵² A conference

⁴⁹ David Tham, British Attitudes Towards the 'Greater Malaysia Proposal', Borneo 2000, Politics, History and Development, Proceedings of the Sixth Biennial Borneo Research Conference, 10th-14th July, 2000, p. 313.

⁵⁰ Poulgrain, G., The Genesis of Konfrontasi: Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia, Crawford House Publishing Pty Ltd, Australia, 1998, pp. 112-118.

⁵¹ C.O. 1022/61, 'Colonial Office Papers', Political Objectives in British Territories of SEA, 10th March 1953, p. 157.

⁵² Sir Anthony Abell had tried to implement his idea of a Borneo Federation from 1953 to 1959. In September 1957, he brought up the issue again, in the meeting between Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien and Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Alan Lennox-Boyd. At the meeting he tried to persuade or at least pressure the Sultan to accept the idea through the advice of the Colonial Office. The Sultan's reluctance to accept the suggestion was reinforced by making reference to the Anglo-Brunei Agreement 1905/06 in that the British could not force the Sultan to accept any advice given by the British Resident, the High Commissioner or the British Government. (Refer to C.O. 1030/460, Minutes of meeting between the Sultan of Brunei and Secretary of State, 30th September 1957.) At last, Sir Anthony retired from his post as Brunei High Commissioner in 1959. According to some observers, he was frustrated because of the Sultan's stubbornness not to agree to his proposal. Therefore,

was held in Kuching on the 23rd April 1953, to discuss economic and administrative cooperation as a pioneering step toward the federation of the three territories.⁵³ The meeting was chaired by the British Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, Malcolm MacDonald,⁵⁴ and attended by the heads of three states, namely, His Highness the Sultan of Brunei, the Governor of Sarawak, Sir Anthony Abell, and the Governor of North Borneo, Sir Ralph Hone.

The Sultan of Brunei, however, did not favour the suggestion of federating the three states, and refused to enter into any agreement.⁵⁵ He was keener on carrying out his own development programme for the benefit of his people and to maintain monarchical rule in his country. In his view, the position of Brunei as a British Protectorate was different from that of North Borneo and Sarawak, which were British colonies.⁵⁶ Therefore, when Sir Anthony Abell explained his idea for the proposed Federation of Borneo Territories in 1953, the Sultan simultaneously declared at the State Council that he intended to introduce the first written

on 29th September 1959, Sir Anthony did not attend the proclamation of the Brunei Constitution at Bandar Brunei.

⁵³ Ranjit, p. 128.

⁵⁴ In Malcolm MacDonald's interview with J.P. Ongkili, in November 1971, he said that "when he was British Commissioner-General for SEA, he had suggested the three Borneo territories - Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo should come together in a federation, because these States had many things in common, for example administration and economic pattern... He also thought that if the Borneo territories were federated they would be in a stronger political entity. They would also be in a bargaining position with any other neighbouring country". See J.P. Ongkili, *Nation-building in Malaysia 1946-1974*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1985, p. 150.

⁵⁵ *Pelita Brunei*, 16th March 1956, p. 1. According to Ongkili there was very little that could be done over the next four years because Brunei refused to entertain the idea of a Borneo Federation. In 1956, Pengiran Pemancha of Brunei (second traditional minister) had read the Sultan's speech regarding the idea of a Borneo Federation. As he said, "His Highness commands me to say that neither he nor his Government have ever contemplated, or wished, to unite or federate the State of Brunei with any other State". *Borneo Bulletin*, 10th March 1956. See also Ongkili, J.P., *Nation-building...* p. 149.

⁵⁶ Ongkili argued that the idea of the Federation of Borneo failed because the people of the three territories had no significant voice in the proposal. The idea mainly came from the metropolitan power which discouraged the participation of the local leaders such as the Sultan of Brunei, Datu Mustafa and Donald A. Stephens. As Ongkili said: "The proposals, in some important respects, were reminiscent of the 'Malayan Union Scheme' and did not appear to foster the idea of independent nationhood in the three underdeveloped territories of Northern Borneo". See Ongkili, p. 151. See also *Borneo Bulletin*, 18th January 1958.

Constitution for the people and State of Brunei. The Sultan issued the following statement on 12th May 1953:

For some time it has been my intention and desire to grant to my people a written constitution by means of which proper provision can be made for the Government and well-being of our State of Brunei. It is my wish to set out in this Constitution firstly, the laws by which the succession to the Sultanate shall be secured, and such other matters relating to the sovereign and his family as is right and proper; and secondly, the composition, powers and duties of the State Council together with rules for the conduct of the State business and the making of laws...⁵⁷

Thus, the real intention of the Sultan in introducing a Constitution was to use it as a tool for the continuity and the survival of monarchy in Brunei. In order to achieve his objective, a committee was set up to prepare a draft of the proposed Constitution.⁵⁸ The committee was also responsible for collecting the people's ideas and opinions regarding the content of the Constitution.⁵⁹ Then in December 1953 the British Government and the Sultan started to negotiate for the promulgation of the Written Constitution of Brunei.⁶⁰ The process of the negotiations between the two governments was expressed by the Sultan in poetic form under the title, *Syair Perlembagaan*:

The negotiations have dragged on
For years without an end in sight
Every session is an occasion to alter
For making additions and deletions.

Agreements reached at one sitting

⁵⁷ Hickling, R.H., Memorandum upon Brunei Constitutional History and Practice, June 1955, Brunei Museum, (typescript).

⁵⁸ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Liku-Liku Perjuangan Pencapaian Kemerdekaan, Pusat Sejarah, Brunei Darussalam, 1992, p. 66.

⁵⁹ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Akitek Brunei Modern, Pusat Sejarah, 1990, p. 186. See also Husseinmiya, p. 145 and Ranjit Singh, p. 129.

⁶⁰ The first draft of the Brunei Constitution Enactment was sent to the Colonial Office after being discussed by Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien with the British Resident, J.O.Gilbert, and R. H. Hickling at Istana Darul Hana, Bandar Brunei, on 16th and 17th December 1954. See Husseinmiya, Sultan Omar Ali..., p. 150.

Become points of contention at the other
Many new suggestions at every turn
Emanate from His Excellency the Governor Abell

As his proposals change constantly,
He no more holds faith or credibility
The entire draft needs review
In a manner to assume new and proper meaning

Each one stands upon what he believes true
Raising points in the manner he thinks best
Moving on in this way for years and years
And there is no end in sight.⁶¹

As a result of the Sultan's speech in the State Council in 1953, a committee was formed consisting of seven members led by Pengiran Maharaja Laila Muda Abdul Kahar. The committee, known as *Jawatankuasa Tujuh Serangkai*⁶² (the Group of Seven Committee), aimed to visit all the towns and villages in the State in order to listen to local opinions and to the requests of the people themselves, and ascertain local views concerning the proposed Constitution.⁶³ According to some members of the committee, "the findings showed that the Brunei people agreed with the contents of the proposed constitution which included Islam as the national religion, the Malay language as the national language, the creation of State and District Councils, and others".⁶⁴ All of these views were forwarded to R.H. Hickling, a British lawyer who came from Malaya to assist Brunei in drafting the new Brunei

⁶¹ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, *Penyair Diraja*, Pusat Sejarah, Brunei and Husseinmiya's translation, pp. 175-176.

⁶² Interview with Pengiran Setia Negara Pengiran Haji Mohd. Yusof bin Pengiran Haji Abd. Rahim, Kuala Lumpur, 1997.

⁶³ Husseinmiya, *Sultan Omar Ali...*, p. 145.

⁶⁴ *The role of Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III*, Radio Televisyen Brunei, Brunei, 1986. (video tape). See also 'Report of the Brunei Constitution Advisory Committee, 23 March 1954,' C.O. 1030/113, Secret, No. 46, Anthony Abell to Colonial Office, London, 23rd March, 1955.

Constitution, which he was to complete in a period of six months in 1954.⁶⁵ When Hickling had drafted the Constitution, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien told him to visit the countryside to solicit opinions directly from the people. In his meeting at Kuala Belait, Hickling met a group of Chinese businessmen. They told him that ‘they were simple folks who looked after their shops and asked him to tell the Sultan that they were grateful for the introduction of “democracy” but they would be pleased if the Sultan could leave them as they were’.⁶⁶ Ultimately, Hickling suggested that Brunei had to change her political system in a way that was adaptable to modern life and consistent with the wishes and the needs of the people. Furthermore he said:

The sense of personal allegiance has in fact increased. The State is a Malay State with a living constitution based upon a strong sense (sic) of history, and with their wealth the people are politically ambitious, although their ambitions have not yet been overtaken by general education. All these factors emphasize the need for care in the guiding of constitutional development in the State.⁶⁷

The Constitution would form the basis of self-government and was intended eventually to enable Brunei to become an independent, sovereign state.⁶⁸ However, at the same time, some Colonial Office officials were also very keen on the idea of a Federation of Borneo Territories.⁶⁹ The concept was once again proposed at conferences chaired by Sir Robert

⁶⁵ Interview with R.H. Hickling, London, 10th August 1995. See also Husseinmiya, The Brunei Constitution of 1959, Brunei Press Sdn., Bhd. Bandar Seri Begawan, 2000, p. 22.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Hickling. Memorandum upon Brunei Constitutional History and Practice, Brunei Museum, Brunei, 1955. (typescript)

⁶⁸ The proposal for self-government can be seen through the transfer of the former powers of the British Resident to Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III. In effect power was divided among the Brunei top government officers such as the Chief Minister, Attorney General, State Financial Officer, State Secretary and even among the State Legislative Council, Executive Council and Privy Council. Refer to D.E.Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate, Monograph of the Brunei Museum Journal, No.2, Brunei, 1970, p. 161.

⁶⁹ For example, Lord Lansdowne, Colonial Office Minister of State, W.I.J. Wallace, Head of Far Eastern Department, Mr. Rogers, Assistant Under-Secretary, Colonial Office, F.D. Jakeway, Chief Secretary, Colonial Office, Sir John Martin, Assistant Under-Secretary, Colonial Office, Eugene Melville, and others.

Scott, the British Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, held in Kuching on the 28th September 1956 and in Jesselton on the 10th October 1956. These conferences were regarded by the Colonial Office as pioneering steps toward the unification of the three territories, but no decision was reached on the proposal.

The matter of closer association between the three Borneo States cropped up yet again during the Brunei Constitutional Negotiations in London in September 1957.⁷⁰ Sir Anthony Abell proposed the return of Labuan Island and also the Fifth Division of Sarawak to Brunei in order to win the Sultan's support.⁷¹ The Colonial Office, however, was not interested in this suggestion at that time⁷² as it was clear that to Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien the proposed Federation of Borneo territories would mean the subjugation of his subjects in all respects - political, economic and social - given that there was insufficient trained and skilled indigenous manpower for the Bruneians to play an active role in such a federation.

On 7th February 1958, Sir Anthony Abell and Sir Roland Turnbull in simultaneous radio broadcasts proposed a Federation of the three territories of British Borneo. In his speech, Anthony Abell even went into details of the governmental and administrative set-up of the proposed federation of the three territories.⁷³ This proposal was made for the purpose of determining the feelings of the population of Borneo toward federation. Both Governors

⁷⁰ C.O. 1030/460, Minutes of Meeting between Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien with Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 30th September 1957.

⁷¹ According to Husseinmiya even Malcolm MacDonald, too, promised the Sultan that Britain would arrange to return the Fifth Division of Sarawak to Brunei. Refer to Husseinmiya, p. 229. See also C.O. 1030/164, Secret, No. 77, Secretary of State for Colonies to United Kingdom Commissioner-General in SEA, 25th March 1955.

⁷² Husseinmiya, Sultan Omar Ali..., p. 229.

⁷³ Zariani, Escape From Berakas 1962 Brunei Revolt, p. 83.

appealed to the population to make their wishes known whilst being careful to point out the benefits for Brunei if it were to join the Federation, particularly that the proposal did not include a common federal budget and that the oil wealth of Brunei would not be spread among all three territories. Later on the same day, in London, when Sir Alan Lennox-Boyd was questioned in the House of Commons as to just what was meant by Abell's and Turnbull's speeches, he simply replied that any plan for closer ties between the three territories of North Borneo would be subject to the wish and will of the population.⁷⁴ Reactions toward the proposal had been favourable in both North Borneo and Sarawak, but not in Brunei. Generally speaking, some people in Brunei were hesitant in making their feelings known because the Sultan of Brunei, the titular head of State, had expressed no opinion on the subject.⁷⁵ An exception was the PRB.⁷⁶ However, the government disagreed with the PRB on the issue of the Borneo Federation. The PRB leaders had declared their stand on the issue, according to Donald L. Woolf, an American diplomat in Singapore, who reported that:

Leaders of the party had expressed the opinion that Party Rakyat would favour federation of the three territories provided the Sultan of Brunei and the Malays were given a special position within the federation.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Berita Brunei, 13th February 1958.

⁷⁵ Before the birth of the PRB there was no place or channel for the people to make their feelings known. The PRB members always expressed their ideas and discontent toward the government through their own newspapers such as Suara Bakti, Berita Brunei, Suara Rakyat and Malaysia. See also RG59, Decimal Files 1955-1959, Amcongen, Singapore to the Department of State, Washington, 25th June 1958, National Archive of Washington, D.C.

⁷⁶ The issue will be discussed in Chapter Two.

⁷⁷ RG59, Decimal Files 1955-1959, Amcongen, Singapore to the Department of State, Washington, 25th June 1958, National Archive of Washington, D.C.

The *Sarawak Tribune* suggested that Brunei should set aside its mistrust of the intentions of its neighbours, North Borneo and Sarawak. According to the *Tribune*, even though North Borneo and Sarawak were poor, it did not mean that they were interested in “milking the oil wealth of Brunei”.⁷⁸ The Rotary Club of North Borneo (whose membership comprised Chinese businessmen and middle class people) felt that the unification idea should be shelved for thirty to a hundred years.⁷⁹ However, in a speech at the North Borneo Legislative Council, one of its members, Donald A. Stephens, expressed his regret at the silence of the Brunei Government regarding the problem of the unification of the three territories.⁸⁰

Nonetheless, the official spokesmen for His Highness, Pengiran Pemancha Pengiran Muda Muhammad Alam (the second minister of the traditional monarchist system in the Sultanate), said that His Highness and His Government had never thought about unification nor did they wish to unite or federate Brunei with any other state.⁸¹ Therefore, in 1958, the Sultan himself declared that he was not aware that the State of Brunei was being federated with any other countries, so he was unable to give any opinion regarding such a proposal.⁸²

Commenting on the idea of the proposed unification of the British North Borneo Territories, Zaini Haji Ahmad, a prominent PRB leader, claimed that the reason why the Sultan refused totally to accept any idea relating to the formation of the three states was that he believed any form of federation would lower the status and sovereignty of Brunei, from an absolute

⁷⁸ *Sarawak Tribune*, 11th February, 1958, p. 3.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 27th February 1958, p. 2

⁸⁰ *Berita Brunei*, 16th October, 1958, p. 1

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 16th March 1956, p. 1

⁸² *Ibid.*, 15th November 1958, p. 1

monarchy to a constitutional monarchy under the direction of the British High Commissioner.⁸³ In other words, the Sultan was wary that the identity of the Sultanate should not be eroded by any merger scheme.⁸⁴ Instead, it has been suggested that from 1958 the Sultan became more interested in a closer relationship with the Federation of Malaya than the Borneo Federation.⁸⁵ Sir Roland Turnbull supported the position of the Sultan at that time.⁸⁶ In a letter to the Colonial Office he stated that “the Sultan was determined to be friendly with the Federation of Malaya” in order to get support from the Malayan leaders and the British Government in tackling his internal political problems, mainly the opposition from the PRB.⁸⁷

Furthermore, the Sultan’s advisors, and particularly his religious advisors, feared that the Muslim citizens of Brunei and the Muslim religion itself would not be accorded a position of sufficient prominence in a Borneo Federation and that the religious basis of life for Muslims would tend to be diluted in the event of merger of the Borneo territories. As the head of an Islamic State, the Sultan was strongly influenced by his religious advisors. It has been said that sometimes the Sultan was encouraged by his religious advisors to use his right of independent judgment on a number of matters concerning which, before the promulgation of

⁸³ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Pertumbuhan Nasionalisme di Brunei 1939-1962, 2R Publication, Kuala Lumpur, 1989, p. 60.

⁸⁴ Ranjit Singh, Brunei 1839-1983.., p.143.

⁸⁵ According to Sarawak Chief Minister, Dato Patinggi Haji Mohd. Taib Mahmud, Tunku Abdul Rahman had revealed the idea of the Malaysia proposal during his visit to Brunei in 1958 when they attended the ‘Opening Ceremony’ of the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien mosque, Bandar Brunei. My interview with Sarawak Chief Minister, Dato Patinggi Haji Mohd. Taib Mahmud, Kuching, Sarawak, 1994. See also Sarawak Tribune, 21th October, 1958.

⁸⁶ Sir Roland Turnbull was a very close friend of Sultan Omar Ali Saifudien, even the Sultan considered him as a father. This was one of the reason why Sir Roland Turnbull respected the Sultan’s decision.

⁸⁷ C.O. 1030/462 ‘Letters by Officers,’ Roland Turnbull, North Borneo to W.I.J. Wallace, Colonial Office, 15th December 1959.



the 1959 Constitution, he had automatically accepted the advice of the British Resident.⁸⁸ In this connection the American Consul stated:

The most serious of the recent independent actions by the Sultan has been his refusal to agree to the continuing of a subsidy grant to all schools in Brunei. The British feel very strongly that this subsidy is essential in order to give the administration the right to screen teachers and weed out potential subversives, particularly in Chinese schools. The Sultan's religious advisor has stated that it is contrary to the Koran for a Muslim to subsidize a non-Muslim school and the Sultan has apparently accepted this position.⁸⁹

On 29th September 1959, after a long period of discussion and negotiation, the new Constitution was proclaimed by Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien. This was preceded by the signing of a new treaty by the Sultan and the Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, Sir Robert Scott, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government. This new agreement replaced the Protection Agreement of 1905/06. Two other agreements were signed on the same day. One related to the power that was given to the Sultan to appoint, in accordance with the Overseas Officers Agreement, officers selected by the Secretary of State for the Colonies for service in Brunei. The other was an agreement to sever administrative ties with Sarawak, known as the Brunei/Sarawak Separation Agreement. The agreement of 1948, under which the Sarawak government agreed to recruit overseas officers required by Brunei for its public service, was terminated. Furthermore, the Sarawak Governor would no longer act as the High Commissioner for Brunei. Under the new agreement, London would appoint a High Commissioner for Brunei after consultation with the Sultan. The High Commissioner would take over the duty of British Resident to give advice to the Sultan on matters of external

⁸⁸ The Head of the Religious Department was Pengiran Haji Mohd Kamaluddin. He was labelled by the PRB as a supporter of the Malaysia proposal.

⁸⁹ RG59 Decimal Files 1955-1959, Amcongen, Singapore to Dept. of State, Washington, 25th June 1958.

relations, defence and internal security,⁹⁰ and he would reside in Brunei. In effect, the 1959 Brunei Agreement granted internal self-government to Brunei; it provided that the power to govern internally was in the hands of the Sultan, assisted by three councils, namely the Legislative Council, Executive Council and Privy Council.⁹¹

The Legislative Council was to be presided over by the *Menteri Besar* (Chief Minister) and would meet to pass laws, exercise financial control and criticise the actions of the Government. The Council was to consist of 33 members, eight ex-officio members, six official members, 16 elected members and three nominated members to represent important interests not adequately represented by the elected members.⁹² The Executive Council was to be presided over by the Sultan and it was to deal with policies and pass the annual budget estimates and any supplementary estimates for presentation to the Legislature. The Privy Council was to advise the Sultan in the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, amendments to the Constitution, and to advise the Sultan on appointments to Malay customary ranks, titles, honours and dignities.

The British, however, retained jurisdiction over external affairs, defence and internal security. Four offices were also to be created: the *Menteri Besar*, the State Secretary, Attorney General and the Financial Officer. The *Menteri Besar*, as the senior Executive Officer, would be responsible to the Sultan for the exercise of all authority in the State. He was to be assisted by

⁹⁰ See the appendix 2 of an Agreement between the United Kingdom and Brunei on Defense and External Affairs, 29th September 1959.

⁹¹ Husseinmiya, *Sultan Omar Ali...* p. 200.

⁹² Ibid., p. 201.

the State Secretary, in charge of all internal administrative affairs. Another important constitutional document was the Succession and Regency Proclamation of 1959 which dealt largely with questions affecting the Royal Household.

The Constitution as it stood represented an important step forward for Brunei, in the sense that it gave birth to internal government. However, it did not represent a major step towards parliamentary democracy, though the Sultan declared that the creation of the Legislative Council marked a milestone in this direction. The PRB denounced the Constitution as a “colonial type administration contrary to the principles of democracy”.⁹³ It contended that all Brunei had achieved was “self administration”. The PRB leaders even argued that “the State of Brunei was not self-governing, contrary to what the British authorities have been telling the United Nations”,⁹⁴ because the *Menteri Besar* did not exercise all the power that had once been vested in the British Resident; power was divided between the Sultan, the *Menteri Besar* and the British High Commissioner. This meant that the Sultan did not have supreme executive authority. The PRB asserted that the Constitution was not for the benefit of the people, but for Britain and a privileged few who supported the British Government, through the appointment of certain important posts in the administration. Those appointed to the posts of Attorney General, State Financial Officer, Secretary of State, the Commissioner of Police, Head of Special Branch, Education Officer, Medical Officer and State Engineer were either British officers or seconded Malayan officers.⁹⁵ Appointments to these posts had to be made

⁹³ The Borneo Bulletin, 12th December 1959.

⁹⁴ Hamzah, p. 71.

⁹⁵ Husseinmiya, Sultan Omar Ali..., p. 201.

jointly by the British and the Sultan, thus somewhat limiting Brunei's internal autonomy.⁹⁶ The PRB complained that no provision had been made for a general election to choose a responsible or representative government.⁹⁷ Generally, the PRB felt 'insulted' by the Brunei government's failure to consult its leaders while devising the Brunei Constitution.⁹⁸ Therefore, the PRB continued to criticize government policy for not giving enough voice to the people in the Legislative Council and for the delay in holding the elections provided for in the Constitution.

The PRB continued its campaign by informing the people that the government had no real intention of introducing democracy in Brunei. They claimed that the 1959 Constitution was designed to kill democracy, which would eventually provoke the people to revolt. As Azahari said, "at first we are patient and then we strike".⁹⁹ In this situation, in the early 1960s the Sultan moved closer toward the British and the Malayan Governments for protection, as the internal political pressure from his own subjects led him to feel insecure in his position as monarch. He envisaged that to retain his political veto in the state, he would have to take a risk: he could either accept the PRB manifesto (unification of the three Borneo States) or find another way, such as merging Brunei with the other states in a Federation of Malaysia as suggested by Britain.

At the beginning of June 1960, while on his way to the United Kingdom, the Sultan stopped in Kuala Lumpur to discuss with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya, Tun

⁹⁶ Leake, p. 50.

⁹⁷ The Borneo Bulletin, 10th December 1959.

⁹⁸ Leake, p. 50.

Abdul Razak, the formation of a Brunei Malay Regiment which he suggested could be trained at Port Dickson, Perak.¹⁰⁰ However, upon arrival in London, the Sultan saw a newspaper report that while he was in Kuala Lumpur he had been visited by the Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman, who had hinted to him that Brunei would be united with the Federation of Malaya in the near future.¹⁰¹ The newspaper report also stated that the Sultan had been visited by D.C. White, the British High Commissioner in Brunei, who, on his way back to Brunei, had stopped over in Kuala Lumpur on long leave. White had informed the Sultan that Britain had no objections to the transfer of the British Borneo territories' sovereign rights to a Malaysian Federation, if their people wanted independence in this form. The Sultan, via an announcement on Radio Brunei by Brunei's information officer, Pengiran Mohd. Yusof, immediately refuted these reports.

It was true that the Sultan had discussed the issue of the Federation of Malaysia with Malaya's leaders. In reality, however, it seems very likely that he was not interested in the proposal either for a Malaysian Federation or a Borneo Federation. He was more keen to maintain his own power as the ruler through his own vision of keeping Brunei separate from any kind of regional federation and maintaining its own identity as a Malay Islamic Monarchy with a guarantee of British support for the security and defense of his realm.¹⁰² In other words, it is my view, as I shall demonstrate in subsequent chapters, that the acceptance by the Sultan of any proposal by the other parties could be considered as a political gambit for the survival of

⁹⁹ As we should see in Chapter 2.

¹⁰⁰ Plans for the formation of a Brunei Malay Regiment were already being discussed between Brunei and the United Kingdom in 1959 during the visit of Field Marshal Sir Richard Hull to the Sultanate.

¹⁰¹ Borneo Bulletin, 1960.

¹⁰² Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

the Sultanate and his own position and power. However, it might be interpreted that in June 1960, the Sultan had accepted the idea of the Federation of Malaysia when he stopped over in Kuala Lumpur. In 1961, when Tuanku Syed Putra, the Raja of Perlis, who was also the Deputy King of Malaya, asked the Sultan for his views about the proposed Federation of Malaysia, it was reported that he simply replied by quoting a Malay proverb according to which relations between Brunei and the Federation of Malaya could not be cut off except by God's will.¹⁰³ Yet all that this might have meant was that he wanted a closer relationship with the people of Malaya, because they were descended from the same Malay roots. This sentiment was repeated by the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong of the Federation of Malaya during his visit to Brunei in July 1961:

We came to Brunei on a mission of friendship and goodwill, and we have found them waiting for us in abundance the same nationality, the same culture and the same customs... It is my earnest hope that the ties of friendship and goodwill in our hearts, ties which link over lands and peoples today as they have through recorded time, will endure as long as the sea which washes both our shores.¹⁰⁴

It was in the interests of the Sultan of Brunei to express a general interest in the Malaysia proposal without committing himself. It offered a new alternative for him to balance the pressure from his own subjects and the British and to forestall any further proposals for a Borneo Federation. By manipulating the issue, the Sultan might then have hoped to undermine the PRB. From this time onward, the political problems of Brunei were to be borne not by the Sultan alone, but would also be shared with the Malayan and British governments. To sum up, in the 1950s the Sultan faced two sets of pressures that caused him to look for other ways

¹⁰³ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, *Liku-Liku Perjuangan...*, p. 158.

¹⁰⁴ Ongkili, J.P., *Nation-building in Malaysia 1946-1974*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1985, p. 171.

of tackling the problem of PRB's demands and the British proposal for a Borneo Federation. Internal pressure from the PRB and also from the British colonial officers led the Sultan to seek ways of safeguarding his own political future. Therefore, as a political manouvre and diplomatic device the Sultan said that he was attracted in principle to the idea of a Federation along with Malaya and of closer relations between the Malays of Brunei and the Peninsula.

CHAPTER TWO

The Malaysia Proposal

2.1. The Background to the Malaysia Proposal

The Malaysia proposal refers to an idea or concept designed to unite the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, and the British Borneo territories, including Brunei. Brunei's monarchist-aristocratic leaders, including Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien, preferred to use the term "Melayu Raya" (which originally meant Greater Malaya or "Malay Homeland")¹ when referring to the Malaysia proposal. For the Sultan, the concept of a "Melayu Raya" was certainly not the same as the broader pan-Malay geopolitical concept that was introduced by President Sukarno in 1945, who had his own vision of "Indonesia Raya".² Sukarno's idea was the formation of one nation or state covering the whole of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago; for some supporters in Malaya this was also confusingly referred to as the "Melayu Raya";³ and later on the proposed homeland was called Maphilindo,⁴ to include the Philippines. However, the concept of Maphilindo comprised a loose regional grouping, rather than a nation or state.

¹ Eussof Agaki, pp. 30-31.

² Japan announced the independence of Indonesia in September 1944. As a result of this declaration, in March 1945, the Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence (BPUPKI) was organized to decide the constitution of the new state. The committee wanted the new nation's territory to include not only the Netherlands Indies but also Portuguese Timor and British Borneo and the Malay Peninsula. Thus, the basis for a postwar Greater Indonesia (Indonesia Raya) policy, pursued by Sukarno in the 1950s and 1960s. See 'Netherlands Indonesia Independence War 1945-1950', URL: <http://www.onwar.com/aced/data/india/Indonesia1954.htm>. See also Ranjit Singh, *Brunei 1839-1983:....*, p. 132.

³ Ranjit, p. 132.

⁴ At the Manila Meeting on 5th August 1963, the President of Indonesia, the President of the Philippines and the Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya had agreed to take initial steps toward the establishment of "Maphilindo" by holding frequent and regular consultations at all levels to be known as Musahawarah Maphilindo. 'Tripartite Summit Meeting Manila', 30th July – 5th August 1963, Department of Information, Malaysia, 1964, pp. 1-5. See also 'Kita Ganjang Terus Projek Neo-Koloni', *Angkasa: Penyebar Kesedaran Udara Nasional*, Year XIII, December, 1963, p. 160.

At the end of the 1930s the concept of a “Melayu Raya” began to be used in Malaya and Indonesia and then spread to Singapore and Borneo. It became the slogan of the Malay nationalist movement in Malaya especially the Kesatuan Melayu Muda⁵ (KMM) and the Sultan Idris Training College (SITC)-trained teachers⁶ who sought the independence of their motherland from Britain. Some of the Brunei students who studied in Malaya were also influenced by this idea and the nationalist movements in Indonesia and Malaya which intended to unite the Malay world as one single unit, in line with the vision of President Sukarno after 1945.⁷ The concept of ‘Melayu Raya’ was also spread widely by Malayan Nationalists who were pro-Indonesian such as Ibrahim Yaakub, Harun Aminnurashid, Ahmad Boestaman, Ishak Haji Muhammad, Burhanuddin AlHelmy and others. But it remained only a dream of some nationalists in the Malay Archipelago and was never realised.

The Sultan and his traditional monarchist-aristocratic group in Brunei also occasionally used the concept of the “Melayu Raya” instead of the “Federation of Malaysia”, especially in their speeches to the Councils or to the public. For example, in his speech on 5th December 1961, the Sultan stated that:

since the future destiny of the people of Brunei depended on our attitude and response to the merger proposal in the new “Melayu Raya”, I have therefore commanded my government firstly to carry out a detailed study of this

⁵ Ibrahim Yaakob, the President of Kesatuan Melayu Muda introduced the concept of Melayu Raya in Malaya in 1928. In Indonesia, the concept of Indonesia Raya was introduced by Muhammad Yamin in 1930. This concept had influenced Sukarno’s foreign policy after World War II. Ranjit Singh, p. 132.

⁶ Eussof Agaki, p. 31.

⁷ The first batch of Brunei students were Awang Marsal bin Maun and Awang Basir bin Taha. They studied at SITC in 1929. The original quota of two places for Brunei students was increased to four annually in 1938. At the beginning of 1940, Brunei had seven SITC-trained teachers. In November 1940 four more teachers arrived from Brunei. The Brunei Government continued to send the teachers to SITC until 1958. Among them were H.M. Salleh, Pengiran Mohd. Yusof Haji Abd. Rahim, Pengiran Ali Mohd. Daud, Jamil Umar, Othman Bidin, Mohammad Ali Tamin, Abu Bakar Haji Jambul, Ibrahim Haji Mohammad Said, Abdullah Alimin, and others. See *BAR*, 1938, pp. 33-35 and Geoffrey C. Gunn, *Language, Power and Ideology in Brunei Darussalam*, Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 1997, pp. 81-82.

problem and seek the views of the people regarding the proposal to form a “Melayu Raya”. The result of such a study will determine what future steps should be taken.⁸

Therefore, in the context of Brunei politics, the term “Melayu Raya” was synonymous with the Malaysia proposal introduced by Tunku Abdul Rahman in May 1961, and not Sukarno’s “Indonesia Raya”. In reality, the use of the concept by the Sultan was not an attempt to mislead his people to support his stand on the Malaysia Federation. For most Bruneians there was no difference in meaning between Melayu Raya and the Malaysia concept. Furthermore, the use of Melayu Raya did not affect his people’s views regarding their stand on the Malaysia proposal. The Sultan stated publicly that he did not intend to bring Brunei into Malaysia if it did not provide benefits for his people and the State of Brunei. Moreover, he had been granted the necessary power by the 1959 Constitution to decide whether or not to join Malaysia.

Nonetheless, the concept of a Melayu Raya in the wider Indonesian sense was incorporated into the manifesto of the Parti Rakyat Malaya (PRM) or People’s Party of Malaya⁹ and the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP)¹⁰ which therefore identified with a grand movement of all Malay Muslims in Southeast Asia. Because of its connection with the PRM¹¹ and PMIP, the PRB strongly supported this idea of a Melayu Raya rather than a specifically ‘Malaysian’

⁸ Titah 1957-1967 DYMM Paduka Seri Baginda Maulana Al-Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddien Sa’adul Kahiri Waddien, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Brunei, 1971, p. 107.

⁹ The PRM was formed in November 1955 by Ahmad Boestaman in Malaya. Formerly he led the Malay Nationalist Party (MNP) which was banned in 1950. The party’s ideology was based on the Indonesian brand of socialism known as “Marhaenism”. The party’s main objective was to improve and upgrade the living standard of the peasants.

¹⁰ The PMIP was founded by Dr. Burhanuddin, a former leader of the Malay Nationalist Party. This party strongly supported Sukarno’s idea of the establishment of a Indonesia Raya. They believed that unification was necessary because of the similarity in language, culture and social values among the people of Indonesia, Malaya, Borneo and Singapore.

¹¹ Ranjit, p. 132.

rendering of the term.¹² This aim of creating a Melayu Raya had been adopted in the PRB's first congress which took place at Brunei Town on the 30th March 1957. As Zariani has said:

As a further gesture of Malay World Solidarity, the Congress also supported the resolution of One Country, One Race, One Language adopted by the Youth Congress of Malaya in 1954. It was a precursor to the Malaysia concept and was based on the resolution adopted by the Youth Congress of Indonesia on 28th October 1928, well known as the *Sumpah Pemuda* (Youth Declaration). The Indonesian concept was a historically inspired one of One Nation, One Race and One Language.¹³

Thus, when on 16th October 1961 Tunku Abdul Rahman put to the *Dewan Rakyat* (Malayan Parliament) his motion on the proposed Federation of Malaysia, Burhanuddin AlHelmy, the leader of the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party, suggested that the concept of Malaysia should encompass not only the Federation of Malaya, Singapore and the Borneo territories, but also Indonesia and the Philippines as an initial step towards the formation of a Malay Homeland or 'Malaysia Raya'.¹⁴ This suggestion, however, was opposed by the Speaker of the *Dewan Rakyat*, Encik Haji Mohd. Omar.¹⁵

Tunku Abdul Rahman officially launched the concept of a Federation of Malaysia during a luncheon meeting of the Foreign Correspondents' Association of Southeast Asia (FCASA) in Singapore on 27th May 1961. It explicitly excluded the concept of a wider Indonesian-Malaysian political entity. According to him:

¹² The PRB originally used the Malaysia term in 1958 through the publication of its Jawi newspaper, "The Malaysia". In 1958, Azahari attended a congress organized by Gerakan Hang Tuah (Hang Tuah Movement; Hang Tuah was a character from the 15th Century Malacca Sultanate) in Singapore. In his speech, Azahari stressed that the Malay Archipelago should be united into a single federation. See Zariani, pp. 84-85.

¹³ Zariani, p. 27.

¹⁴ Dewan Rakyat, Parliamentary Debate, Penggal III, October 1961 - January 1962.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Malaya today as a nation realizes that she cannot stand alone in isolation... Sooner or later she should have an understanding with Britain and the people of Singapore, Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak. It is premature for me to say how this clear understanding can be brought about but it is inevitable that we should look ahead to this objective and think of a plan whereby these territories can be brought closer in a political and economic cooperation...¹⁶

The plan was not entirely the Tunku's idea. He took the idea seriously after arranging several discussions with leaders of Singapore, especially Mr. Lee Kuan Yew. As he said:

Needless for me to say that the idea of Malaysia is not a new idea. It was not my dream alone, but also that of many prominent leaders. To me it came about when I heard of the many discussions the British officials of the Borneo territories had with the British Government and agreed to by some of the leaders of Sabah and Sarawak.¹⁷

Although the plan was derived publicly from Tunku Abdul Rahman, some observers believed that the British had 'whispered' the idea to him.¹⁸ The Tunku acknowledged that the idea of Malaysia did not come to him by chance. Originally it arose as a result of his discussions with a number of 'responsible citizens' of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore¹⁹ who asked

¹⁶ Malaysia, Department of Information, Kuala Lumpur, 1962, p. 6. For a press report of the speech, see Sunday Times, 27 May 1961.

¹⁷ Papers of Sir William Goode, Federation of Malaysia, Text of the Address by the Honourable the Prime Minister the Federation of Malaya at the Opening Ceremony of the Malaysian Solidarity Consultative Committee (MSCC) Meeting, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. This speech took place at the opening ceremony at the second MSCC meeting at Kuching, 18th December, 1961.

¹⁸ This is difficult to demonstrate because the British Government had not initiated the idea of Malaysia; only other federations such as the Borneo Federation and the Malayan Union. Although the American Consul in Singapore stated that 'British policy favours Malaysia, and they are trying hard to build up local support. In this connection, it would appear that the key personality on (or behind) the scene is the Chief Secretary, F.D. Jakeway'. RG59 Decimal File 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Department of State, 2nd March 1962. According to Ghazali Shafie (as the project officer), he and Zainal Sulong were responsible for providing the Memorandum for the Malaysia proposal which was sent to Duncan Sandys on 15th June 1961. Ghazali Shafie said that 'the Memorandum on the Malaysia idea was submitted to the British Government with the intention of explaining the preliminary concept primarily to convince Her Majesty's Government of the urgent need for the constitutional arrangement'. See Ghazali Shafie's Memoir on the Formation of Malaysia, University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, 1998, pp. 32-34.

¹⁹ Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew and also former Chief Ministers of Singapore, Mr. David Marshall and Mr. Lim Yew Hock had suggested that Singapore should join the Federation of Malaya. See Emily Sadka, Malaysia: The Political Background, Eastern University Press, Singapore, 1963, p. 33.

him from time to time whether there was a possibility of the integration of the two territories, with Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei.²⁰ This he mentioned in a speech in the *Dewan Rakyat* on 16th October, 1961:

That this House agreeing in principle with the concept of Malaysia comprising the eleven States of the Federation, the States of Singapore and Brunei and the territories of North Borneo and Sarawak, endorses the Government's initiative in taking action for its realization, the progress of which will be reported to the House by the Honourable the Prime Minister from time to time.²¹

In reality, Tunku Abdul Rahman was not in favour of the idea of merger between Singapore and the Federation of Malaya alone.²² In his opinion, this plan could create social and political conflicts between the two states, mainly due to differences in ethnic composition.²³ The Tunku also realised that it would not be an easy task to persuade the Chinese in Singapore (who represented more than 70% of the total population) to accept the plan. But considering the survival of the Borneo States²⁴ and Singapore²⁵ in the face of the Communist threat on the one hand and the security of the Federation of Malaya on the other, he thought that he should proceed with the scheme immediately in May 1961. The Tunku and Lee Kuan Yew agreed that the communist threat in Singapore was increasing and could be extremely dangerous. If

²⁰ Gullick, p. 32.

²¹ *Dewan Rakyat, Parliamentary Debate*, 3rd. Session, October 1961 January 1962, col. 1590

²² Gullick, p. 32.

²³ See appendix 6 for the ethnic composition of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore.

²⁴ The British Government came to the view that the Malaysia Concept was a suitable means for the Borneo States to gain their independence. Furthermore, the British were concerned that the Communist element could control these states especially from within. The Communist Clandestine Organization (CCO) for example, supported the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) which had relations with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). See *The Threat of Armed Communism in Sarawak*, Malaysia Government Printing, Kuala Lumpur, 1972.

²⁵ According to Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, had been very concerned about Singapore's survival. Furthermore, Mr. Lee had disclosed the presence of a large number of Singaporeans who were inclined towards Communism. Therefore, the formation of Malaysia could prevent a situation in which an independent Singapore would go a different way from that of the Federation of Malaysia. See 'Parliamentary Debate', 3rd. Session, 16th October 1961, cols. 1594-1597. The threat from the Communist element in Singapore was clearly mentioned by the Tunku in his speech at the *Dewan Rakyat* on 16th October

drastic measures were not taken in Singapore, the position in Malaya would also worsen. Therefore, the only way to forestall an independent Singapore under communist control was to assist the PAP non-communist leaders like Lee Kuan Yew into achieving independence within a Federation that would include the three Borneo states. The Tunku was willing to proceed with this plan if the British Government was prepared to transfer the sovereignty of the Borneo territories to the Malayan Government.

2.2. The Malaysia Proposal.

After the Tunku's declaration in Singapore, the first meeting regarding the Malaysia proposal was held in London on 10th June 1961 between the Tunku and Lord Perth, Minister of State in the Colonial Office. The first official British reaction came on 20th June 1961, when the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Macmillan, replying to a question in the House of Commons, said that the Tunku's idea of a Malaysia Federation was attractive. Five days later, Sir William Goode, Governor of North Borneo, Sir Alexander Waddell, Governor of Sarawak, and Mr. D.C. White, High Commissioner for Brunei, attended a meeting with the British Commissioner-General in Southeast Asia, Lord Selkirk, to discuss the Malaysia proposal in Singapore. On 22nd November 1961 the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr. Macmillan and the Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman, jointly declared that the formation of Malaysia was a desirable aim.²⁶ A joint statement was issued on 23rd November 1961 which announced inter alia, the decision to set up a Commission to ascertain the views of the people of North Borneo and Sarawak and in the light of the Commission's assessment

1961. He said that "while Singapore is under the British we feel that there is no threat of open action by the Communists which might endanger the peace and security of the Federation, but with an independent Singapore, anything could happen..."

²⁶ Harry Miller, The Story of Malaysia, Faber and Faber, London, 1965, pp. 223-225.

to make recommendations on the inclusion of those territories in the proposed Federation. On 28th November 1961, in the British House of Commons, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, Mr. Duncan Sandys, reported favourably on the Tunku's proposal.²⁷

The Tunku regarded this matter as one of great urgency because in Singapore the position of the current Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew and the PAP was increasingly insecure.²⁸ Thus, the Tunku had met the Prime Minister of Singapore on several occasions to discuss the proposal. Mr. Lee had made it clear that it had his full backing; and he agreed with the Tunku on the general arrangements under which Singapore could enter Malaysia on special terms.²⁹ In a letter to the Tunku, Lee had expressed his views on the future development of Singapore and Malaya:

...in our discussions on the constitutional framework of effecting the merger of Singapore with the Federation of Malaya in the new Federation of Malaysia we agreed upon a memorandum which contains several heads of agreement, including State and Federation responsibilities, whereby Singapore will retain responsibility over Education and Labour and enjoy local autonomy in certain agreed matters...³⁰

²⁷ On 18th April 1961, the Colonial Policy Committee meeting in London concluded that the Malaysia proposal would be an "ultimate aim of policy". See David Tham, 'British Attitudes...', p. 316.

²⁸ The People's Action Party (PAP) was formed in late 1954. Its fourteen founders included two lawyers, two journalists, two teachers, one lecturer at the University of Malaya and seven trade unionists. From the beginning, the PAP was obviously divided into two wings: on the one side, the non-Communists under Lee Kuan Yew who, according to one report, was the 'brain' of the Party; on the other side, the pro-Communists under Lim Chin Siong, who provided the muscles. The split between these two groups took place in 1961. According to Carolyn Choo, the factor which led to the break between the two groups was the issue of independence through merger with the Federation of Malaya. As in 1957, the pro-Communists opposed such a merger. See Pang Cheng Lian, Singapore's People's Action Party, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1971, pp. 1-5 Carolyn Choo, Singapore: The PAP & The Problem of Political Succession, Pelanduk Publications, Kuala Lumpur, pp. 20-21.

²⁹ C.O. 947/2 'Solidarity Consultative Committee,' Proposed Federation of Malaysia Commission of Inquiry Paper for British Members, p. 6.

³⁰ The Merger Plan, Ministry of Culture Publication, Singapore, 1962.

In order to achieve this scheme, Tunku Abdul Rahman laid down two essential conditions for Singapore's entry:

1. Before being committed to a merger with Singapore, he needed to be absolutely certain that the three Borneo territories (Brunei, North Borneo and Sarawak) with their predominantly non-Chinese population, would be brought into the Federation; and
2. Singapore should have a smaller representation in the central Government than it would be entitled to on a population basis; in return for this, Singapore would retain wider powers than the other member States, but not responsibility for internal security.³¹

The Tunku's basic proposal was that, as the first step, Brunei, North Borneo and Sarawak should be brought into the Malayan Federation as constituent units, on the same basis as the existing States. Then Singapore would join the Federation, with greater powers to administer its own affairs than the other states.

In terms of future security, it was agreed that responsibility for external affairs, defence and security should be vested in the central government. This meant that any internal or external threats such as communist subversion in the Borneo states would be dealt with by the federal government.³² The British government also had to take into consideration the possible threat of hostile action in Asia, particularly against small countries. There was a possibility that a

³¹ C.O. 947/2 'Solidarity Consultative Committee', p. 8.

³² Hara Fujio, *The North Kalimantan Communist Party: A Preliminary Study*, Borneo 2000, Proceedings of the Sixth Biennial Borneo Research Conference, 10th-14th July, 2000, pp. 197-248. See also Mahmud, E.,

small wealthy state like Brunei might appear to be tempting prey to more powerful neighbours. If Brunei were to become a part of Malaysia, her security would be strengthened. She would enjoy the protection of Malaysian forces, together with those of the United Kingdom based there by agreement. With regard to this issue it was decided that, in the event of the formation of the proposed Federation of Malaysia, the existing Defence Agreement between Britain and Malaya should be extended to embrace the other territories concerned. In the Agreement on External Defence and Mutual Assistance Between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Federation of Malaya on October 1957, Article 6 stated that:

In the event of a threat of armed attack against any of the territories or forces of the Federation of Malaya or the territories or protectorates of the United Kingdom in the Far East or any of the forces of the United Kingdom in those territories or protectorates or within the Federation of Malaya, or other threat to the preservation of peace in the Far East, the Government of the Federation and the United Kingdom will consult together on the measures to be taken jointly or separately to ensure the fullest co-operation between them for the purpose of meeting the situation effectively.³³

Furthermore, it was agreed that a prospective Malaysian Government would afford to the Government of the United Kingdom the right to continue to maintain bases at Singapore for the purpose of assisting in the defence of Malaysia, and for Commonwealth defence and the preservation of peace in Southeast Asia.³⁴ Unfortunately, this issue became the main reason why Indonesia later opposed the Malaysia scheme, which it regarded as initiating a new era of

³³ 'Komunisme di Sarawak,' Borneo 2000, Proceedings of the Sixth Biennial Borneo Research Conference, 10-14th July, 2000, pp. 249-293.

³³ Gullick, p. 100.

³⁴ C.O. 947/2 'Solidarity Consultative Committee', The Joint Statement by the British and Malayan Government on 22nd November, 1961. (As a White Paper).

British neo-colonialism in Southeast Asia and undermining the Bandung Agreement of 1955.³⁵

In principle, the British Government preferred that Brunei should join the Federation together with Sarawak and North Borneo, either as individual entities or as a single confederated unit. In North Borneo, the majority of the Chinese community, estimated at about 25% of the total population, was against Malaysia. Some of the opponents were members of political parties such as the North Borneo Democratic Party under the leadership of Peter Chin, the North Borneo Liberal Party led by Teo Chee Hing, and the North Borneo Social Democratic Party led by Kwan Yui Ming.³⁶ In Sarawak, the Tunku's scheme was opposed by the Chinese-dominated Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP),³⁷ which continued to agitate for constitutional reform, self-government, independence and subsequent union of the three Borneo territories prior to consideration of a merger with the Federation and Singapore. The SUPP had been heavily infiltrated by communist elements³⁸ who also played an important role in the Chinese labour unions and farmers' groups which in turn supported the leader of

³⁵ The first official and most important inter-governmental conference of the Afro-Asian Block was held in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955. This conference is generally seen as the founding meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Most of the 29 participating states had been decolonised and expressed their anti-colonial sentiments. The Final Communiqué of the Bandung Conference condemned colonialism on various grounds.

³⁶ RG59 Decimal File 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Dept. of State, Washington, 30th January 1962.

³⁷ The SUPP was formed on 11th June 1959. In March 1961, the SUPP Secretary-General, Stephen Yong reported that the organization had about 24,000 members. The members were mainly Chinese but included a small number of Ibans, Malays and people from other communities. The basic SUPP political objective was independence and self-government for Sarawak and it supported the idea of a Borneo Federation and was against the Malaysia proposal. See RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Department of State, Washington, 17th May 1961 and 6th March 1962.

³⁸ The early formation of communist organizations in Sarawak began in 1941 at Chinese language schools. After the war there were three communist underground organizations in Sarawak, namely the Sarawak Advanced Youths' Association (SAYA), the North Kalimantan National Liberation League (NKNLL) and the Sarawak Farmers' Association (SFA). By 1959, these communist organizations had fully penetrated the SUPP. On 7th March, 1962 the press reported that Banggau Anak Renang (Iban), SUPP Vice-Chairman and concurrently Chairman of the Sibu SUPP Branch, had left the Party because he had discovered there were communists in the Party who were using the party to disguise their activities. Furthermore, Banggau opposed the SUPP Central and

the SUPP,³⁹ Ong Kee Hui. Thus, Malaysia was seen as an important means of preventing Communist influence from increasing in the three territories. This issue also had some influence on the Sultan to support the scheme⁴⁰ as he stated that:

In the present day political atmosphere of Southeast Asia, it must be understood that it would be difficult, for a State by itself, especially a small State, to defend itself from subversive influence and external threats of communism, and as far as Brunei is concerned, it is necessary for her to find an ally among her neighbouring countries.⁴¹

The British Government hoped that this plan would unite the British-governed territories into one whole body, by which they would be more easily defended against external threats. The main reason why the Malaysia plan was highly esteemed by far-sighted politicians in London (such as Mr. Macmillan, Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Duncan Sandys and Sir Arthur Snelling) might well have been the fear that if the people and political parties of the three territories were to go their own way and form their own government, the weakest territory could be easily infiltrated and utilized by communist organizations to build their footing in the three territories.⁴² In this way, communist influence might expand gradually and, in the end, all the

Working Committee's decision not to expel two members who had been convicted in court of belonging to the CCO. See Hara Fujio, pp. 249-293.

³⁹ The SUPP might have been following the PAP's step of cooperating with the Communists in their struggle to agitate for constitutional reform, self-government, independence and subsequent union of the three Borneo territories. According to the American Consul in Singapore, Ong Kee Hui (the Chairman of SUPP), tried to get in touch with Ong Pang Boon, Home Minister and Organizing Secretary of PAP, in January 1962. Ong Pang Boon was described by Lee Kuan Yew as the person who "saved" the PAP from the communists. Ong Kee Hui wanted presumably to study or learn from Ong Pang Boon the tactic of removing or destroying the CCO from the SUPP. See RG59 Decimal File, 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Dept. of State, Washington, 30th January 1962.

⁴⁰ Although the Sultan supported the Malaysia proposal in principle, it did not mean that he definitely wanted to join the Federation.

⁴¹ Borneo Bulletin, 21st July 1962.

⁴² In the Borneo territories, the Communist threat came from Indonesia (PKI) through the PKI's relations with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and with the SUPP in Sarawak, and also indirectly PRB's relations with Indonesia and SUPP. For example, there was a report that communist elements might exist in the Brunei Shell Company in the 1950s and 1960s because some of the workers were Indonesians. C.O. 947/6 'Memorandum of Malaysia Plan For the 5 Man Commission of Inquiry for Views of the peoples of Sarawak and North Borneo', p. 18.

three territories would fall to communism. Internally, the British, who were responsible for the internal security of Brunei, were concerned about the PRB's connection with the SUPP⁴³ and with Indonesia in general.⁴⁴

The Malaysia proposal's main objective was therefore security-oriented rather than economic or social. Historically, the Malay States had always been wary of association with Singapore because of the latter's overwhelming Chinese population. It was largely for this reason that the island had been excluded from the Malayan Union of 1946 and the Federation of Malaya of 1948, although an additional reason was that the British wanted to keep full control of important defence installations in Singapore. But because of the success of the communists in the island during the 1950s,⁴⁵ they posed an increasing threat to the Federation of Malaya. And to make sure the plan was successfully implemented without jeopardizing the interests of any parties, the Tunku needed the Borneo territories to be included in the Federation, in order to balance the proportion of the Chinese population in Singapore. Otherwise, the Malays would become a minority in the Federation of Malaysia with consequences for their political dominance.⁴⁶

⁴³ Within the SUPP there was a communist group which was later known as the Sarawak Communist Organization (SCO). After the Brunei revolt in December 1962, there was clear evidence of active collaboration by the SCO with the PKI in Indonesia which led to the formation of a joint guerrilla group known as the "Bara Force". In 1965, a secret meeting was held in Pontianak between the SCO and PKI representatives to form a Communist Party which was later known as the North Kalimantan Communist Party (NKCP). See The Threats of Armed Communism in Sarawak, Kuala Lumpur, 1972, pp. 1-3, 26.

⁴⁴ The Indonesian Government under Sukarno was supported by the Indonesian communists who in turn were backed by communist China. The PKI was the largest communist party in Southeast Asia and planned to take over Indonesia through the GESTAPU coup in September 1965. The PKI also supported the Brunei revolt in December 1962. The colonial authorities were concerned about possible communist or Indonesian subversion coming from the Indonesian portion of Borneo (Kalimantan). There were for example about 6,000 to 7,000 Indonesian agricultural workers in the Tawau area of North Borneo alone. RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to the Department of State, Washington, 12th May 1961.

⁴⁵ The pro-Communist group supported the PAP from 1954 to 1961. See Pang Cheng Lian, Singapore's People's Action Party.

⁴⁶ See appendix 6, for the ethnic composition in Singapore and the Federation of Malaya.

Furthermore, the Tunku also promised Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien early on that he was eligible to be elected as Yang Di-Pertuan Agong of the proposed Federation of Malaysia.⁴⁷ This was surely true, as Ongkili said that “he (the Sultan of Brunei) expected to become the next Agong when the incumbent (Tuanku Syed Putra ibni Al-Marhum Syed Hassan Jamalullail) who visited Brunei in July 1961 had completed his term of five years in September 1965”.⁴⁸ The Tunku stressed that Brunei would not become a Federal colony but would have the same rights and privileges as the other federated states.⁴⁹ Certainly, on the surface at least, the Malaysia plan was not an attempt to colonise the Borneo territories, as the left-wing groups thought. The Tunku promised that under this scheme, the Borneo territories should join in equal partnership, enjoying the same status, so there would be no fear that Malaysia meant to impose Islam⁵⁰ especially on the non-Muslim peoples of Sarawak and North Borneo.

On the other hand, it could not be denied that the Federation would also provide substantial markets and create more job opportunities, especially for the people of Brunei. The Tunku also envisaged that the merger would provide political stability and safeguard the survival of the Sultanate in a fast-changing world. The Brunei dynasty would be secure within the Federal Constitution which would contain effective safeguards for the position of the Ruler, but as a constitutional monarch.⁵¹

⁴⁷ RG59, Decimal file 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Department of State, Washington, 14th February 1962. Also Ranjit, p. 163.

⁴⁸ Ongkili, p. 173.

⁴⁹ RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Department of State, 7th July 1961.

⁵⁰ Gullick, p. 44.

⁵¹ C.O. 1030/1012 ‘Greater Malaysia - Brunei Aspects’, Mr. Reginald Maudling, Colonial Office to Sultan of Brunei, 9th March 1962.

In conclusion, there were three major reasons why the Tunku wanted to bring Brunei into the Federation of Malaysia; first to balance the Chinese majority in Singapore; secondly, to enhance security in the face of communist intentions to expand their influence and power in Southeast Asia in that the Federation was seen as a “bulwark against the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia”;⁵² and thirdly, to form a single economically viable unit so that indirectly Brunei could help finance development projects in North Borneo and Sarawak.⁵³ Ultimately, however, the decision was seen as resting with the people of the Borneo territories to accept the scheme or find the ways and means to form their own government and to achieve independence from British rule. As they stood, none of these factors could really influence the decision of the Sultan and the PRB to bring Brunei into the Federation of Malaysia, and a key difference between Brunei and the neighbouring colonies of Sarawak and Sabah was that the Sultan of Brunei, as a protected monarch and head of internal government, had a crucial role to play in the decision.

2.3. Brunei’s Reaction towards the Malaysia Proposal

2.3.1. A.M. Azahari

In addition to the role played by Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien, the study of Brunei’s historical development must also take account of the prominent part played by A.M. Azahari, a key

⁵² Eastern World, September 1963.

⁵³ Muhammad Abu Bakar, ‘Politik Brunei Menjelang Penubuhan Malaysia’, Malaysia dari Segi Sejarah, Kuala Lumpur, p. 122.

figure in the territory's political history in the 1950s and 1960s.⁵⁴ In studying the impact of the Malaysia proposal on Brunei politics we have to examine Azahari's personal background, especially his links with Indonesia and other political parties such as SUPP, PMIP and the Barisan Sosialis.

Azahari was born in Labuan in 1928.⁵⁵ His father was of Arab descent, but his mother was a Brunei Malay. The wedding of his parents was conducted in Labuan at state level, with the British Resident providing an official naval-gun salute in honour of his father, a close relative of the Sultan of Brunei. Indeed, his uncle Pengiran Kerma Indera Pengiran Muhammad, was of royal blood⁵⁶ and his house was next to that of the British Resident in the 1950s. This is an important element to bear in mind in my following discussion because Azahari enjoyed personal and familial relations with the Sultan. A former sultan, Abdul Mumin (1852-1885),⁵⁷ had granted the Island of Kaingaran in Brunei's Muara Bay to Azahari's grandfather, Sheikh Abdul Hamid, in perpetuity.

Azahari had his early education at the Roman Catholic School, Brunei Town. One of his classmates was Awang Isa bin Pehin Dato Perdana Menteri Ibrahim Jaafar.⁵⁸ When the Japanese Army occupied Brunei from 1941-45, Azahari was sent to Bogor, Indonesia by the Japanese, ostensibly to study veterinary science. There he met Ahmad Zaidi who later joined

⁵⁴ Some people felt that if there had been no A.M.Azahari there would have been no PRB and there would have been no kind of radical political discontent towards the Government.

⁵⁵ C.O. 1030/1012 'Greater Malaysia: Indonesia Attitudes,' A.M. Azahari by D.C. White. However, in my interview with A.M. Azahari in Bogor 1994, he told me that he was born in Brunei. See also FEER, 7th January 1984.

⁵⁶ Refer to appendix 5, A.M.Azahari's family tree in relation to the Brunei Royal Family.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ At present known as Pehin Orangkaya Dato Seri Setia Laila Rashia Diraja Awang Haji Isa bin Pehin Perdana Menteri Perdana Menteri Ibrahim Jaafar, Minister of Home Affairs, Negara Brunei Darussalam.

the PRB's struggle in Kalimantan Borneo.⁵⁹ When the Japanese surrendered in 1945, both of them fought against the Dutch for Indonesia's independence. After Indonesia achieved Independence in 1949, Azahari was offered the post of Chief Police Officer of the Indonesian Police Force in Jakarta, but he rejected it and then joined a commercial firm in Palembang.⁶⁰

In 1950 Azahari's father requested his son's return from Indonesia, but the British Resident, Eric Pretty, refused him entry on the grounds that Azahari was a follower of Sukarno, an exponent of revolutionary ideology, and therefore politically undesirable. This was the official reason given for refusing him entry to Brunei, and without doubt, the security of the Brunei oil industry was an important factor. The Managing Director of Brunei Malayan Petroleum, Roland Edward, claimed that not only was Azahari indoctrinated with revolutionary ideology, but also he was "on 'leave' from Java where he was alleged to be employed by the Indonesian Government".⁶¹ However, this allegation was misleading. Pretty, who knew Azahari's family, tried to dissuade Azahari's uncle, the Pengiran Temenggung,⁶² from helping to secure his return. "Sukarno has poisoned his mind", Pretty said to Azahari's father. The Resident cabled his superior in London, but the Colonial Office left this decision to the Sultan. Eventually the Sultan approved the application and, in October 1952, Azahari returned to Brunei permanently.⁶³

⁵⁹ In 1962, Ahmad Zaidi became the leader of the North Kalimantan National Army or Tentara Nasional Kalimantan Utara (TNKU) in Sarawak and supported the PRB's manifesto of the Federation of British Borneo. After returning from Indonesia in 1975, he was appointed as Yang DiPertuan Negeri Sarawak until his death in December 2000.

⁶⁰ C.O. 1030/1013 'Greater Malaysia: Indonesia Attitudes', A.M. Azahari, by D.C.White 27th September 1961. Cited by Husseinmiya, p. 96.

⁶¹ C.O. 396/328/8/01, 'Notes from extract of letter from the Managing Director of Brunei Malayan Petroleum,' Hales to Nuttall, 11th February, 1953.

⁶² The fourth minister within the traditional system of Sultanate rule in Brunei.

⁶³ C.O. 1030/1013, 'Greater Malaysia: Indonesia Attitudes,' A.M.Azahari, by D.C. White, 27th September 1961.

Shortly afterwards, Azahari announced that he would work to prepare Brunei for independence. This was the beginning of a new era in Brunei's political history. Many Bruneians were excited by his return some began to support and participate in his various business ventures. They were impressed by his speeches. He started to canvas for funds to start a film company.⁶⁴ His first attempt failed because the British Resident refused to register his company. As there was no company law in Brunei except the Societies Act 1932, his company was regarded as illegal. Azahari protested; he organized a march to the Resident's Office and demanded that the ban be repealed; as the procession was illegal, it was ordered to disperse; this order was ignored and the leaders arrested for contempt. Azahari was given one year's imprisonment and fined \$100 but, on appeal, his sentence was reduced to six months. Sir Anthony Abell, then High Commissioner for Brunei, described Azahari's action thus:

Azahari returned recently to Brunei and started almost immediately to stir up trouble, preaching an anti-colonial and pro-Indonesian creed. His persuasive figure, tongue and superior education gained him considerable support, particularly among the young rank and file of the Police and the junior grades of the Civil Service. Even His Highness and some of his Ministers at one time showed some interest in the film project...⁶⁵

According to H.M. Salleh, another prominent member of the PRB, while Azahari was in prison in 1953 he started to organize a revolt,⁶⁶ but the attempt failed. The plot came to light and several conspirators were convicted and sent to prison. After serving his sentence, Azahari continued his political and business activities. He started various firms and enterprises, all of which ended in financial difficulties. In 1955 he began openly to organise a

⁶⁴ Through this business he could spread his political ideas to the people of Brunei by using propaganda in films. To hide his real aim of spreading the idea of nationalism, he revealed the aim of his film company was to encourage the people of Brunei to take part in business activities in order to improve their standard of living.

⁶⁵ C.O. 1030/396, 'Political Development in Brunei', High Commissioner for Brunei to Secretary of State of Colonies, 10th March, 1953.

⁶⁶ Interview with H.M. Salleh, Jalan Bedil, Berakas, Brunei. 27th November 1994.

political party, together with the former leader of BARIP, H.M. Salleh.⁶⁷ H.M. Salleh was the man behind the scenes who played an important role beside Azahari; without him, Azahari would not have become so popular. This party was registered in 1956 after a few changes in its manifesto,⁶⁸ which contradicted Government policies. The party was eventually registered under the Societies Ordinance as Party Rakyat Brunei (PRB) or the Brunei People's Party.⁶⁹

2.3.2. The Party Rakyat Brunei's Response

The government declined to register the party when its Constitution claimed that North Borneo and Sarawak should be united in a Federation of North Borneo Territories.⁷⁰ The government had insisted that registration would be granted only if the Constitution included no provision for affiliation with political bodies outside the State of Brunei.⁷¹ In 1956, the PRB's main objective was to fight for the independence of the country⁷² from Great Britain and, as a first step, for the Federation of Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei⁷³ with the Sultan of Brunei becoming Sri Mahkota Negara as a Constitutional Monarch.⁷⁴ This would be

⁶⁷ H.M.Salleh was the first leader of the Brunei Nationalist Movement in the 1940s and 1950s. He wrote an article entitled 'Tangisan Terjajah'. The article was banned by the British because the content of the article was mainly anti-British. Because of this article H.M. Salleh was sentenced to several months in prison after the Second World War.

⁶⁸ The Government asked the PRB's Central Executive Committee to delete one of its aims to include North Borneo and Sarawak in the establishment of the Federation of Borneo States.

⁶⁹ At a meeting on 25th August 1956, the PRB's interim Executive Committee was appointed. The members of the committee were Sheikh Azahari bin Sheikh Mahmud (President), Encik H.M.Salleh (Vice President) Encik Yassin Affandy (Secretary General), Encik H.B.Hidup (Asst. Secretary General), Encik Hapiz Laksamana (Treasurer), Encik Abdullah Jahfar and Encik Abd. Kadir (Executive Committee). See RG59, Decimal Files, 1955-1959, Amcongen, Singapore to Dept. of State, Washington, 17th September 1956.

⁷⁰ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Pertumbuhan Nasionalisme.., p. 71.

⁷¹ Brunei had been a British Protectorate since 1888. Therefore, Brunei Government policy was identical with that of the Singapore Government, which delayed registration of Parti Rakyat Singapore in the Colony until similar assurances were received that there was no connection with Parti Rakyat Malaya (PRM) in the Federation. One of the PRB's objectives was to struggle for the independence of all Malay States in the Archipelago which related with PRM's ambition of upholding the idea of 'Melayu Raya'.

⁷² Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, People Party.., p. 281.

⁷³ Brown, p. 160

⁷⁴ RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Department of State, 30th January 1961, National Archive of Washington, D.C.

achieved through elections held in order to appoint members of the State Council. The party demanded that if they won the majority of seats in the Council then they should form a government. This view was contrary to that held by the Sultan; his view was that even if the PRB won the election, the power to rule the country should remain under the Sultan's hand; the members of the party would only be appointed as members of the State Council and not asked to set up a new government. "These two different views about the future destiny of Brunei's political system finally culminated in political turmoil, with the 'December Revolution' of 1962".⁷⁵

It was clear that in 1962, the Malaysia plan had been rejected by the people of Brunei.⁷⁶ Former Singapore Chief Minister, David Marshall, who visited Brunei in early December 1962, commented on the intense opposition towards the proposal, which proved that the people had a sincere desire to fulfill their own nationalist leanings and to stand on their own feet.⁷⁷ The PRB was confident it was time for the Bruneians to administer their own country, and chart their own destiny. Thus, from the time of its formation, the PRB continued to oppose the government and to seek more voice in the government of the state through increasing the percentage of elected members in the Legislative Council from 50 percent to 75 percent. Though the Sultan had succeeded in introducing the Constitution, the PRB considered that this did not meet the people's wish and was still out of date. The PRB therefore argued for the implementation of constitutional reform and greater democracy. They also expressed dissatisfaction with the government because of its delay in organizing the

⁷⁵ Sabihah Osman & Muhammad Hadi Abdullah, Sejarah Brunei Menjelang Kemerdekaan, p. 170.

⁷⁶ However, the Sultan supported it in principle because it was part of his political manoeuvre and a diplomatic device for the survival of the Brunei Sultanate.

⁷⁷ Borneo Bulletin, 1st December 1962.

District Council elections, which were supposed to be held two years after the proclamation of the 1959 Constitution.

The conflict between the PRB and the government intensified when the Sultan declared his stand on the Malaysia proposal in December 1961.⁷⁸ On the issue of the Malaysia proposal, the PRB had already declared its own position: it sought the reunification of the Borneo territories as a first step after elections, and then independence, and perhaps Malaysia later.⁷⁹ The PRB insisted on independence before merger, as in the name of national interest, it did not want to obtain independence through Malaysia.⁸⁰ The first step, it was argued, should be the integration of Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo with the Sultan of Brunei as Sri Mahkota Negara. The second step would be the merger with the Federation of Malaya and Singapore. The PRB had fondly harboured the vision of the Federation of Northern Borneo Territories and above all, wanted the restoration of the sovereignty of the Brunei Sultanate over Northern Borneo. Therefore, any move to bring these three territories together with another country as in the Malaysia proposal would defeat the PRB's initial goal. The PRB claimed that its main objection to the Malaysia proposal was based on the premise that the Chinese would constitute the largest single racial group in the Federation of Malaysia, and eventually dominate such a political entity both politically and economically. The stage would then be set for a communist takeover because the communists in the Chinese community were by far the most astute and powerful group.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Titah 1959-67, DYMM Paduka Seri Baginda Maulana Al-Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin Sa'adul Khairi Waddin, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Brunei, 1971, p. 101.

⁷⁹ Ranjit, p. 156.

⁸⁰ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad said that 'the people of Brunei wanted to obtain independence for themselves, not receive it from the hands of Tunku Abdul Rahman.' RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Department of State, 9th September 1962, Enclosed 'Memorandum of Conversation'.

⁸¹ Sabihah Osman & Muhammad Hadi Abdullah, Sejarah Brunei Menjelang Kemerdekaan, p. 187.

The PRB was not only anti-Malaysia, but was also opposed to the presence of Malayan officials seconded to Brunei. By the 1960s, there were an estimated 200 Malayan officers serving at all levels of the Brunei Government, including some of the highest posts⁸². On 12th June 1961, one of the seconded Malayan officers, Encik Mohd. Yakin Long,⁸³ was allegedly hit by a member of the PRB, namely Azahari's brother. Consequently, some Malayan officers resigned from their posts and returned to Malaya without the approval and knowledge of the Brunei Government. In response, the *Menteri Besar*, Pehin Dato Ibrahim, announced on Radio Brunei that the seconded Malaysians would not be allowed to stay and work permanently in Brunei. They would vacate their posts when Bruneians were capable of taking over their jobs. In order to calm the situation, the *Menteri Besar* dismissed the PRB's allegations that Brunei was colonized by Malaysians. As he said:

I, on behalf of the Government, wish to say to the *rakyat* (people) that it is the intention of our Government to free ourselves from the claws of colonialism and to achieve independence. It is preposterous to suggest that we wish to be colonized.⁸⁴

In 1961, within a month, PRB membership had soared from 19,000 to 26,000.⁸⁵ This was related to the visit of the Malayan Yang Di-Pertuan Agong, and Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, on 4th July 1961. The Tunku, tried to explain and 'sell' the Malaysia concept to the

⁸² RG59 Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Secretary of State, Washington, D.C., 30th January 1961.

⁸³ Ranjit, p. 157.

⁸⁴ *Malaya*, August 1961, p.32.

⁸⁵ *Borneo Bulletin*, 15th June 1961. According to Azahari in 1961, there were about 26,000 registered members in his party. RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Department of State, Washington, 30th January 1962.

Sultan and the people of Brunei.⁸⁶ Secondly, he also intended to settle the crisis that had developed concerning seconded Malayan officers in Brunei. The theme of the Tunku's address and remarks on Radio Brunei were that Brunei and other Borneo Territories should join the Federation of Malaysia on an equal status with other Malay States.⁸⁷ He also noted that under such circumstances, the Sultan of Brunei would be eligible to become Yang Di-Pertuan Agong of the new Federation.⁸⁸ The PRB issued a written reply to the speech made by the Tunku on Brunei Radio on 4th July 1961.⁸⁹ It considered the Malaysia plan as a British political game, in which the Tunku "was being pushed by a big power to strengthen their military situation in Southeast Asia".⁹⁰ The PRB urged the British Government not "to sell the State of Brunei to anybody else because the Brunei people were not cattle but human beings whose rights were guaranteed by the United Nations Organization under the Charter of Human Rights".⁹¹ The PRB alleged that the Tunku appeared to be interested only in using the Borneo Territories as pawns in his political game of chess. On 24th June, 1961, the PRB circulated a pamphlet which accused the Tunku of sending his officers to Brunei in order to turn Brunei into a colony of Malaya.⁹²

⁸⁶ The Raja of Perlis, DYMM Tuanku Syed Putra ibni Al-Marhum Syed Hassan Jamalullail. Tunku Abdul Rahman accompanied the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Malaysia on a 3-day visit to Brunei. See C.O. 1030/1447, D.C. White to Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 4th July 1961.

⁸⁷ RG59 Decimal File 1960-1963, Amcogen, Singapore to Department of State, Washington, 7th July 1961.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ The PRB opposed the idea because they felt that the actual aim of the Federation was to dominate and 'colonize' Brunei. Furthermore, the PRB began to feel that the aims of the Malayan Government to give administrative, technical and educational assistance to Brunei were not sincere, which led to the growth of anti-Malayan feeling among the local people in Brunei in 1961. See RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Department of State, 30th January 1961. Ranjit, pp. 156-157 and Ongkili, J.P., p. 171.

⁹⁰ Borneo Bulletin, 15th July 1961.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ranjit, p. 157.

The left-wing groups that stood in opposition to the proposal in Singapore,⁹³ Malaya and the Borneo territories, including the PRB,⁹⁴ viewed it as another British “monster”, intended to unite all the colonial supporters in Malaya, Singapore and Northern Borneo in order to counteract the revolutionary forces of the people; and to make use of the Tunku and his colleagues to thwart and suppress “national liberation movements” which were mounting in Malaya, Singapore⁹⁵ and the northern Borneo territories. The PRB took virtually the same position, saying that the Tunku was planning to impose a right-wing Malay dictatorship on Singapore which by extension would involve an attack on Singapore’s “Socialist” gains and on Chinese education and culture.⁹⁶ One means by which this could be achieved was through a Defence Treaty between Great Britain and the Federation of Malaya as one of the conditions for the formation of Malaysia.

Due to the Sultan’s professed public enthusiasm for the Malaysia proposal, Azahari had immediate talks with Donald A. Stephens⁹⁷ and Ong Kee Hui.⁹⁸ On 9th July 1961 the

⁹³ The Barisan Sosialis for example was formed on July 1961, after the pro-Communist leaders left the PAP. The extremists or the pro-Communists led by Lim Chin Siong were supported by trade unions and Chinese Middle Schools. See Pang Cheng Lian, Singapore’s People’s Action Party, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1971.

⁹⁴ According to D.C. White, British High Commissioner for Brunei, ‘the PRB seem the only Malay organization in Borneo territories who had not welcomed Malaysia, and that it seemed incomprehensible that they should seem to be prepared to throw in their lot with the Chinese Communist Barisan Sosialis of Singapore and the predominantly Chinese left-wing SUPP of Sarawak’. See C.O. 1030/1012, ‘Greater Malaysia- Brunei aspects’, D.C. White to C.G. Eastwood, Colonial Office, 20th February 1962.

⁹⁵ In Singapore, *Fajar*, the organ of the left wing Socialist Club at the University of Malaya, described the Tunku’s plan as a British plot to perpetuate colonialism.

⁹⁶ RG59 Decimal File 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Secretary of State, Washington, 7th July 1961.

⁹⁷ Donald A. Stephens was the Chairman of the United National Kadazan Organization (UNKO) in North Borneo. The party was formed in August 1961. In July 1961, Donald A. Stephens, Azahari and Ong Kee Hui formed a United Front to oppose the Malaysia proposal. But later, Stephens changed his stand when he attended the Eighth Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Singapore, July 1961. As a result of the meeting the MSCC was set up on 23rd July 1961 whereby Stephens was appointed as the Chairman of the Committee. See Ongkili, The Borneo Response to Malaysia 1961-63, Donald Moore Press, Singapore, 1967, p. 33.

⁹⁸ Ong Kee Hui was the son-in-law of the richest banker in Kuching. He was the Chairman of the SUPP which was founded on 11th June 1959. See RG59, Decimal file 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Department of State, 17th May 1961.

Trio issued a Joint Communiqué in which they opposed the concept and demanded that elections be held in the three territories where undertakings to do so had been given by the governments concerned, to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people for political advancement.⁹⁹ Azahari also signed a Joint Communiqué with the leader of the Malayan People's Socialist Front and the Socialist Front of Singapore; the leaders of the three parties opposed any proposal "which does not advance the self-determination of the people. Any merger proposal should be made only after the right of self-determination had been vested with the people of Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo".¹⁰⁰

The Chinese minority in Brunei also revealed their opposition towards Malaysia. According to the American Consulate in Singapore, the Chinese leaders met almost daily to discuss their position on the issue between 15th to 22nd of January 1962. Eventually a decision was reached whereby the majority of them opposed the Malaysia plan.¹⁰¹ They believed that by joining Malaysia taxes would be likely to increase. Brunei had no personal income tax but the situation might well change in line with the position in the Federation and Singapore.

The PRB was also angry over the Tunku's public utterances in Brunei and elsewhere. He had said that the "Bruneians were regarded as a backward people, who should be honoured to accept an invitation to join Malaysia".¹⁰² Apart from stimulating opposition to the Malaysia plan, the Tunku's remarks also gave rise to strong suspicion, not without justification, that he was advising against elections for Brunei. The failure to hold elections by the agreed date

⁹⁹ Mohd. Noor Abdullah, Kemasukan Sabah dan Sarawak Ke dalam Persekutuan Malaysia, DBP, Kuala Lumpur, 1979, p. 41.

¹⁰⁰ Zariani, p. 97.

¹⁰¹ RG59 Decimal File, 1960-1963, Amcongen, Singapore to Dept of State, Washington, 30th January 1962.

¹⁰² Ranjit, p. 159.

was certainly to some extent due to the dilatory way in which the Attorney General, Dato Aziz Zain, a Malayan Officer,¹⁰³ performed his duties.¹⁰⁴ Apparently, the Tunku had instructed the Malayan Officers in Brunei to try to win the people's support for his proposal. It was possible that the Tunku was also playing a game with the Sultan, to introduce delaying tactics which would give the Sultan enough time to develop his own political party, the Brunei National Organisation (BNO), which supported the Malaysia idea.¹⁰⁵ The party also received a donation of \$100,000 from the Federal Government to prepare for the coming elections.¹⁰⁶ The party utilized the money to gain more support for its cause. In Kampong Rambai, for instance, this considerable sum was spent on purchasing motorboats and buffaloes for the community.¹⁰⁷ This impressed some village folk but only a small number of them actually changed their stand in supporting the proposal.

The consequence of all of this was that the PRB became more powerful and its position strengthened after the declaration of the Malaysia proposal in May 1961. The proposal pushed the party to the height of popularity, winning many supporters because of its opposition towards Malaysia. In the subsequent District Council elections which took place on 30th

¹⁰³ The Attorney General was Encik Aziz Zain, who, sent by Tunku Abdul Rahman to Brunei, was not only to perform his duties as an Attorney General (to replace Encik Ali Hassan in 1962) but tried to persuade the Brunei political leaders and specifically the PRB to accept the Malaysia idea. According to Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil two months before the outbreak of the Brunei revolt, Deputy Chief Minister of Brunei, Pengiran Ali Mohd. Daud, saw Encik Aziz Zain at A.M. Azahari's own residence. The purpose of the visit was to offer Azahari some kind of reward in order to get Azahari to change his stand on the Malaysia proposal. Even Ghazalie Shafie visited A.M. Azahari when he came to Brunei. This meeting made the Brunei political leaders suspicious towards the Malayan Government. Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd, Jamil Al-Sufri.

¹⁰⁴ C.O. 1030/1012, 'Greater Malaysia - Brunei Aspects'. D.C. White, High Commissioner for Brunei to Mr. Reginald Maudling, Colonial Office, 15th January 1962.

¹⁰⁵ Some observers claimed that the BNO, led by Manan Mohammad, was in fact the Sultan's party. Actually, this was not true; even the Tunku and the BNO leaders also misunderstood the Sultan's stand on Malaysia. When the Sultan said he was attracted to the Malaysia proposal, it did not mean that he would like to join the Federation. See Ranjit, p. 167.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Haji Hanafi bin Mohd. Daud, Tutong, 13th February 1987.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Awang Damit Salleh, Kampung Rambai, Tutong, Brunei 1987.

August 1962, the PRB won a major landslide, taking all but one seat (54 out of 55 seats)¹⁰⁸ and 16 PRB representatives became members of the Legislative Council.¹⁰⁹ The PRB then tabled a motion in the Legislative Council against the Malaysia proposal, suggesting it be replaced with a Federation of Borneo Territories. The Sultan made a first move by appointing Azahari as an unofficial member of the Legislative Council with effect from 1st January 1962.¹¹⁰ On this appointment, Azahari said that he accepted the nomination by the Sultan to the Council of the State because he respected him. Furthermore, he thought that if he had rejected the appointment, it might embarrass the Sultan. Nevertheless, he refused to accept a salary of \$500 per month because he knew that he did not deserve the money. Azahari added, “on my part it was just a goodwill gesture to His Highness”.¹¹¹

At the same time, the Sultan had asked Azahari to become a member of the Brunei Commission of Inquiry on the Malaysia proposal. Azahari had been invited to serve under Marsal Maun, the Chief Minister, on an ‘all-races’ committee to study the Malaysia idea and probably had received some sympathetic treatment in his business difficulties. He then obtained a loan from the Brunei Government, totalling \$120,000.¹¹² The British also tried to co-opt Azahari: the British High Commissioner asked him to work with the government by offering him any post he wanted, except for those which were not within the discretion of the British to grant, and the High Commissioner said, “How much salary do you want?”.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ In Brunei’s first District Council election, candidates of the PRB won in 22 of 23 contested constituencies. Another 32 party members had been returned unopposed on nomination day, 21st July 1962. See RG59 Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore, to Department of State, Washington, 9th September 1962.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ C.O. 1030/1012 ‘Greater-Malaysia-Brunei Aspect’, D.C. White to Mr Eastwood, Colonial Office, 11th January 1962.

¹¹¹ Zariani, p. 98.

¹¹² C.O. 1030/1012 ‘Greater-Malaysia-Brunei Aspect’, D.C. White to Mr Eastwood, Colonial Office, 15th January 1962.

¹¹³ Zariani, p. 98.

Azahari declined the offer and simply replied that he did not wish to work under the colonial government. Furthermore, he said “I want your place (i.e. to be executive head of government) and then I’ll work for the people, and for His Highness, not for colonial interests”.¹¹⁴ Thus, all these tactics failed to gain Azahari’s support.¹¹⁵ Not only that, but the Brunei Government could not change Azahari’s stand against Malaysia. The American Consul commented on this issue:

In Brunei the Government tried to win Azahari through official favours and thinly-disguised subsidies. All proved unsuccessful. Azahari cheerfully accepted whatever he was offered, but he has refused to change his political stand because of considerations received.¹¹⁶

The Malayan government made similar moves but they also failed to win Azahari’s support. In reality, the government could not buy Azahari, because the PRB supporters’ stand could not be changed. If Azahari had changed his stand by accepting the offer from the Malayan government, he would have been considered as a traitor to his party. Azahari stood firm in his belief and proceeded with his mission of opposing Malaysia.

2.3.3 The Sultan’s Attitude

According to the British High Commissioner, the Sultan had flatly refused to express any preliminary view on the Malaysia proposal because he was barred from making any comment by both the Brunei Constitution 1959 and the Agreement with Her Majesty’s Government of 1959. Under Clause 18(1) of the Brunei Constitution the Sultan was obliged to seek advice

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ The American Consul in Singapore made a comment about this failure, and said that ‘previous Brunei Government attempts to “buy off” Azahari have failed, and the “price” may be high’. RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Department of State, Washington, 14th February 1962.

¹¹⁶ RG59 Decimal File 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Department of State, Washington, 30th January 1961.

from the members of the Executive Council, even though he could act in opposition to such advice. The reference to the Agreement presumably refers to Articles 3(1) and 4 in which the Sultan agreed that he would not make any treaty, enter into any engagement, deal in or correspond on political matters with, or send envoys to any other State without the knowledge and consent of Her Majesty's Government.¹¹⁷ The Sultan could therefore only express his view on the Tunku's proposal after receiving a formal invitation to do so from the British Government. The British Government was very keen on the Tunku's proposal and some British officials advised the Sultan to accept the idea after consulting public opinion.¹¹⁸

The positive British responses to Brunei's membership of the proposed Federation was understandable in the light of the United Nations resolution 1514(XV), passed by the General Assembly in December 1960. The resolution was a seven-point declaration urging the colonial powers to end colonialism.¹¹⁹ Her Majesty Government's stand was clearly indicated by Nigel Fisher, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, after the signing of the Malaysia Agreement: "The advice of Her Majesty's Government to the Sultan of Brunei to join...still stands."¹²⁰ Therefore, on the 29th August 1961 the High Commissioner for Brunei suggested to the Colonial Office that a formal invitation should be given to the Sultan to ascertain his views on the Malaysia proposal.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ C.O. 1030/1012 'Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects', Minutes by Mr. Nield, H., Colonial Office 25th Oct. 1961.

¹¹⁸ C.O. 1030/1012 'Greater Malaysia- Brunei Aspects,' Sultan of Brunei from Mr Reginald Maulding, Colonial Office, March 1962.

¹¹⁹ United Nation Review, Vol. 8 (1) 1961, p. 7.

¹²⁰ House of Common Debate, Vol. 669 1962/63, 11 December 1962 and Vol. 680 1962/63, 9 July 1963.

¹²¹ Mr. Eastwood sent the Sultan's letter to the British High Commissioner in Brunei, Mr. D.C.White, on the 14th March 1962.

After the Tunku's announcement on May 1961, the Sultan had not yet made any response to the proposal. In July 1961, the Tunku accompanied the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Malaya on a visit to Brunei. The main objective of the visit was to persuade the Sultan and the public to accept the Tunku's proposal. The visit, however, aroused opposition among the Bruneians towards the Malaysia proposal. This was because of the Tunku's undiplomatic statements about Bruneians, when he said it was 'nonsense' for a small state, implying Brunei, to talk of independence.¹²² It seemed that the Sultan, having weighed the Tunku's statement and his attitude of superiority towards Brunei; hesitated to reveal his decision. Furthermore, one of the three leading local figures in the Government Department - Dato Marsal Maun, the *Menteri Besar*, Pengiran Mohd. Ali, the Deputy *Menteri Besar* and Pengiran Mohd Yusof, the Information Officer, who were known by British officials as "the three musketeers" - could also well have influenced the Sultan's views on the Malaysia proposal. Pengiran Mohd Ali favoured the scheme; Pengiran Mohd. Yusof was neutral on the issue and Dato Marsal Maun totally rejected the plan,¹²³ and the influential *Menteri Besar*'s stand might have been a factor in the Sultan's decision to delay comment on the Tunku's plan.

When Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien asked Dato Marsal Maun about his stand, he replied that, even if the Sultan threatened to dismiss him from his post as *Menteri Besar*, he would not change his stand of opposing Malaysia.¹²⁴ According to the American Consul, Marsal Maun

¹²² Ranjit, p. 159.

¹²³ He opposed Brunei joining Malaysia because he realised that within the Federation the Bruneians would become a 'inferior minority'. It would have meant that the role of Brunei in the Federation became insignificant, even the position of *Menteri Besar* would be downgraded in terms of power and status. Therefore, Dato Marsal Maun felt that within the Federation, he would have lost his political power as Chief Minister. Interview with Dato Marsal bin Maun, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 1994.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

feared that within the Federation of Malaysia his authority might be diluted, or the salaries of the local government would be lowered.¹²⁵

Sequentially, on the 5th December 1961 the Sultan finally, with some equivocation, broke his long silence and publicly accepted the Malaysia proposal in principle, though it was hardly unequivocal and was probably, in part, the result of advice from his legal advisor. In a speech to his hand-picked Legislative Council, the Sultan said that while his acceptance was not final, it would appear that “if the conditions are reasonable and beneficial” it would be advantageous for Brunei to join.¹²⁶ The Sultan explained his stand thus:

One aspect of the proposal which interests me most is the close cooperation and relationship which existed between my Government and those of the Federation of Malaya, Singapore and the Borneo territories... The recent proposal was put forward by Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Prime Minister of Malaya in the form of closer ties between the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo and Brunei, the plan for the formation of Melayu Raya...The proposal was well received by the British Government. I would like to state here that recently the British Secretary of State for the Colonies had sought my views on this proposal. In my opinion, it's an interesting proposal since there was already a common and strong bond of religion, race, custom and culture among the countries mentioned in the proposal...¹²⁷

The Attorney General, Dato Aziz Zain, prepared this speech. He was a seconded officer from Malaya. His main tasks were not only to perform his duty as a legal advisor for Brunei but also to try to persuade Brunei's ruler to accept the Malaysia idea. According to D.C. White:

¹²⁵ RG59 Decimal File 1960-64, Amcongen, Singapore to Department of State, Washington, 22nd August 1962.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 10th August 1962. The statements showed that the Sultan was not wholly in support of the Malaysia proposal but he did not want to reveal his opposition either. As Pehin Jamil said ‘the Sultan might have thought the plan good for the others but not for Brunei. That is why the Sultan always said the plan was good and attractive because it brought benefits to the others but not to Brunei’. Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

¹²⁷ Titah 1959-1967 Kebawah..., pp. 106-107.

The new Attorney General from Malaya, Dato Abdul Aziz, has worked hard and successfully to persuade the Sultan to take the plunge and come out in favour of merger...At a subsequent meeting of the Executive Council, the Sultan's speech from the throne for the budget meeting of the Legislative Council was discussed in detail. It had been prepared by the Attorney General and dealt at length with Malaysia and elections.¹²⁸

It therefore seems that the seconded officers played an important role in trying to influence and persuade the Sultan. Nevertheless, the Sultan's acceptance was not a final decision, and it was clear he wished to keep his options open, and to play for time. He also needed to retain the support and confidence of the British and Malayan Governments. His position served as the basis for the Brunei Government to seek favourable terms and the Sultan stressed that if the terms and conditions were beneficial to his people, then it would lead to Bruneian participation in the proposed Federation. However, if agreement could not be reached on issues which were important to the Brunei Government, and the terms were not advantageous, it was possible that Brunei would decline to participate.¹²⁹ Mr. Wallace, a senior official in the Colonial Office, confirmed what seemed to be the favourable attitude of the Sultan of Brunei towards the Tunku's plan. He said that the Sultan "welcomed the Tunku's proposal for closer association of the five territories and was willing to take part in any negotiation between the Federation of Malaya and the British government for the purpose of considering and determining Brunei's terms of association".¹³⁰ The main reason why the Sultan revealed his stand on the proposal was because he wanted his government to be involved in the process of negotiating the structure and terms of the Federation of Malaysia.

¹²⁸ C.O. 1030/1012 'Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects', Political Intelligence Report November 1961, by D.C.White, 9th December, 1962.

¹²⁹ *Titah 1959-1967...*, p. 132.

¹³⁰ C.O. 1030/1012 'Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects', Mr Wallace's Minutes to Mr. Eastwood, 12th December 1961.

By so doing, the Sultan could get the real picture of the proposal and then make his final decision as to whether to join or not. Therefore, after the Sultan's announcement of his stand on Malaysia, firstly, a Brunei delegation was sent to attend the Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee (MSCC) and, secondly, the Sultan ordered the formation of Brunei's Commission on the Malaysia proposal.

The MSCC was set up as a result of a preliminary examination by the Singapore, Malayan, Sarawak, and Sabah leaders at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting in Singapore on 23rd July 1961. The MSCC was chaired by Donald A. Stephens and comprised members from each of the potential constituents of the proposed Federation of Malaysia.

There were four main aims of the MSCC:

1. to collect and collate views and opinions concerning the creation of Malaysia consisting of Brunei, North Borneo, Sarawak, Singapore and the Federation of Malaya;
2. to disseminate information on the question of Malaysia;
3. to initiate and encourage discussions on Malaysia; and
4. to foster activities that would promote and expedite the realisation of Malaysia.¹³¹

The MSCC held several meetings in 1961 and 1962. The first meeting was on 21st August 1961 in Jesselton; the next meeting was on 18th-20th December 1961 in Kuching; the third was on 6th-8th January 1962 in Kuala Lumpur; and the final one from 1st to 3rd February 1962 in Singapore.¹³² Brunei's delegates did not attend the first meeting, because the

¹³¹ C.O. 947/1 'Solidarity Consultative Committee', Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Committee Memorandum Malaysia, p. 145.

¹³² C.O. 1030/1012 'Greater-Malaysia-Brunei Aspect,' Letter from D.C. White to Mr Eastwood, Colonial Office, 11th January 1962.

invitation from Jesselton came too late. Pengiran Yusof, Deputy State Secretary, said, “we had no time to appoint our representatives”.¹³³

The Brunei delegation was headed by Pengiran Dato Setia Mohd Ali. Other members were Pengiran Haji Mohd. Yusof, Haji Awang Mohd. Jamil bin Haji Umar, Awang Haji Hashim Tahir, Pehin Lim Cheng Choo, Awang George Ah Foot and Dato Aziz Zain as legal advisor for Brunei. Interestingly, the Brunei delegation acted only as observers at the meeting.¹³⁴ Its main task was to submit a report to the Brunei Government and the Sultan, including the impressions and views of the representatives of the MSCC from the other territories.

In the last of the MSCC meetings it was recognised that Brunei was a self-governing State and not a colony, as in the case of Sarawak and North Borneo. Therefore, the Commission of Enquiry’s jurisdiction did not extend to Brunei and the State was competent to negotiate directly with the Government of the United Kingdom and the Federation of Malaya. The memorandum on Malaysia was signed by the leaders of the respective countries. One of the recommendations contained in the MSCC’s memorandum was that the Sultan of Brunei would be eligible for nomination to be the constitutional head of state of the Federation of Malaysia,¹³⁵ while Sarawak and North Borneo would each have a Head of State. Brunei would also have its own constitution and its powers would be defined. Lastly, the sovereignty of the ruler of each state of the Federation of Malaysia would be guaranteed.¹³⁶

¹³³ Borneo Bulletin, 26th August 1961.

¹³⁴ Mohd. Noor Abdullah, p. 44.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 10th February 1962.

¹³⁶ C.O. 947/1 ‘Solidarity Consultative Committee,’ *Malaysia Solidarity...*, p. 148.

It was true that the MSCC was able to sell its idea to the people of North Borneo. Even the leader of UNKO in North Borneo, Donald A. Stephens, gradually changed his stand from an anti-Malaysia one to an acceptance of the proposal when he became the chairman of the MSCC.¹³⁷ In his speech at the opening ceremony of the second meeting of the MSCC he acknowledged that:

I found that my fears and misgivings, although quite natural, were unfounded. That Malaysia was a Plan put forward by an elder brother, who having gained freedom, himself wanted also to see his younger brothers enjoy the same freedom, and working together as good brothers should be better able to safeguard their future.... There are, unfortunately, still people in Sabah who do not see Malaysia as I see it, but it is my hope, my prayer, that the work of the MSCC will help to banish all the misunderstandings, all the fears and misgivings regarding Malaysia.¹³⁸

On the contrary, the feelings and opinions of the people in Brunei were generally not in favour of merging with the newly proposed Federation of Malaysia, and it became a hot topic of conversation in the country. Even the Sultan still did not make any new response towards the scheme. Therefore, after Brunei's delegation attended the MSCC, the Sultan still did not make any final decision on the Tunku's plan. This indicated that the Sultan was still listening to the voices of his subjects, and indeed it provided him with good reason to be circumspect and not to commit himself prematurely. It fitted well with his strategy to proceed slowly and without firm commitment. Of course, he had veto power on the Malaysia issue but his instructions to consult the people in order to reduce the degree of opposition from the PRB also gave him potential room for manoeuvre. He asked his government to study the problem carefully and to ascertain the views of the public on the issue, and in his speech he appealed to

¹³⁷ Mohd. Noor Abdullah, pp. 42-45.

¹³⁸ Papers of Sir William Goode, Federation of Malaysia, Text of Address by the Chairman at the Opening Ceremony, Rhode House Library, p. 32

his subjects to give their sincere views and opinions to determine Brunei's next step in the negotiations. He stressed that his provisional acceptance of the plan was based on his personal opinion because of the ties of religion, race, custom and culture between Brunei and Malaya and that the decision was not a final one. He emphasised that ultimately Brunei's entry into a Federation did not depend entirely on him, but would also be determined by his people. As he said; "since the future destiny of the state depends on the people's attitude and response to the merger proposal so I commanded my government to seek the views of the people regarding the issue. The result of such a study would determine the Brunei decision on the Tunku's plan",¹³⁹ that is, on whether or not to join. The Assistant State Secretary confirmed that "the Sultan will seek the views of the people, and he does not want to make any move without the backing of his subjects".¹⁴⁰

2.4. Brunei Commission Committee on the Malaysia Proposal

As a result of the Sultan's speech in the Legislative Council on 5th December 1961 a Committee on the referendum regarding the proposal to form a Federation of Malaysia was formed on 16th January 1962. It was charged with collecting the opinions of the people of Brunei regarding the merger with the proposed Federation of Malaysia. The Committee was headed by the *Menteri Besar*, Dato Marsal bin Maun, and its members were: A.M.Azahari, Orang Kaya Gimang anak Perait (representing the Iban community), Orang Kaya Lukan bin Uking (representing the Dusun community), Pehin Bendahari China, Mr Hong Kok Tien (representing the Chinese community), and Awang Hashim bin Tahir as the secretary of the Committee. The question is, why did the Sultan appoint Azahari as a member of the

¹³⁹ Titah 1959-1967 ..., p. 107.

¹⁴⁰ Borneo Bulletin, 9th December 1961.

Committee? After all, Azahari and his party opposed the idea of the Malaysia Federation. It seems that this was a device by the Sultan to secure the validity of the report, and ensure that opposition voices were represented, but it also gave him the option of withdrawing from negotiations if the recommendations of the Report warranted it. Certainly, Azahari was not surprised by his appointment; he considered it a wise move by the Sultan.¹⁴¹ He believed that, at heart, the Sultan opposed the 'colonial' concept of Malaysia,¹⁴² so by putting him (Azahari) on the Committee, in Azahari's own words, the Sultan was trying to ensure that the people of Brunei would come out against the Malaysia concept. From the Sultan's perspective, Azahari's anti-Malaysian stance might also be utilised as a diplomatic device without the Sultan and Dato Marsal, who were also anti-Malaysia, being blamed by the British or the Malayan Governments. Furthermore, as a subject of the Sultan, who was expected to be loyal, Azahari had to accept the wishes of the Sultan. If he did not accept the nomination, he would be considered to have turned against the Monarchy. As Azahari said, "If I don't accept, His Highness will think I am against the throne".¹⁴³

The Sultan also appointed the leaders of ethnic communities, all of whom were anti-Malaysia as members of the Committee. If indeed they came out against the Federation, then the Sultan would be assured that he had the people's support and would have a good reason ultimately to reject the Federation proposal if it should come to it. Interestingly, the Sultan did not appoint a leader from the Tutong ethnic group; the Brunei National Organization, under the leadership of Encik Manan Mohamed, mostly supported by Tutong people, was pro-Malaysia. This was

¹⁴¹ Zariani, p. 99.

¹⁴² In reality, the Sultan did not consider the concept as a continuity of British colonialism. See Titah 1959-1967..., pp.106-107.

¹⁴³ Zariani, p. 99.

confirmed by Lord Selkirk, in his letter to the Secretary of State, which stated “that the only support for Malaysia came from the town of Tutong half way between here (Bandar Brunei) and the big Seria oilfield”.¹⁴⁴ Elsewhere, the Kedayans, Muruts and the Brunei Malays largely supported the PRB under the leadership of Azahari; thus, the majority of them opposed the Malaysia proposal.

In performing their task, the members of the Committee visited several locations in the country: Bangar Town in Temburong District on 16th January, Tutong Town from 17th to 18th January, Seria on 22nd January, Kuala Belait from 23rd to 24th January, Muara Town on 25th January and Bandar Brunei on 27th January 1962. The Committee completed its state-wide sittings by 3rd February 1962 and the PRB demanded the publication of the Commission’s report for the public. However, in an interesting twist the entire report of the Committee was not published by the Brunei Government.¹⁴⁵ Instead only a summary of the report prepared by the *Menteri Besar* (as the Chairman of the Brunei Commission Committee on the Malaysia Proposal) was presented, and this proved to be contrary to its main findings.¹⁴⁶ Publication of the full report, if negative, might well have embarrassed the Sarawak and North Borneo authorities and, even more crucially, it might have influenced public opinion in those territories. It is possible that the Federation Government and the British had also persuaded the Brunei Government not to reveal the real extent of opposition

¹⁴⁴ C.O. 1030/1012 ‘Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects,’ Lord Selkirk to Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 1st February 1962.

¹⁴⁵ Ranjit, p. 168.

¹⁴⁶ The findings of the Committee were announced by the Sultan in his speech at the Investiture Ceremony on 23rd September 1962, but it did not represent the original report of the Committee. It was a summary prepared by the Chairman of the Brunei Committee on the Malaysia Proposal. It concluded that the majority of Brunei people were in favour of the Malaysia Federation. See C.O. 1030/1012 Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects, “Report on the Public Hearing of *Menteri Besar*’s Committee on Malaysia”.

amongst Brunei's people to the plan because it might affect the response of people in North Borneo and Sarawak.

Though the findings were not published, the Chairman of the Committee prepared a general summary of the findings which was presented to the audience of the Sultan on 3rd February 1962,¹⁴⁷ but only addressed to the members of the Legislative Council on 18th July 1962. It took five months for the Sultan to announce the findings of the Commission. This may well have been another alternative used by the Sultan to buy time in dealing with the Malaysia proposal. What is more, the Sultan's speech was read by the Deputy *Menteri Besar*, Dato Setia Pengiran Haji Ali bin Pengiran Haji Mohd. Daud. It said, again with qualification on the basis of the purported small number of people consulted, that:

The committee found that a small number of people gave their views and opinions, however, the majority of them revealed their intention of supporting the Malaysia proposal in principle.¹⁴⁸

It was not until his Investiture Ceremony on 23rd September 1962 at the Istana Darul Hana, in conjunction with his 48th birthday, that the Sultan himself formally announced the overall findings of the report. Yet again his support for Malaysia was given in principle, not in fact, and responsibility for the contents of the report was placed at the door of the *Menteri Besar*.

The Sultan stated that:

Recently I have declared to the people of this country that I have examined, studied and carefully considered the advantages and the disadvantages of the Malaysia proposal. If it brings benefits, happiness and security to the people of this country, then all my people and myself are of the opinion that I should accept the proposal in principle...In this context I am happy to hear the

¹⁴⁷ Pelita Brunei, 1st August 1962.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

declaration of the *Menteri Besar*, in which I learned that the people support my intention to accept the Malaysia proposal in principle and that there are no groups opposing it. I have full trust in the *Menteri Besar's* declaration for I believe that all the citizens of this country would like to have happiness, wealthiness [sic] and security of life, not only for themselves but also for the benefit and happiness of our future generations.¹⁴⁹

According to subsequent comments by members of the Brunei Committee on the Malaysia Proposal, the initial announcement, which was read by the Deputy *Menteri Besar* and also published in *Pelita Brunei*, was not true.¹⁵⁰ In reality, it should have shown that the majority of Bruneians opposed Malaysia. Indeed, Lord Selkirk stressed that the “Brunei Government Fact Finding Commission had recorded stiff and almost 100 percent opposition from sections of the population to Malaysia”.¹⁵¹ The report mentioned that:

The exact figures are not available for the whole State of Brunei, but some hundreds of people spoke against Malaysia, while literally one or perhaps two persons spoke in favour. In Kuala Belait and Seria 78 persons spoke against and 1 in favour; the two meetings here were attended by 700 or 800 people.¹⁵²

The members of the Committee, namely the *Menteri Besar*, Dato Marsal Maun and Orang Kaya Lukan bin Uking, acknowledged subsequently that in every town or place they had visited the majority of people maintained their opposition to bringing Brunei into the Federation.¹⁵³ According to Orang Kaya Lukan bin Uking in a later interview, only a small number of people were keen on the idea of a Federation of Malaysia, especially the people

¹⁴⁹ Titah 1959-1967..., pp.138-139.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor, Jakarta and also Orangkaya Pekerma Dewa Awang Lukan bin Uking, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 20th February 1987. Dato Marsal bin Maun also admitted that the Sultan's speech was contrary to the findings of the Committee.

¹⁵¹ C.O. 1030/1012, 'Greater Malaysia - Brunei Aspects', Report on the Public Hearing of *Menteri Besar's* Committee on Malaysia.

¹⁵² C.O. 1030/1012, 'Greater Malaysia - Brunei Aspects', Report on the Public hearings of *Menteri Besar's* Committee on Malaysia.

¹⁵³ However, they did not say so at the time because most of them thought the Sultan favoured the Federation. Interview with Dato Marsal bin Maun and Orang Kaya Lukan bin Uking.

from Tutong district, who supported the Brunei National Organization under the leadership of Abdul Manan Mohammad. Furthermore, he said that when the Committee visited Kuala Belait, the people there had shouted that they ‘opposed’ the Malaysia plan. The opposition came not only from the PRB, but also from individuals who came from the countryside. He concluded that, overall, 90 percent of the Brunei people did not agree with the idea of merging Brunei into the Federation of Malaysia.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, Lord Selkirk found that the strongest opposition to Malaysia was found in the urban areas of Brunei Town, Seria and Kuala Belait, where the anti-Malaysia Party Rakyat was well supported. The Commission estimated that opposition to Malaysia, judged by the public reaction at open sessions held throughout the country, was “almost 100 percent.”¹⁵⁵ A.M. Azahari had already told the press that 100 percent of the Brunei people opposed the proposed Federation of Malaysia.¹⁵⁶

Even the American Consul, in private correspondence, acknowledged that high-ranking Brunei officials had informed him “that the commission did in fact report ‘overwhelming’ sentiment against Malaysia in Brunei; and this office has no reason to believe the report was inaccurate or exaggerated.”¹⁵⁷ As a result, the Consul concluded that the opposite view conveyed by the Sultan’s announcement was because he “would very much like to be elected *Yang Di-Pertuan Agong* of the proposed Federation of Malaysia. Therefore, it seems probable he wanted to use his influence to bring Brunei into the Federation under proper conditions.”¹⁵⁸ This seem highly unlikely because the text of the Sultan’s announcement represented not the

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Orang Kaya Lukan bin Uking.

¹⁵⁵ C.O. 1030/1012, ‘Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects’, The Earl of Selkirk to Secretary of State, 1st February 1962.

¹⁵⁶ *Pelita Brunei* 7th March 1962.

¹⁵⁷ RG59 Decimal File 1960-63, Amcongeng, Singapore to Secretary of State, Washington, 14th February 1962.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. This opinion was not true. In reality, the Sultan was not interested in joining the Federation. The investigation was used by the Sultan as a device to play for time in making his final decision on the Federation.

true wishes of the Brunei people, but a carefully proposal report by the chairman of the Brunei Committee on the Malaysia Proposal.¹⁵⁹

Furthermore, the members of the Committee asserted in subsequent interview with me, that they were not in favour of the idea of merging Brunei into the Federation,¹⁶⁰ but that they had tried to hide their views because they thought that the Sultan's decision of accepting the Malaysia proposal in principle was final. The British High Commissioner for Brunei had told Mr. Wallace at the Colonial Office that Dato Marsal was "definitely wavering in his support for Malaysia".¹⁶¹ But the *Menteri Besar* did not highlight his original attitude of opposing Malaysia because he assumed it was contrary to the Sultan's stand. D.C. White also indicated in his letter to Mr. Wallace that the Sultan had called a meeting of his non-British advisers for 22nd of March to discuss the Commission's report which "appears to be the work of Marsal only".¹⁶² Marsal Maun was convinced that "he acted neutrally upon his report which was presented to the Sultan" without supporting any groups, i.e. either pro-Malaysia¹⁶³ or anti-Malaysia.¹⁶⁴ According to Marsal Maun, if he had reported the real situation by telling the Sultan that most of his subjects totally rejected the idea of the Federation, the report would embarrass not only the pro-Malaysia group (mostly the government senior officers and

¹⁵⁹ According to Dato Marsal Maun he had to prepare his report thus because he did not want it to embarrass the pro-Malaysia group (mostly government senior officers and aristocrats) and the Sultan, who was thought to be in favour of the Malaysia proposal. Interview with Dato Marsal bin Maun, 18th March 1989. See also C.O. 1030/1012, Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects, D.C. White to Mr. Wallace, Colonial Office.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Dato Marsal bin Maun and Orang Kaya Pekerma Dewa Awang Lukan bin Uking.

¹⁶¹ C.O. 1030/1012 'Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects', D.C. White to Mr. Wallace, W.I.J., Colonial Office, 13th March 1962.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ In Brunei, there was a small number of political leaders who supported the Malaysia proposal. Their view was that 'through Malaysia they will enjoy the same freedom, liberty and independence as the people of the independent Federation of Malaya are already enjoying'. The North Borneo and Sabah Times, 3rd. May, 1963. The same views also revealed by the Deputy Chief Minister of Brunei, Pengiran Dato Ali Mohd. Daud. See Borneo Bulletin, 4th May 1963.

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Dato Marsal bin Maun.

aristocrats) but also the Sultan whom he thought definitely favoured the Malaysia proposal. Therefore, as a loyal subject he should prepare the report in accordance with the Sultan's stand of accepting Malaysia in principle.

Why did the people not resist when they heard that the findings of the summary report were different from what they had expected? Everybody knew that in reality most Bruneians opposed the plan, and the PRB's leaders also knew it. In my view, the cultural values and norms of Brunei society played an important role in dampening opposition. Feelings of loyalty ran very deep, and ordinary people felt that they should support and respect the decisions made by their Sultan. Nobody wanted to be labelled as a traitor to their ruler, which would be contrary not only to Islamic teaching but also to the cultural heritage of the society. Nevertheless, what is clear is that the Sultan by delaying his announcement and asking the chair of the Committee to prepare a summary report distanced himself from the exercise. As for the Sultan, we still know little about his private motives for commissioning the report, choosing the particular Committee members, and what his eventual intentions might have been if the findings opposed Brunei's entry into Malaysia. In my view, the Sultan had no intention of joining Malaysia, knowing the PRB's opposition to it. In the meantime he kept British and Malayan support, hoping to contain opposition whilst the negotiations were proceeding. Ultimately, he wished to secure his own position and protect his country's oil wealth. Accepting in principle the Malaysia proposal was a tool for him in dealing with internal political opposition and external relations with the Malayan and British Governments.

2.5. The August 1962 Election

According to the 1959 Constitution, election for District Councils would be held before 29th September 1961. However, since the bills for National Enactment had not yet been passed in the Legislative Council,¹⁶⁵ the elections were postponed until the following year. The PRB criticized the government policy of postponing the election until “not later than 18th October 1962”.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, the PRB alleged that the Colonial Administration was responsible for the postponement of the election, on the grounds of ‘unavoidable circumstances’.¹⁶⁷ According to the PRB, the deadline for the election was supposed to be 29th September, or at the latest 18th October 1961. On 6th August 1961, Azahari had led a demonstration involving “over 10,000 persons” (or approximately one-eighth of the entire population of Brunei).¹⁶⁸ The demonstration lasted about three hours and took place in the afternoon. It consisted of an orderly procession through the streets of Brunei Town, ending at the residence of the British High Commissioner, D.C. White, to whom Azahari presented a petition to be transmitted to the British Government.¹⁶⁹ The petition demanded:

1. immediate elections;
2. democratic government;
3. a government completely administered by Bruneians;
4. the voice of the people to be the voice of freedom;
5. death to old and neo-colonialism; and

¹⁶⁵ The North Borneo News and Sabah Times, 23rd September 1960.

¹⁶⁶ RG59 Decimal File 1960-1963, Memorandum of Conversation Brunei-Malaysia, Singapore, 9th August 1961.

¹⁶⁷ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Party Rakyat..., p. 282.

¹⁶⁸ RG59 Decimal File 1960-63, Memorandum of Conversation Brunei-Malaysia, Singapore, 9th August 1961.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

6. immediate dissolution of the Legislative Assembly.¹⁷⁰

Some people believed that the delay of the election was a deliberate political tactic on the part of the Malayan Government through its officers seconded to Brunei, as the delay left room for the Brunei and Malayan Governments to manoeuvre.¹⁷¹ Both governments continued their efforts to counter the PRB's influence among the Brunei population. It meant the delay of the election might also be interpreted as an effort to gain time necessary for the formation of the Sultan's own party as a counter to Azahari's. In reality, no-one can prove this allegation, because at the time, the election could not be held, given that the Brunei Government had not completed the preparations for the law on citizenship and nationality. Even Azahari himself was not registered as a Brunei citizen, and just laughed when the Sultan asked him to become a Brunei citizen under the new enactment.¹⁷² Then, when it was time for the registration, Azahari resigned from his post as PRB leader and went to Singapore 'on business' to isolate himself from the citizenship issue. According to the American Consul:

...one of the main reasons for Azahari's absence from Brunei was to avoid the embarrassment of being forced to apply for citizenship as an alien before being allowed to run for a District Council (ultimately a Legislative Council) seat. Now the nomination day (21 July) has passed and the embarrassing citizenship issue can be avoided, Azahari may believe that the time is right to return to Brunei.¹⁷³

Fearing the popularity of the PRB, the Sultan encouraged the formation of rival political parties in an attempt to erode its political strength. Thus, in the early 1960s, two new political

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ For example to encourage the formation of two political parties which were pro-Malaysia i.e the Brunei National Organization (BNO) led by Encik Manan Mohamed and the Brunei United Party (BUP) led by Haji Hasbollah.

¹⁷² Interview with Pehin Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

¹⁷³ RG59 Decimal File, 1960-63, Amcogen, Singapore to Dept. of State, Washington, 12th August 1962.

parties emerged, the BNO and the Brunei United Party (BUP).¹⁷⁴ Both of these parties supported the formation of Malaysia. Therefore, some sources said that the BNO had received financial support from the Malayan Government.

Brunei went to its long-awaited elections to the Councils on 30th and 31st August 1962. The election was to be on a two-tier system. Direct elections were to be held to the 55 seats on the four District Councils. Out of these, the elected representatives would be chosen to the 33-member Legislative Council. There were three political parties contesting the election-the PRB, the BNO and the BUP. They contested eight seats in Brunei/Muara, four in Belait, three in Tutong and one in Temburong.

With its manifesto of independence for Brunei by 1963, the rejection of Malaysia and the formation of the Federation of the Northern Borneo territories with the Sultan as the Head of State, the PRB won 32 out of the 55 seats uncontested. In the remainder, the PRB won 22 out of the 23 seats, one lost in Labu Estate, Temburong. Another significant point is that over 90 per cent of the total electorate of 6,000 went to the polls.¹⁷⁵ The result was that the PRB captured all the four District Councils, so that all the 16 elected members of the Legislative Council were PRB men. The election underlines the fact that public opinion in Brunei opposed the Malaysia scheme.

What is more, the August election could also be considered as “extended family politics” because it was closely related to the cultural values and practices of the society, especially in

¹⁷⁴ The BUP was formed in December 1961. The BUP opposed the Federation of North Borneo suggested by the PRB. The BUP leaders said that the Federation of Malaysia was desirable for Brunei, Zainun Johari, p. 228. Borneo Bulletin, 15th November 1961 and 23rd December, 1961.

¹⁷⁵ Borneo Bulletin, 2nd December 1961.

the countryside. It could be argued that the PRB won the election not only because the people supported its policy of opposing Malaysia and establishing the Federation of Northern Borneo territories, but because of the influence and the position of the local PRB leaders in every village. Even Zaini Haji Ahmad said that the defeat of the PRB's candidate at Labu Estate was not because the people did not support the PRB's manifesto, but because of the popularity of the Independent candidate, Awang Aliakhbar, who was considered as ketua (Head) of the Labu Estate area. Instead the PRB candidate came from Brunei Town. The feeling of a sense of belonging to one village or community or strong family ties were more important than national political issues especially for those who did not understand politics and also lacked educational background, for example in the remote areas of Tutong, Temburong and Belait District in the 1960s. People would have felt ashamed and guilty if they had not supported their own leader from their own people, as in every village the community leaders had to be respected and obeyed as representing the authority of the Sultan. Those who did not support them would be considered as traitors.¹⁷⁶

In the case of Kampung Benutan and Kampung Rambai in the Tutong District, the PRB's candidates were their own relatives (represented by Awang Mohd. Yusof bin Tengah and Awang Damit bin Salleh respectively), whereas the opposing candidates from BNO came from Tutong Town. The opponents were considered as outsiders by the villagers because they were culturally and ethnically different. Both the PRB candidates were Dusun and the BNO

¹⁷⁶ In Brunei society, there is a 'social contract' between a leader and his followers or a Sultan and his subjects. This 'social contract' is stated in Adat Istiadat Brunei that 'Raja tidak boleh zalim' dan 'rakyat tidak boleh derhaka' which means that 'the Sultan may not be tyrannical' the counterpart of which is 'and the people of the country cannot commit treason against the Sultan'. See D.E. Brown, Brunei: The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate, Monograph of the Brunei Museum Journal Brunei, 1970, p. 100. P.L. Amin Sweeny, 'Silsilah Raja-Raja Brunei', JMBRAS, Vol. 41, Pt. 2, 1968 p. 20. Also Pehin Haji Mohd. Zain, 'Selayang Pandang Mengenai Adat Istiadat Brunei', BMJ, 1971, p. 2.

candidates were Tutong, and in these two villages, the population were mostly from the Dusun ethnic group. In these two villages, it could be argued that the defeat of the BNO candidate was not due primarily to the support for the Malaysia Federation but because of voters desire to support those to whom they were closely connected by blood, family ties and culture.

The PRB's victory in these two villages was therefore not mainly a product of their manifesto, but resulted from traditional loyalties. This is understandable, as most of the people in these two villages were illiterate. Schools were only introduced into these two kampungs in the 1960s. When I asked the PRB's main supporter¹⁷⁷ in Kampung Benutan, about the "Malaysia Proposal", he said, "I did not know anything about Malaysia; and I also did not know who Azahari was, because I had never met him or talked to him, even though I was a supporter of PRB".¹⁷⁸ Therefore, personal relationships or extended family values played important roles in determining the people's votes in the election. If their leaders had made the wrong decision, generally they would not argue with them, because they were bound by the norms of the society: *awar galat* or *tua dituakan* which means "respect to the older, head or leader". To some extent the people also felt secure if they followed their leaders. In a traditional society, such people still held a kind of spiritual power and the people were afraid to disobey their leaders.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ The assistant candidate of Kampung Benutan is the father of the writer, who never enjoyed the benefit of formal education. He also cannot read and write Malay language.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Awang Melayong bin Rayun, who considered himself as an assistant of Awang Yusof bin Tengah, the PRB candidate in kampung Benutan, Tutong.

¹⁷⁹ In Malay Society, especially in Brunei, many people still believe and practise magic. These practices can be used to cure or kill people, for example if someone wants to eliminate his rival, he can do it without any trace by using spiritual power to make his rival sick or die immediately. This practice still persists today. See Awang

Immediately after the election in September 1962, following which the new Legislative Council was formed, the PRB decided to move a motion “blocking” the formation of Malaysia and proposed a resolution that the council accept the PRB Borneo Federation proposal. At the same time, the Malayan Government took steps to win the PRB’s support. For example, before and after the election, an invitation was extended to PRB leaders to visit Malaya; but this was ignored by the PRB. The Tunku continued to try to persuade Azahari to support his plan. Azahari was invited by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of Malaya to see the Tunku in Kuala Lumpur. The meeting with the Tunku lasted an hour-and-a-half. At the meeting Azahari conveyed to the Tunku his 17-point proposal for the proposed Federation of North Borneo Territories.¹⁸⁰ The Tunku then asked Azahari to be patient and wait for three weeks. As soon as Azahari returned to Brunei, he was called to meet the Sultan at Istana Darul Hana. The Sultan asked him about his meeting with the Tunku. Azahari told him everything that he had discussed with the Tunku, including his proposal for the creation of the Federation of Northern Borneo Territories. The Sultan appeared to be very pleased and, smiling, straightaway expressed his approval by saying, “*sahabat beta* (my friend), I support your proposal”.¹⁸¹ The Sultan explained to Azahari that the representatives of the people of Sarawak and North Borneo were appealing to His Highness to agree to unite Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo,¹⁸² and that the people of the territories recognized the sovereignty of the Sultanate of Brunei.

Ahmad and Rokiah Salleh, ‘Kaedah Perubatan Melayu’, *Beriga*, bil. 2, Jan-Mac 1984, pp. 39-44. Metussin Haji Md. Tahir, ‘Mantera Melayu’, *Beriga*, bil. 22, Jan-Mac 1989, pp. 85-96.

¹⁸⁰ Please refer to Zariani, p. 103.

¹⁸¹ My interview with Azahari, Bogor, Indonesia, 7th April 1992. Azahari made the same statement as that contained in Zariani’s account when I interviewed him by repeating the Sultan’s statement that “Sahabat Beta (my friend), I support your struggle and I support your proposal.” See Zariani, p. 104)

¹⁸² Zariani, p. 104.

Seventeen days after this meeting, the Tunku sent Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister, to Brunei to ask Azahari to support the Malaysia proposal in his opinions and motions in the Council of State. If Azahari supported the Tunku's plan, the latter would offer the former the post of Second Deputy Prime Minister in the Federation, while Tun Abdul Razak would be First Deputy Prime Minister. But Azahari declined, saying:

I am not struggling for my own interest but the interest of the people. Please tell Tunku not to pursue the Federation of Malaysia because the concept of Malaysia will endanger the situation. It will be like swallowing a cucumber and a happy Malaysia will not be established.¹⁸³

The Malayan government made several overtures to get PRB leaders to visit Kuala Lumpur. After the election another Malayan delegation comprising the Minister of Information, Senu Abdul Rahman, the Minister of Health, Bahaman, and the Assistant Minister of Culture, Engku Mohsein, met the PRB leaders in Singapore. The Malayan Government had paid the PRB delegation's air passage to Singapore, in order to determine why the PRB continued to oppose the Malaysia concept and to persuade them to accept the plan by offering some reward. Tun Razak had already offered two or three ministerial posts to the PRB leaders who regarded these offers as political bribery.¹⁸⁴ Regarding the first question, the PRB leaders replied that the PRB had never been convinced that the Federation of Malaya had the military capability to defend Northern Borneo against external aggression, nor did they subscribe to the Malayan Government's laissez-faire economic policy, which had resulted in unequal opportunities between national and "colonial" interests. The PRB stressed social infrastructure such as cheap housing for the people, and adequate health and medical services for rural

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 106.

people. They also argued that it was quite beyond the means of the Federation of Malaya, in terms of finance and manpower, to carry out these projects nationwide. On the second issue, the PRB leaders, especially Azahari, were prepared to negotiate. Prior to the Revolt, meetings between Azahari and the Malayan government continued.

After the appointment of the new members of the Legislative Council in the August elections, Azahari, as the PRB leader, indicated that he wished to pass a resolution opposing Malaysia. Upon receiving this news, the Sultan and *Menteri Besar* consulted with the Secretary of State for Colonies as to what action should be taken. It was decided that the State Secretary should secretly visit Kuala Lumpur and confer with officials there as to the best course of action. As a result, the British Government decided to advise the Brunei Government to postpone the Legislative meeting scheduled for early December 1962.¹⁸⁵ As it was, in failing to face the people's elected representatives, the Sultan made a mockery of democracy and committed a grave political error. The PRB's leaders believed that this action was a major error on the part of his Government. The PRB became distrustful and angry as a result and then sufficiently impatient to take radical action. It has been suggested that this could have been one of the main factors which led to the outbreak of the revolt.¹⁸⁶ So at the Council of State on 24th November 1962, the PRB proposed a motion which was read by Hapiz Laksamana, Vice Chairman of the PRB:

That the Council of State having its session today decided to demand the British Government to cancel the Malaysia concept which is scheduled to materialize in August 1963, since the action of the British Government forms a denial of the human right of self determination.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁵ RG59 Decimal Files 1960-1963, British Resident's report on the subject 'Escape from Brunei', 19th December 1962.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Zariani, p. 117.

But this action could not prevent the Tunku from continuing to offer Azahari and other PRB leaders high posts in the Federation.¹⁸⁸ These offers might have resulted from the last meeting between the Malayan and Brunei Governments regarding Brunei's conditions for joining Malaysia and the success of the PRB in the August election of 1962. According to British High Commissioner, D.C. White, the Sultan had reserved his position, in spite of the unanimous advice of the Palace clique to reject the invitation to join,¹⁸⁹ after the rebuff to the Brunei delegation in Kuala Lumpur. Furthermore, he said:

This advice was undoubtedly known to the Party Rakyat, whose leader Azahari and some of his colleagues had been touch with Tun Razak and the Malaysians. Azahari had indicated that if he was recognised as the leader of Brunei, he would "bend" his Party to accept Malaysia.¹⁹⁰

This suggests that at first Azahari agreed to the suggestion, but once again he had to discuss this offer with the PRB's Central Executive Committee (CEC) members, most of whom rejected the idea. Sheikh Osman, Azahari's brother, would not agree to any commitment to the Tunku's offer. Instead, two weeks before the Revolt, in Azahari's last meeting with his brother at Johor Baharu, he was informed that the PRB would start a revolt with or without Azahari. Sheikh Osman warned Azahari that the Revolutionary Council Meeting of the PRB had decided that a Revolt was imminent, "whether you like it or not". He said:

¹⁸⁸ This offer was confirmed by Dato Paduka Haji Hapiz Laksamana, the Vice Chairman of PRB in 1962, who explained that at one time Dato Abd. Aziz, Attorney General for Brunei in 1962, had contacted him and personally offered to make the necessary arrangement for members of PRB who wished to visit the Federation of Malaysia. Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Brunei. He added that the confirmation was made by Hapiz Laksamana during the reception at the Officers Mess Berakas, on 28th March 1989, in honour of the visit of Encik Ghafar Baba, the former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia.

¹⁸⁹ Most probably, Chief Minister Dato Marsal bin Maun and Pengiran Haji Mohd Yusof bin Pengiran Haji Abd. Rahim.

¹⁹⁰ C.O. 1030/1076, 'Brunei Disturbance', D.C.White to the Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 20th December 1962.

First, you must not come back to Brunei. The Revolt will start any moment now. We will tell you. If you support us we'll call you leader. Otherwise we shall paint your name as Traitor in Blood.¹⁹¹

That is why Azahari told Tun Razak, when they met for the last time in Johor Baharu, that the only way he could accept the Malayan Government's offer was through discussion with the PRB's CEC. At the last minute, before the Revolt broke out, the PRB cancelled their goodwill mission to Malaya. As British High Commissioner, D.C.White said, everything was too late because the PRB's delegation to Malaya was postponed on the morning of 12th November 1962 when he left Brunei for London on leave for nearly one month.¹⁹² The Malayan Government had been too late in courting the PRB. The PRB had planned to internationalize the anti-Malaysia issue by going to the UN with a Joint Memorandum signed on behalf of the SUPP, the PPM (Parti Pasuk Momogun) and the PRB. The United Nations Secretariat received the Memorandum on 5th September 1962. The United Nations Sub-committee on Petitions adopted the Memorandum on 14th September with a recommendation to the United Nations Special Committee of Twenty-four to grant a hearing to the petitioners to send their representatives.¹⁹³ But the journey of the SUPP-PMP-PRB delegation, comprising Stephen Yong, Ong Kee Hui, Tahir Hassan (SUPP), O.K. Sundang (PMP), Azahari, Zaini and Yassin Affandy (PRB) was aborted by the revolt of 8th December 1962.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Zariani, p. 119.

¹⁹² C.O. 1030/1076, 'Brunei Disturbance', D.C. White to Secretary of State, 20th December 1962.

¹⁹³ The United Nations General Assembly, in 1961, established a 17-member Special Committee, enlarged to 24 members in 1962, to examine the application of the Declaration on decolonization, and to make recommendations on its implementation. Commonly referred to as the Special Committee of 24 on Decolonization, its full title is the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

¹⁹⁴ Zariani, p. 109.

Internally, the Malaysia proposal led to the development of an open rift between Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien (backed by his government) and the leaders of the PRB. This was the first time in Brunei's history that a popular party openly opposed the Sultan's decision. The conflict originally began when the PRB felt dissatisfaction with the political reforms introduced by the Government after the proclamation of the Brunei Constitution 1959, whereby the PRB openly criticized the failure of the Government to implement the introduction of full democracy in the state. This conflict escalated because of the apparently welcoming stand of the Brunei Sultan towards the Malaysia proposal. Furthermore, Azahari and his party had to contest with the Tunku for ultimate control over the Borneo territories. The existence of the conflict between these different groups led to the outbreak of the bloody incident in December 1962. The PRB fought for the formation of a Borneo State based on Brunei nationalism while the Tunku and the British were more concerned with the future security of the Malayan and Bornean states. The Malaysia proposal was therefore based on political and administrative matters rather than on nationalism as pursued by the PRB and, as might be, by Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien. Therefore, the Federation of Malaysia plan played a vital role in generating Brunei's internal conflicts and transforming them into an international issue.

CHAPTER THREE

The December 1962 Brunei Revolt

3.1. Introduction

The revolt of 8th December 1962 was the bloodiest episode in modern Brunei history. It is certainly a crucial subject to examine but there are many reasons why it is very difficult to discern the true nature of the event. Even today, it is difficult to study the details of the Revolt because of insufficient source-material in Brunei. The event is still considered a 'sensitive issue' by the Brunei authorities and few people, especially those involved in the rebellion, are willing to come forward to discuss their experience of or knowledge about it. The Brunei government also prohibits local researchers or historians from publishing articles or books relating to the issue without official permission. This situation is reinforced by the State Emergency Law which was declared on the 10th December 1962, and which is still in force to the present day.

In this chapter, the available source material will be used to give as detailed an account of the matter as possible. The main intention is to try to analyse and highlight the background of the event in order to understand the reasons for the outbreak of the Revolt. Thus, the main objective of this chapter is to analyse and examine whether or not the plan to establish Malaysia could be considered as a major factor in the uprising. It also gives preliminary consideration of the extent to which the Revolt was responsible for bringing Brunei's internal conflict into the international arena, especially in relation to the Malaysian-Indonesian

Confrontation of 1963-1966, and also its connection to the Cold War between the superpowers, which is examined in detail in Chapter Six. The conflict between the Sultan and the PRB in Brunei could be seen as a struggle for power and influence which was also connected to the struggle between British and American interests on the one side, and Russian and Chinese communist interests on the other, to gain political influence and power in Southeast Asia.

3.2. The Aims of the Revolt

The term 'revolt' can be defined as a military action by a group of people who want to change the traditional system of administration in a specific country.¹ In Brunei, according to Leake, the action reflected the dissatisfaction of some people towards the ancient hereditary class system and the Malaysia proposal.² However, what is clear is that the Brunei Revolt was a continuation of the nationalist movement in Brunei that emerged in 1946, under the name, Barisan Pemuda (BARIP)³. It was a movement of modern nationalism, supported by a small group within Brunei society, bound together by long-standing historical and cultural bonds. The PRB continued the struggle for the establishment of the Negara Kesatuan Kalimantan Utara⁴ (which literally means "the United States of North Kalimantan" or USKU) comprising North Borneo, Sarawak and Brunei.

¹ According to Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, political reform meant the change of the political system of the state from feudalism to a modern democracy through the introduction of elections. See Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Pertumbuhan Nasionalisme..., p. 210. See also Rupert Emerson, Government and Nationalism in Southeast Asia, International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1942, pp. 17-18.

² Leake, Brunei; The Modern Southeast Asian Islamic Sultanate, Forum, Kuala Lumpur, 1990, p. 48.

³ Muhammad Hadi Abdullah, 'Semangat Kesedaran Kebangsaan Brunei', Jurnal Darussalam, Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, 1988.

⁴ The concept of Negara Kesatuan Kalimantan Utara or USKU was introduced by Haji Abd. Rahman in 1954. In 1957 -1958 the concept was widely used in Berita Brunei. Haji Abd Rahman came from Malaya and worked as editor of Salam, Berita Brunei and Berita Borneo in 1950s. In Bogor A.M. Azahari said that "as editor of Salam

In studying this event, it is not the intention to judge whether the action of the PRB was right or wrong. The aim is to find out the objectives of, and the reasons for, the Revolt. Understandably, there has been disagreement over its causes between, on the one hand, the Brunei Government⁵ and its protector (the British), who considered the rebellion to be an action against the Sultan and his government and, on the other hand, the PRB and the Indonesians, particularly the Indonesian Communist Party which considered the Revolt as an action to oppose the Malaysia proposal and “neo-colonialism”. Furthermore, the PRB leaders were convinced that their actions were part of the struggle to establish the USKU with the Sultan as the Head of State.⁶ This was stated in A. M. Azahari’s telegram to President Kennedy, dated 10th December 1962:

On behalf of the Government of the Unitary State of Kalimantan Utara proclaimed by the people on December eight recognizing His Highness the Sultan of Brunei as constitutional and parliamentary head of State. I sincerely and formally appeal to your government for immediate assistance, towards peaceful settlement of our dispute with the Government of United Kingdom.⁷

The difference in the interpretations of the aims of the rebellion is mainly due to the differences of political and personal interest between the groups concerned. The government considered the rebels as “traitors”⁸ who tried to seize power from the government’s legitimate

and Berita Brunei, he (Haji Abd. Rahman) had the means to popularize this concept”. Refer also to Zariani, p. 29.

⁵ This mainly refers to the Sultan and the monarchist-aristocratic group, for example the Wazir-Wazir, Cheteria-Cheteria, Pehin-Pehin and high-ranking government officers.

⁶ My interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor Indonesia, 7th April 1994.

⁷ RG59 1960-63, Telegram to the President, dated December 10, from A.M.Azahari, Prime Minister of the Unitary State of Kalimantan Utara.

⁸ On 15th December 1962, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin made a speech in which he alleged Azahari was the leader of traitors (ketua penderhaka). See Titah 1959-1967..., p. 152.

leaders.⁹ In the eyes of the government, the PRB's actions were against the laws and the religious beliefs of the society.¹⁰ According to Malay traditions and religion, the Sultan is an agent of God on earth; his duty is to protect innocent people from evil. His duty is to lead his subjects and bring peace and harmony to them. Therefore, his position as a leader must be supported and followed by his subjects, unless he does evil things that contradict the norms and the teaching of the religion, then, his subjects can oppose him.

Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III was widely considered a good Sultan, who looked after his people by meeting as best he could all their social and economic needs. It has been argued that since his government undertook political reforms in 1953 and the First Five-Year Development Plan was implemented from 1954 to 1958, Brunei had developed into a modern state. The Sultan was known as the "Architect of Modern Brunei",¹¹ and from this perspective there was no justification for the PRB's claim to be considered as representing the correct way forward.¹² This is why the Sultan at first did not believe that his people would turn against his government, because he assumed that the people's basic needs were already provided for.¹³ However, the Sultan's expectations were overturned when he faced the reality that the 1962

⁹ Titah 1959-1967 DYMM..., pp.147-148. According to Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, the PRB leaders were selfish and did not think about the welfare of the people, but were more concerned with their own interests to seize power from the Sultan through the establishment of the USKU. See Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Liku-Liku Perjuangan..., pp. 125-126.

¹⁰ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Liku-Liku Perjuangan..., p. 127.

¹¹ 'Architect of Brunei Modern', Forum organised by Brunei History Society, 1986. (Video tape available at Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, Brunei).

¹² According to Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri the PRB's action in starting the revolt was contrary to Islamic law: The PRB leaders had committed a huge sin against God. See Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, p. 130. The Sultan also asked the rebels to surrender their weapons and return to normal life. He said the PRB actions were forbidden by the laws and contrary to Islamic teachings. Titah 1959-67..., pp. 147-148.

¹³ According to Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil, when the news about the Revolt was revealed to the Sultan, the Sultan said that he did not believe the story, because he did not think his subjects would rise against their own leader. Furthermore, the Sultan was convinced that he had not made any mistake or been cruel to his people, but rather, had provided many social services and facilities in the State.

uprising was an attempt by an underground body which called itself the North Kalimantan National Army or Tentara Nasional Kalimantan Utara (TNKU) to overthrow the Government of the autonomous State of Brunei.¹⁴ As he said:

...I feel very sad at the rebellious incident which broke out last night, 8th December 1962...In this rebellion several people were shot dead and several others were detained by the police... the specific aim of these rebels was to overthrow my government. This action was not only prohibited by the laws of the country but was condemned by God... In view of this and for the safety of the whole population of Brunei, the Government is forced to take stern actions to stem the rebellion. The government had to impose heavy sentences on the perpetrators of the rebellion according to the provisions of the law.¹⁵ [emphasis added]

Furthermore, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien did not see the Tunku's Malaysia proposal as the main reason for the Revolt. In his opinion, Brunei's decision to join Malaysia had not finally been made. He had only announced that he accepted the proposal in principle, in order that the Brunei government should be able to discuss with the Federal Government the advantages and disadvantages of the plan. As the Tunku said, the rebellion opposed the Sultan as the legitimate ruler of the State of Brunei, and the Tunku considered that the PRB's action was a coup d'état, whose perpetrators manipulated the anti-Malaysia issue as an excuse to obtain the people's support. That is why the Tunku said that the rebellion was nothing to do with his Malaysia plan, because the people were free to make their decision on the proposal.¹⁶ On the contrary, the Tunku was convinced that the Revolt had a motivation other than opposition to the Malaysia proposal.¹⁷ The Tunku said:

¹⁴ Parliamentary Debate House of Commons, Session 62-63, 10th –21st December 1961, Vol. 669, p. 31.

¹⁵ Titah 1959-1967..., pp. 147-148.

¹⁶ Siaran Akhbar, Pen. 12/62/92 (PM), Jabatan Penerangan PTM, Kuala Lumpur, 8th December 1962.

¹⁷ Ibid.

This scheme of theirs (PRB) has failed and our neighbours will now be able to see that the rebellion had not been carried out on the question of whether Brunei should join Malaysia or not, but with the intention of uniting all these three territories under the control of Azahari who proclaimed himself as Prime Minister, Defence Minister and Foreign Minister.¹⁸

Pehin Jamil argued that the rebellion was against the throne.¹⁹ According to him, this can be proved through the action of the PRB's delegation (Pengiran Metussin and Hapiz Laksamana) who were sent to the palace early on the morning of the revolt to capture the Sultan and force him to declare the formation of USKU. Pehin Jamil considered the action was unacceptable to the society and government because it was against the Sultan's will. Furthermore, he concluded that the action was wrong in the eyes of the Sultan, contrary to the teaching of Islam and values of Malay culture, and could be called *penderhaka* (treachery).²⁰ If the Sultan had agreed with the PRB programme, then he would have voluntarily declared the formation of the USKU. According to Pehin Jamil, the PRB's actions were clearly contrary to the basic principle of the PRB, that is "to protect and uphold the sovereignty of the Sultan and all his heirs on the throne of Brunei Government",²¹ as laid out in their Constitution.

However, the Sultan allegedly argued that the PRB's manifesto showed that Azahari wanted to seize power from him and the British, who were responsible for Brunei's external affairs through the Anglo-Brunei Agreement of 1959. This objective would be implemented through

¹⁸ The Straits Times, 12th December 1962.

¹⁹ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri, Liku-Liku Perjuangan..., p. 126.

²⁰ Titah 1959-1967 Kebawah DYMM..., pp. 152, 155-156.

²¹ Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al Sufri.

the creation in the new government of the post of Prime Minister,²² who would possess the highest authority in the administration. The position of the Sultan in this new government would be symbolic. In other words, the Sultan would become a “Constitutional and Parliamentary Head of State” without holding political power.²³ The Sultan’s responsibilities would only cover matters of tradition and religion. Other matters, related to the armed forces, laws, foreign relations, and the State Council of the Executive would be in the Prime Minister’s hands. According to the Sultan, under the USKU government, Azahari would have had authoritative power to rule the country, as shown in the PRB manifesto which stated that “the high authority of the USKU was vested in the Prime Minister”.²⁴

The PRB’s leaders argued that the aim of the Revolt was to establish a new government of USKU;²⁵ this was stated in the PRB’s petition to the Secretary-General of the United Nations that “highly provoked and inspired by the principles of self-determination, the peoples of Brunei, acting in the name of LIBERTY, JUSTICE AND HUMANITY, exercised their inalienable rights to proclaim their independence on the 8th of December, 1962 through popular revolution”.²⁶ The PRB considered their actions were trying to prevent “the selling of their state and people to anybody else”.²⁷ As Azahari said, “Bruneians are not eggs to be

²² Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Party Rakyat Brunei..., pp. 204-205. The Prime Minister and his ministers were elected by the people through the election. They would hold the government for five years.

²³ Ibid., p. 199.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 200-209.

²⁵ Ahmady Hassan, Ke mana Azahari, United Development Cooperation, Alor Setar, p. 11. See Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Party Rakyat Brunei..., pp. 200-209.

²⁶ PRB’s Documents, Brunei Independence at the United Nations, by People Party Brunei, 1975, p. 2.

²⁷ Teoh Keat Poh, Hubungan Malaysia-Brunei Darussalam 1960-1980-an, unpublished B.A. thesis, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, 1991, p. 49.

transferred from one basket to another”.²⁸

Azahari claimed that the rebellion was an action of people “who love freedom”. He said that “the Sultan himself supports their actions and voluntarily hoists USKU’s flag”.²⁹ In addition to that, the PRB leaders convinced themselves that their actions were not against the Sultan and his authority.³⁰ Their aims were to appoint the Sultan as head of the proposed Federation of North Borneo Territories with the title “Sri Mahkota Negara”.³¹ In principle, the PRB considered their actions were directed to changing the monarchical system of the nation to a system that was supposedly better, but what they regretted was that British aid for the Sultan had become an obstacle to the achievement of their objectives. According to the original plan, the rebels would attack the palace with the intention of holding the Sultan hostage and then bring him by force to declare the formation of USKU in front of the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque in Brunei Town.³² Simultaneously, Azahari who was to be in the Philippines at the time of the Revolt would declare himself Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs of USKU.³³ This objective was mentioned by Haji Zaini:

According to the programme, the proclamation should occur in front of the Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque in Bandar Brunei. It should be officially declared by Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien in his capacity as Sri Mahkota Negara of

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Berita Harian, 10th Disember 1962.

³⁰ According to all leaders of the PRB, they acknowledged that the real intention of organizing the Brunei Revolt December was to establish USKU and appoint the Sultan as Sri Mahkota Negara. Interview with A.M. Azahari, Yassin Affandy, Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Ampuan Yusof bin Ampuan Adol, Ladis Puasa, and others.

³¹ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Pertumbuhan Nasionalisme..., pp. 150-151.

³² In Manila, Azahari was interviewed by Alex Josey and denied any plan “to assassinate the Sultan, or kidnap him, put a pistol in his back and force him to declare his support to the revolt”. In my interview with him at Bogor, he confirmed that he never had any intention to kill the Sultan whom he considered had the same family blood as him. See RG59, 1960-33, Amcongen, Singapore to Secretary of State, Washington, 19th January, 1963.

³³ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Pertumbuhan Nasionalisme..., pp. 150-151.

USKU at 8.00 a.m on 8th December 1962, that is six hours after the start of the revolution. According to the programme the Sultan would be captured by USKU and brought to the compound of the mosque where the would be Deputy Prime Minister, Jasin Affandy and Labour Minister, Hapiz Laksamana would be expected to present the proclamation letter to the Seri Mahkota Negara. Unfortunately the programme could not be carried out as planned. USKU's delegation failed to capture and forcibly bring Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien into the compound of the mosque.³⁴

Azahari stated that the aim of the PRB was to establish the USKU. This statement was repeated during his meeting with Tunku Abdul Rahman on 9th April 1962.³⁵ Furthermore, he told the Tunku that "the Sultan of Brunei would become the head of the USKU, which would comprise North Borneo, Sarawak and Brunei".³⁶ Azahari considered that the Tunku's plan was the main obstacle which prevented the realisation of his dream of the re-emergence of the glory of the Brunei empire under Sultan Bolkiah (the fifth Sultan of Brunei).³⁷ Azahari considered that the Malaysia plan also meant, not the end of colonialism in northern Borneo, but absorption by Malaya, which was still heavily under the influence of Britain. Azahari was convinced that the rebels had no alternative but armed revolt because they had already tried to prevent Malaysia's formation through constitutional means but had failed. On 24th November the PRB had sought and failed to secure permission to move a motion in the State Council which demanded that the British Government cancel the formation of the Malaysian

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Tunku Abdul Rahman denied that the meeting with Azahari in Kuala Lumpur actually took place. Ahmad Boestaman, the Socialist Front leader of Malaya, asked Tunku why he had omitted to say that Azahari had also been sought out by the Prime Minister. The Tunku said "this is the first time I've heard of this. Azahari must have been bluffing you". The Strait Times, 14th December 1962.

³⁶ Ahmady Hassan, p. 11.

³⁷ Zariani, p. 96. Azahari had put forward the idea of a Borneo Federation joining the Federation of Malaysia after achieving independence. This proposal was forwarded to the Colonial Office during the PRB's trip to London in 1957 but the British Resident, J.O. Gilbert, considered the idea to be a dangerous move.

Federation.³⁸ The reply from the Speaker of the Council mentioned that the motion involved the British and Malayan Governments and was nothing to do with Brunei, so that the motion should not be included in the agenda of the meeting.³⁹ On receiving this answer, the PRB's leaders felt frustrated and that they had no other choice but to revolt. As Azahari said:

When we received that, I knew we could not stop Malaysia by constitutional means. We had no alternative. We decided to strike. In the early hours of December 8th the revolution began.⁴⁰

Furthermore, Azahari thought that his action was favoured by the Tunku and Lee Kuan Yew. According to him, before the Malaysia plan was conceived, both the Tunku (1958) and Lee Kuan Yew (1959) knew and agreed with Azahari's plan to use force to gain Brunei's independence.⁴¹ As Alex Josey said:

He (Azahari) said both Tunku Abdul Rahman and Mr. Lee Kuan Yew knew his intentions. Before Malaysia was conceived both of them, he said, had agreed with him that there was no other way of getting independence for Borneo except by fighting for it.⁴²

In reality, it might be true that Lee Kuan Yew agreed with Azahari's plan to secure Brunei's independence - but through constitutional means, not force as claimed by Azahari. Furthermore, in 1959 the idea of Malaysia still did not exist, and there was no reason for either Lee Kuan Yew or the Tunku to oppose Azahari's intention of securing independence for the Borneo territories. However, given the plans for the formation of Malaysia, Azahari

³⁸ Letter from Pengiran Momin (Secretary to the Legislative Council) to Hapiz Laksamana (Vice President of PRB), 3rd Disember 1962. See Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Party Rakyat Brunei..., p. 184.

³⁹ Zariani, p. 117.

⁴⁰ RG59, Decimal File 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Secretary of State, Washington, 19th January 1963.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

felt that his plan was jeopardized and considered the revolt was an uprising against neo-colonialism (Malaysian) but not British or the Sultan⁴³. However, this statement was contrary to the event which occurred on the morning of 8th December 1962, when Hapiz Laksamana and Pengiran Metussin were sent to the Palace with the intention of kidnapping the Sultan and forcing him to go to the declaration site.⁴⁴ This was mentioned by the Tunku:

In actual fact, according to secret reports that we have received, the intentions of these people were to kidnap the Sultan and force him to sign a proclamation to give independence to these three territories.⁴⁵

Initially, the PRB was not against the British, and even when the revolt broke out, no British civilians were intentionally killed or shot by the rebels.⁴⁶ Even the British Ambassador in the Philippines, Mr. John Pilcher, denied that the rebellion was against the British or colonialism. According to him, Brunei was not a colony but a protected state under an autonomous ruler and was perfectly free to decide for itself whether to accept the invitation to join Malaysia or not.⁴⁷ According to W.J. Parks, the Acting British High Commissioner in Brunei during D.C. White's absence, he was captured and held by the rebels in his home at about 3 a.m. until a detachment of the Brunei police arrived at about 9.30 a.m. Furthermore, Parks said that they

⁴³ According to Raja Azlan as a Superintendent of Berakas Detention Camp 1964-1974, only three of the PRB leaders were anti-Sultan but almost all of them were anti-Malaysia. See Raja Azlan Raja Ngah Ali, Ke Arah Kemerdekaan Brunei: Sumbangan Tun Abdul Razak, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, unpublished book. See also Zariani, p. 165.

⁴⁴ According to Zariani, Hapiz Laksamana and Pengiran Metussin Pengiran Lampoh (a member of the Brunei Legislative Council) were ordered by the TNKU men to submit a letter from Princess Tarhata Kiram and the Proclamation of Independence for the Sultan to sign on the morning of 8 December. But the Sultan refused to see them. This account contradicts the government version.

⁴⁵ The Straits Times, 12th December 1962.

⁴⁶ In Belait District about 100 Europeans were reported to be under house arrest. These hostages were safe when the First Battalion of Queen's Own Highlanders under the Command of Brigadier Jack Glennie with his 700 troops against 500 TNKU rebels recaptured Anduki Airfield, Panaga Police Station and Brunei Shell Refinery on 11th December 1962. See The Straits Times, 11th December 1962 and Zariani, p. 156.

⁴⁷ The Straits Times, 11th December 1962.

only tied him up with rope, without doing him any harm. The rebels also assured him that the Sultan was all right and nothing would happen to him.⁴⁸ In Seria, 45 people, mostly Europeans who worked with the Brunei Shell Company, were rescued from the rebels. They said that the rebels had not been vicious; indeed most of them were friendly. Father John Vyvyan, a Church of England priest, said that “the uprising was mistaken but there is little doubt that these people believe in the cause. They want to run their government and there is nothing wrong in that. Why should they not get what they want?”.⁴⁹ D.C. White was convinced that the safety of British civilians in Brunei during the Revolt was not threatened:

No European or other houses were attacked or molested. There was no looting. It is interesting to record that Miss Petrie, my confidential secretary, drove unmolested through bands of rebels in uniform to the house, was allowed to talk to Mr. Parks, who was tied up, and to go away again.⁵⁰

Azahari was convinced that the Revolt was not against the British, as long as the latter did interfere or send a military contingent to Borneo. The British High Commissioner to Brunei held the PRB manifesto to be anti-colonialist, but not anti-British or pro-Communist. He stated that, “if British forces did not intervene, there was to be no injury to British personnel or damage to property. If British forces were to intervene, the rebels were to resort to guerrilla warfare and sabotage”.⁵¹ Furthermore, the PRB had no intention to jeopardize British oil interests in Brunei.⁵² But when British troops arrived from Singapore and Hong Kong, the PRB changed its policy, and turned against the British. Most of the PRB leaders admitted that

⁴⁸ Ibid., 12th December 1962.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 14th December 1962.

⁵⁰ C.O. 1030/1076 - ‘Brunei Disturbance’, D.C. White, Brunei, to Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 20th December, 1962.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Zariani, p. 90.

their actions were taken mainly to block the Sultan's decision to bring Brunei into the Federation of Malaysia. They believed that the Sultan's decision to accept the proposal in principle was to be final, but there was still an element of uncertainty. This was because the Sultan still gave the impression that he was going to find out what would be the *faedah* (benefits) of Brunei joining the Federation. Even though he knew that his subjects had already made known their views of rejecting the Malaysia proposal, he reiterated that he accepted Malaysia in principle. But this was just a political device used by the Sultan in buying time which confused not only his people but also the political leaders.⁵³

Believing the allegation of the PRB's leaders that the Sultan wanted to bring Brunei into the Federation of Malaysia, the grass-roots supporters of PRB without any question took the order to start the Revolt.⁵⁴ That is why some Bruneians bravely involved themselves in the rebellion; their involvement and actions in the Revolts were intended to prevent Brunei from becoming a part of Malaysia. The finding of the Brunei Committee on the views of the Bruneians already proved that the majority of the population was against the Malaysia Federation. The Sultan himself had only become aware of the misunderstanding of his subjects regarding the matter after receiving the report from the interrogation committee. According to the report, the misunderstanding arose partly because of his subjects' lack of knowledge of politics and poor educational background.

⁵³ Ghazali Shafie's Memoir on the Formation of Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, 1998, p. 269.

⁵⁴ According to Tun Haji Rahman Yaakub (ex-Sarawak Chief Minister) the Kedayans at Bekenu, Sibuti and Lawas were exploited by PRB leaders, because they believed that the aim of the revolt was to establish the USKU with the Sultan as the head of state. They also believed that Tun Haji Rahman Yaakub would also be appointed as the Governor of Sarawak. My interview with Tun Haji Rahman Yaakub, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, September 1997.

The Sultan realised that a small number of his subjects had been exploited by the leaders of the PRB.⁵⁵ He knew that the PRB leaders had spread false propaganda which stated that the Sultan supported them, in order to get the backing of the people.⁵⁶ The PRB circulated rumours that all the people, not only in Brunei, but also in the territories of East Sarawak and North Borneo (Sabah), supported them and that these people would rise up and rebel against the policy of the Brunei Government. The PRB leaders' propaganda, which had been circulated very much earlier on,⁵⁷ persuasively stated that the Sultan was in league with them in their endeavour to topple British authority in Brunei. It is possible that some members of the public were taken in by such propaganda, and were ready to co-operate with the PRB because they thought that "the Sultan is in their [PRB's] hands and supports the Revolution".⁵⁸ Furthermore, it was possible that the members of PRB, especially those who did not scrutinize Azahari's words, were unaware of the trickery and deceit of Sheikh A.M. Azahari, and were influenced by his fiery oratory. Consequently, some of them felt that the PRB propaganda was true, which led them to take part in the Revolt. Haji Zaini said that the citizens had taken part in the Revolt, because they were convinced of the allegiance of their leaders and that the Sultan had given his blessing to the Revolt. This shows the important role played in Malay politics by socio-cultural values. As Haji Zaini said:

...on the other hand there were opinions which said that the 8 December revolt occurred because of the political ignorance of the traditional people. It was true that the revolt led by the PRB gained the people's support, but not of their own free will. Information gathered from the prisoners showed that the revolt was supposedly launched with the blessing of the Sultan. Its objective was to

⁵⁵ Titah 1959-1967..., p. 156

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 148.

⁵⁷ There is no specific date when the PRB circulated the story that the Sultan supported the Revolt. But the rumours were spread by word of mouth and by formal circulars such as letters and memoranda.

⁵⁸ Straits Times, 10th December, 1962.

establish a government with the Sultan as its head. Such propaganda could easily influence the traditional people who were too fanatical towards the Sultan. The rebellion had been motivated by social complications brought about by the people's own lack of intelligence to think for themselves on matters concerning State politics. It is acknowledged that PRB followers were made up of ordinary common people. However it could not be said that their involvement in the 8 December revolt was due solely to their political ignorance. It was more than that. Their blind love and faith towards the leaders had influenced them in joining the revolt. Such a situation could not be avoided in a traditional society where every member belonged to their respective social order.⁵⁹

It is true, that, in reality, the majority of Brunei Malays or the citizens of Brunei were loyal towards their leaders.⁶⁰ They were bound by their cultural and religious values which prohibited them from acting in a way that could embarrass their leaders. Furthermore, the majority of the Bruneians were anti-Malaysia and the Malaysia proposal had a significant influence on the people's decision to support the Revolt. However, for the PRB's leaders the aim of the revolt was to set up NNKU and exploit the Malaysia proposal in order to get public support.

3.3. The Rumour of the Revolt

The PRB planned to start the revolt at the end of December 1962, but when its leaders heard that the Special Branch had issued a warrant to arrest some of them, the radical leaders of TNKU immediately changed the date of the revolt to 8th December 1962.⁶¹ However, Brunei's

⁵⁹ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, *Pertumbuhan Nasionalisme...*, p. 209.

⁶⁰ Most of the people of Brunei, including the Malays and Kedayans in Sarawak and North Borneo were still loyal to the Brunei Sultanate. According to Tun Haji Rahman Yaakub, the Malays and Kedayans of the Fourth and Fifth Divisions of Sarawak preferred to be under Brunei rule instead of joining Malaysia in September 1963.

⁶¹ H.B. Hidup had been warned by his uncle, Magistrate Jaya Abdul Latiff, that warrants for the arrest of PRB leaders had been issued 72 hours before the outbreak of the Revolt. The PRB's Revolutionary Council, comprising Yassin Affandy, Sheikh Osman, Sheikh Muhammad, Jais Haji Karim, and Mesir Karuddin, was calling for an immediate Consultative Revolutionary Meeting with representatives from Sarawak and North Borneo. They decided that the revolt would take place on 8th December 1962 with or without approval from

Special Branch, which was, of course, under British control, considered the story as no more than a rumour. Duncan Sandys, Commonwealth Relations Secretary and Colonial Secretary, mentioned this when he told the House of Commons that "Britain had received information of coming trouble in Brunei, but it was similar to previous warnings which turned out to be groundless".⁶² In August 1962, Ghazali Shafie, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the Federation of Malaya, informed the British High Commission in Kuala Lumpur that PKI elements were training some PRB members in armed combat and warfare in Indonesian Kalimantan. But according to Ghazali, the British laughed it off saying it must be 'Indonesian boy scouts'.⁶³ The PRB at the same time spread a rumour that Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III supported the revolt. As the Sultan said:

These leaders of the rebellion had spread false and treacherous propaganda which said that their army had my support. This is all lies. And I was made to believe that they wrested power on behalf of my government and that I was sympathetic towards their unwarranted actions.⁶⁴

The PRB leaders continually used such rumours in order to gain the support of the people and some British officials tended to believe that the Sultan was involved in the revolt. The British Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, Lord Selkirk, who visited the Sultan on 6th December 1962, asked the Sultan whether he was in league with the PRB's plans for rebellion.⁶⁵ However, before replying to the query, the Sultan wanted to know from what source Lord Selkirk had obtained his information. Dato A.N. Outram replied that his source

A.M. Azahari, who was in the Philippines at this time. See Zariani, p. 119. Also Interview with Dr. Haji Hashim Haji Abd. Hamid, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 22nd December 1988.

⁶² The Straits Times, 12th December 1962.

⁶³ Ghazali Shafie's Memoir..., p. 266.

⁶⁴ Titah 1959-1967..., p. 148.

⁶⁵ Interview with Dato Haji Marsal bin Maun, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.

was from rumours.⁶⁶ Even D.C. White suspected that the Sultan had a secret agreement with Azahari as he said “I suspect, in fact I am almost sure, that Azahari discussed this (the unification of three states) with the Sultan”.⁶⁷ He also believed that the Sultan and his ruling clique might, like the PRB, entertain from time to time a dream of restoring Brunei’s sovereignty over the ‘lost territories’.⁶⁸ Furthermore, White said:

If I am right in my deductions or guesses, we are faced with the question of whether the public are going to believe the Sultan’s story that the Party Rakyat leaders have deliberately misled them into believing that the Sultan himself was to lead the crusade for the “liberation” of Brunei’s lost territories.⁶⁹

In reality the people believed what their Sultan said was true, that the rebels were misled by the PRB leaders. More than 2,300 members of PRB were arrested,⁷⁰ most of whom claimed that they had been misled by their leaders.⁷¹ It could be said that the term ‘misled’ could be considered as a way for the authorities to protect some government officers and the royal family,⁷² who were directly involved in the revolt, from the heavy punishment they would otherwise have received. As a result, nearly all of them were released after confessing their loyalty to the Sultan and his government. This was mentioned by Nihal Singh who interviewed high-ranking Brunei officials:

The rebels include a large number of government employees and also Shell employees at the Seria Oil Refinery (the general secretary of the newly-formed

⁶⁶ Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

⁶⁷ C.O. 1030/1076, ‘Brunei Disturbances’, D.C. White, Brunei to Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 20th December 1962.

⁶⁸ According to Zariani, Azahari discussed this with the Sultan at the palace after his return from Kuala Lumpur, where he conveyed to the Tunku the 17-point proposal for the proposed Federation. See Zariani, A.R., p. 103.

⁶⁹ C.O. 1030/1076, ‘Brunei Disturbances’, D.C. White, Brunei to Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 20th December 1962.

⁷⁰ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, *Party Rakyat Brunei...*, p. 271.

⁷¹ Nihal Singh, S., *Malaysia: A Commentary*, Barnes and Noble, Inc., New York, 1971, p. 32.

⁷² RG59, 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Secretary of State, Washington, 19th January, 1963.

Oil Workers' Union in Seria is a Rakyat Party Leader). For its own survival, the Brunei Government will therefore be forced to accept most rebels' statement of being misled at face value.⁷³

According to Azahari, when he met the Sultan at his palace before the revolt, he told him of his intention to establish the USKU. He claimed that the Sultan replied: "I agree with your plan" (*Beta restui dan setuju cita-cita sahabat Beta*).⁷⁴ Although the Sultan spoke of his agreement with the plan, it is very difficult to believe that he genuinely accepted the PRB's plan to form the USKU. He was not interested in becoming the head of USKU, or in the establishment of the Borneo Federation.⁷⁵ He also did not agree with the idea of taking military action, either in opposition to the Malaysia proposal or to gain independence for USKU from the British. Azahari might have misunderstood what the Sultan said to him, when the Sultan implied that "he was on their side". By saying that he "supported my friend's plan", the Sultan may have meant that, like Azahari, he opposed the Malaysia plan, though he could not declare this publicly.⁷⁶ The Sultan's apparent attempt to both support and oppose the Malaysia plan, mainly to secure the position of the monarchy, clearly led to confusion and misinterpretation. He was obviously playing a fine balancing act, but there were also other reasons for this, in his attempt to appease the conflicting parties.

There is certainly evidence that the Sultan supported the PRB's stand of opposing the Malaysia plan. In 1961, when Azahari's business (The Light Press) was on the brink of bankruptcy in Singapore, the Government of Brunei helped him and transferred his business

⁷³ Nihal Singh, S., pp. 32-33.

⁷⁴ Interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor, Indonesia.

⁷⁵ Refer to Chapter 1 on the topic of the Borneo Federation.

⁷⁶ If the Sultan had revealed his opposition to the Malaysia proposal, he could have embarrassed the Malayan leaders and the HMG.

to Brunei.⁷⁷ The business survived through the successive loans given by the Government to Azahari.⁷⁸ The Sultan also tried to maintain good relations with Azahari not only as his subject, but also as a blood relation.⁷⁹ Therefore, in this meeting, each side tried to compromise to accommodate the other's viewpoint and to minimize disagreement. That was why the Sultan indicated his favourable attitude towards Azahari's proposal, though in reality he might have disagreed with him. As a result of the meeting, Azahari spread the rumours that he had discussed with the Sultan his plan to set up USKU.⁸⁰ Eventually these rumours became the widely-accepted version of the Sultan's position toward the Revolt, because not only the Bruneians believed it but also some British officials.⁸¹ The rumours spread widely, not only in Brunei but also as far as the House of Commons in London, as reported in the *Malay Mail* in 1963:

A British Labour Member of Parliament, Mr. Arthur Bottomley, had charged that the Sultan was behind the revolt because he was aspiring to become the unitary ruler of the three British Borneo territories of Sarawak, North Borneo and Brunei.⁸²

The Sultan denied the reports.⁸³ Furthermore, he insisted that he did not support either the anti-Malaysia movements or independence for North Kalimantan. The Sultan added in his

⁷⁷ BA/2449/1983, Application for Loan from Azahari Mahmud to start a Printing Press in Brunei, SUK 233/60, National Archives of Brunei Darussalam.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ See appendix 5

⁸⁰ However, Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri denied the story. Interview with Pehin Hj. Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

⁸¹ D.C White, British High Commissioner felt that the Sultan might have supported the PRB's action of starting the uprising. See C.O. 1030/1076, 'Brunei Disturbances', D.C White to Secretary of State, 20th December 1962.

⁸² *Malay Mail*, 22nd July, 1963.

⁸³ Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri who attended the meeting between the Sultan and Azahari called Azahari a liar, saying that in the meeting, they never discussed any issue relating to the proposed Federation of Borneo States. When Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri met Azahari at Bogor in 1994, Azahari admitted that he had never discussed the issue relating to the Borneo Federation with the Sultan. Furthermore, Azahari said that 'the story might have been created by the reporter'. At last, I asked him without Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri being

letter to Lieutenant-General Djatikusumo, the personal representative of President Sukarno in 1963, that he had never had any relationship with President Sukarno or the Government of Indonesia.⁸⁴ On the contrary, the Sultan said that he and his Government had recognized the formation of Malaysia as an independent sovereign state.⁸⁵ Moreover, the Sultan never made any formal announcement that he agreed with the PRB plan, especially in the sense of using military forces to oppose the Malaysia plan. Even though the Sultan eventually rejected the idea of joining Malaysia, this does not mean that he used the PRB to show the Tunku that he had to agree with his subjects' stand of opposing Malaysia. In reality, the Sultan was not only against the idea of using military force to form the USKU, but also he had no wish to be the head of the three states. As Lawson has said, "the Sultan was not interested either in becoming the Head of a Borneo Federation or becoming Yang Di-Pertuan Agung of the new Federation of Malaysia".⁸⁶ But in his strategy of playing one side off against the other and appeasing both it appeared that he was interested in both positions at various times.

The formation of USKU was only Azahari's pipe-dream. Support for his plan came from a small number of people within Brunei (mainly in the Muara, Temburong and Belait districts), and in certain areas of North Borneo and Sarawak. These people were originally against the formation of Malaysia. In other words, the PRB leaders had exploited anti-Malaysia feelings in order to achieve their objective of establishing USKU. Without the existence of anti-Malaysia feeling, the PRB could not have secured significant support, especially from Sabah and Sarawak.

present and he said "I swear to God that the Sultan supported my struggle". Interview with Pehin Jamil Al-Sufri and A.M. Azahari.

⁸⁴ *Malaysia*, January, 1965, p. 30.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

3.4. The Plan for the Revolt

According to Pehin Haji Mohd Jamil Al-Sufri,⁸⁷ the outbreak of the revolt was planned by some Malayan officers.⁸⁸ There might be two reasons why the Malayan Government wanted the revolt to take place.⁸⁹ Firstly, it was the only way to persuade the Sultan of Brunei to accept the Malaysia proposal. It was argued by Ghazali Shafie that the Sultan of Brunei was not in favour of joining Malaysia because he was not interested in holding democratic elections in his state:⁹⁰ the Menteri Besar, Dato Marsal Maun said in September 1962 that “Brunei was not prepared to lose her existing constitutional authority and the power of the Sultan”.⁹¹ In other words, it was already understood by the Malayan Government that there was no way they could bring Brunei into the Federation of Malaysia except through military means and by threatening the Sultan’s position. According to Hamzah in the last meeting in June 1963 between the Sultan’s delegation and the Malayan leaders, the Sultan started to change his stand on the issue of Brunei’s entry to the Federation.⁹² But, in reality there was

⁸⁶ C.O. 1030/1296, Secretary of State, Colonial Office to Sir D.C. White, Brunei 12th October, 1962.

⁸⁷ One of the Brunei political leaders in the 1960s was convinced that the Malayan officers in Brunei might be involved in the revolt. He said that the Malayan officers in Brunei had secret relations with the PRB leaders such as Azahari. This view is probably untrue because the relations between Azahari and the Malayan Officers and also the Tunku and Tun Abd. Razak were a tactical approach taken by the Malayan Government in order to persuade Azahari to accept the Malaysia proposal (refer to chapter 2). This view might have existed because the Brunei political leaders were always suspicious of relations and meetings between the Malayan leaders and Azahari prior to the revolt. See *Ghazali Shafie Memoir....*, pp. 268-274.

⁸⁸ Most Bruneians, especially the PRB followers, were told by their leaders that the Sultan of Brunei had been kidnapped by the Malayan authorities in order to threaten him to join Malaysia. Therefore, it was said that the PRB started the revolt as an action to prevent Brunei from joining Malaysia and to protect their Sultan. (Interview with Awang Muhammad bin Haji Awang Damit, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Gadong, May, 1998).

⁸⁹ This is not the view of the Brunei Government. It is the opinion of some Brunei politicians in the 1960s.

⁹⁰ *Ghazali Shafie Memoir....*, p. 275.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

⁹² The Sultan started to change his attitude toward the Malaysia proposal when the Brunei Shell Petroleum Company sent a telegram to the Sultan who attended the meeting in Kuala Lumpur, informing him of the new discovery of oil at Southwest Ampa. This discovery strengthened the Sultan’s bargaining position in Kuala Lumpur. See Hamzah, p. 131.

probably no real change in the Sultan's stand because, from the beginning, he might have already decided not to join the Federation. As Ghazali Shafie has said:

I did not think the Sultan would be very serious about Brunei's membership in the Federation if the position of the Sultan was like that of the other Sultans in Malaysia. Very candidly, I submitted to the Tunku and Razak that Brunei in Malaysia without democratisation would be like a drop of indigo in a pail of milk.⁹³

Therefore, the revolt could have been staged by Malaya to make the Sultan feel insecure, thus prompting him to join Malaysia to ensure the survival of his sultanate. Secondly, it might be that by provoking it, the Malayan government felt confident that it could defeat and destroy the PRB, ousting it from Borneo politics. This could be done through the implementation of the Anglo-Malayan Military Agreement of 1957, and the Tunku could then have brought the British North Borneo States into the Federation without any opposition from the PRB.⁹⁴

Furthermore, White also might have agreed with the PRB's plan to appoint the Sultan as the Constitutional Ruler of Brunei,⁹⁵ but there was no evidence to prove this statement. This plan had been discussed between Azahari and Tun Abdul Razak.⁹⁶ The plan might have been acceptable to both parties (the PRB and the Malayan Government) because by accepting the PRB's proposal it would be easier to bring Brunei into the Federation with Sabah and

⁹³ Ghazali Shafie Memoir..., p. 274.

⁹⁴ When the revolt broke out, the Tunku sent 150 men from the Police Field Force to Brunei. Pelita Brunei, 31st December 1962, Straits Times, 11th December 1962. According to Muhammad bin Awang Damit, this action could be considered as the Tunku's tactic to force Brunei to join the Federation of Malaysia. See Muhammad Awang Damit, p. 155. The Tunku also stated in his letter to the Sultan that the Malayan Government could only help Brunei to suppress the revolt on condition that Brunei joined Malaysia. See Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil, Liku-Liku Perjuangan..., pp. 122-123.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Tun Abd. Razak had met A.M.Azahari in Seria, Belait in August 1962. See Ghazali Shafie's Memoir..., pp. 267-275.

Sarawak. It seemed that there might well have been a secret agreement between Azahari on the one hand and British and Malayan officers on the other. Even after the revolt, there was a suggestion that Azahari be given a chance to return to Brunei to lead the Constitutional Government.⁹⁷ If he did, it would have been easy to control Azahari, persuading him into the Federation and at the same time separating him from the communist connection in Indonesia. This was suggested by British diplomats in Indonesia, but rejected by the Colonial Office. This idea was also proposed by British diplomats in the Philippines to Zaini Haji Ahmad in January 1963. Zaini accepted the offer by the British diplomats in the Philippines by giving him political protection,⁹⁸ so enabling him to negotiate with the Brunei authorities about the future of Brunei politics. As a result, Zaini declined to join Azahari to continue their struggles in Indonesia. Zaini escaped to Hong Kong where he was captured by the British authorities.⁹⁹ Finally, Zaini was sent to prison, together with the other rebels. This plot was mentioned by White:

I was convinced that the real battle ahead lay between the people of Brunei and the ruling clique, i.e. local nobility and a few elevated commoners, and that the only safe course for the Sultan to pursue was to become a genuinely Constitutional ruler, and grant power to the Parti Rakyat, even at the price of letting down the ruling clique. As I have already stated in para 6 above, I believed that Tun Razak had also accepted this view.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ According to Mr. Meadows, Deputy British High Commissioner for Brunei, immediately after the revolt, the British had special plans for Brunei, including the suggestion for the return of Azahari to Brunei. See RG59, 1960-63, Amcongen, Singapore to Secretary of State, Washington, 17th January, 1963

⁹⁸ See BA /2862/1963 'Detention Camp Brunei'. The meeting between Zaini Haji Ahmad with his wife, Rugayah, at Berakas Detention Camp, on 17th September 1963. In the meeting Zaini told his wife to see Mr. Noel Rees at Limbang to discuss the agreement he made with the British authorities in Hong Kong.

⁹⁹ RG59, 1960-63, Amcongen, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 18th January 1963. According to Mr. Pilcher he received from reliable intelligence sources that there was some sort of plan to assassinate Zaini in the Philippines, making it appear that the British were responsible for the murder. Therefore, in order to avoid the incident, the British diplomat in the Philippines might have promised political asylum to Zaini.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

Nevertheless, there is no strong documentary evidence to support any of these interpretations. On the other hand, the PRB leaders such as Azahari and Zaini Haji Ahmad were convinced that the British had provoked the PRB to start the revolt.¹⁰¹ According to Ghazali Shafie, there was the possibility of deliberate inaction on the part of British officials in Brunei to allow for the development of a Revolt which would abort the Sultan's decision to join Malaysia.¹⁰² By doing this, the British would be able to continue their role as a protector of Brunei¹⁰³ and generally in Borneo and the Southeast Asian region, mainly to maintain their economic and strategic interests.¹⁰⁴ As Muhammad Awang Damit wrote:

Indirectly, the British were responsible for the outbreak of the Brunei revolt in 1962, in order to maintain their influence and interests in Brunei's politics and economics. Furthermore, PRB leaders like Zaini Haji Ahmad, Yassin Affandy, Jais Abas and A. M. Azahari have stated that the British provoked the revolt.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Interview with A.M.Azahari. He claimed that the British provoked the PRB to start the revolt. Azahari said that six PRB extremists were ordered to start the Revolt by two men from the palace. The meeting between them took place at the Snowman Restaurant, Bandar Brunei. Ampuan Yusof bin Ampuan Adul confirmed that someone inside the palace encouraged the PRB to start the revolt. Other sources claimed that Roy Henry (British Intelligence) was responsible for the outbreak of the revolt, because he had exposed in public the discovery of TNKU's uniforms two weeks before the revolt at Lawas. Interview Pehin Haji Mohd Jamil with Ampuan Yusof bin Ampuan Yusof, Bandar Seri Begawan, 1997 also my discussion with Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, Bandar Seri Begawan, August 2001.

¹⁰² Ghazali Shafie's Memoir..., p. 266.

¹⁰³ Muhamad bin Haji Awang Damit, p.148

¹⁰⁴ The outbreak of Revolt was considered as a British provocation by Azahari (my interview with Azahari in Bogor) in order to maintain British influence in Brunei through the flow of British military to Brunei from Singapore. Furthermore, Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer said that the historical role of Sukarno as the initiator of Confrontation should be revised in the light of this new evidence. According to him, even the Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation and the G30S were also provoked by the British in order to achieve their objective of maintaining their power in Southeast Asia. Poulgrain supported this theory, based on documents in the Public Record Office, which mentioned in early 1957 that the Colonial Office adopted the plan to eliminate Azahari by hatching a scheme for a rebellion in Brunei which would lead to an influx of British military into Brunei, and resolve the political situation in Brunei. He added that this plan was initiated by 'upper echelons of British intelligence, together with a few Colonial Office representatives'. See G. Poulgrain, The Genesis of Konfrontasi Malaysia Brunei Indonesia 1945-1965, C. Hurst and Company, London, 1998, p. 8.

¹⁰⁵ Muhammad Haji Awang Damit, pp. 148-49 (my own translation from the Malay version).

With the outbreak of the Revolt, the Sultan of Brunei sought military intervention from the British. Consequently, the British would continue to protect the Sultanate, which was able to destroy the PRB's influence and strength in Brunei politics. In effect, if the British had taken prior precautions, the revolt would not have broken out.¹⁰⁶ However, the British did not take the rumours seriously, because they knew that the TNKU's military strength could not seriously challenge them. According to Haji Saman, the British had already made some preparations to tackle the revolt in Miri and Limbang in Sarawak, but not in Brunei. On the night of the rebellion the only force sent to Bandar Brunei was the Police Reserve Unit from Seria which comprised no more than 50 men.¹⁰⁷ According to a member of the unit, they were not informed clearly about their special duty to handle the rebellion. Most of them were sent to Bandar Brunei Police Station.¹⁰⁸

According to Zairani Abdul Rahman, the PRB leaders planned to start the revolt on 25th December 1962.¹⁰⁹ However, news about the impending revolt had spread widely very much earlier, several months before the proposed date. Stories spread in Lawas, Limbang, Miri, Serikei and Kilanas about military training. It was also said that Indonesian boats and even helicopters had landed along the coast of Sarawak's Third Division.¹¹⁰ The authorities also had obtained evidence which exposed secret paramilitary activities in Sarawak. For example, in Serikai, the police had arrested several people involved in illegal activities. In May 1962,

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Haji Saman, Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, Brunei. At this moment, he is working as a driver with Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, Brunei, 1996. (He retired from the Police Reserve Unit, having been on duty at the Bandar Brunei Police Station, on the night of the outbreak of the revolt, 8th December 1962.)

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Haji Saman, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 1996.

¹⁰⁹ Zairani, A.R., p. 143

¹¹⁰ Sarawak Tribune, 10th June 1963.

there was a rumour that a company of the North Borneo Freedom Army¹¹¹ (later known as TNKU) was gathered near the boundary of Lawas, Sarawak and Indonesian Kalimantan. It was also said that about 100 youths from North Borneo had joined the said Company of the North Borneo Freedom Army.¹¹² Official sources (in Limbang) confirmed that they had received several reports regarding the activities of the TNKU in the Lawas area.¹¹³ Rumours about TNKU activities continued to be received by the authorities in Lawas and Limbang, and additional police detachments were sent to their town in Sarawak adjoining Brunei. During a patrol on 25th November 1962 the police detachment managed to arrest 10 smugglers in Lawas. Then in early December 1962, a police patrol discovered two jungle training camps with 35 pieces of green clothing labelled TNKU and several documents about the illegal armed group.¹¹⁴ In Bandar Brunei, several weeks before the Revolt, many youths reportedly went into the jungle, and there was an incident of gun-stealing in the Temburong District. It seemed that the rebels had to speed up their plans in view of the arrests in Lawas, a week before the rebellion. Among the documents found by the Police, some indicated an organized system of command. According to Zariani, when some of the PRB leaders heard that the police would issue a warrant of arrest 48 hours before the uprising,¹¹⁵ the PRB's leaders

¹¹¹ The first underground movement was formed in 1953 at Lorong Tiga Seria, Belait. The leader was Ampuan Yusof bin Ampuan Adul. According to him, after his resignation from the Brunei Police Force in April 1952, he started the idea of an underground movement to gain Brunei's independence through the formation of NKKU. Its members numbered roughly about twenty people. In August 1961, the movement formally became known as Tentera Nasional Kalimantan Utara (TNKU or National Army of North Kalimantan). TNKU also sent its first batch of 20 people to the Kalimantan border to get military training from Tentera Nasional Indonesia (TNI). The topic will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six. See Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, *Pertumbuhan Nasionalisme...*, p. 139, and Muhammad Hadi Abdullah, Sabihah Osman, Sabullah Hakip, *Sejarah Brunei Menjelang Kemerdekaan*, DBP, Kuala Lumpur, 1995, p. 193.

¹¹² *Borneo Bulletin*, 26th May 1962.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 29th December 1962.

¹¹⁵ Zariani, p. 119.

immediately changed the date of the Revolt. However, according to D.C.White, Lord Selkirk's impending visit may have influenced the change of date.¹¹⁶

It seemed that the authorities did not take this report seriously but continued to ignore the stories about the training of the rebels in the jungle. In fact it was reported by many tailors in Bandar Brunei that their stock of green cloth ran out, and they were kept busy sewing green uniforms.¹¹⁷ The Brunei Chamber of Commerce informed the authorities about this, and still no action was taken,¹¹⁸ primarily because the Special Branch in Brunei considered that the TNKU activities presented no serious danger. Therefore, there was no firm preparations in terms of security measures to counter the Revolt, that is, until the *Menteri Besar* informed the Sultan that the Revolt would take place on the midnight of 7th December 1962.

3.5. The Outbreak of the Revolt

Azahari has admitted his role in the creation of the TNKU¹¹⁹ and the preparation of the rebellion.¹²⁰ Regarding the timing of the rebellion, he was shocked to hear from his brother, Sheikh Othman, at their meeting in Johore on 5th December 1962, that the rebellion was imminent whether he liked it or not.¹²¹ According to Azahari, he had no choice but to go

¹¹⁶ Lord Selkirk visited Brunei on 6th to 7th December 1962. Refer to C.O. 1030/1076, 'Brunei Disturbance', D.C. White, Brunei to Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 20th December 1962.

¹¹⁷ Two or three months before the Revolt the PRB started buying ready-made jungle green uniforms or had them made at Chinese tailors' shops in Tutong and Seria. See Zariani, p. 342

¹¹⁸ The Strait Times, 13th December 1962.

¹¹⁹ Interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor, Indonesia, 7th April 1994. Azahari showed me photos of the TNKU activities at the Kalimantan border. Unfortunately, he would not give me copies of the photographs, because he considered them as the USKU's secret documents.

¹²⁰ It was stated by Governor of Sarawak, Sir Alexander Waddell, that the Revolt had been planned by Azahari who, not willing to risk his own skin, was conveniently out of the country. See The Straits Times, 11th December 1962.

¹²¹ Zariani, p. 119.

along with his followers; otherwise he would have been treated as a traitor.¹²² That is why on 6th December 1962, he left for Manila to safeguard his life.¹²³ Azahari claims that he disagreed with the plan but was forced to accept it by the radical leaders within the Revolutionary Council Committee.¹²⁴ As party leader, he had to take a definite stance by accepting the decision of the Revolutionary Council of the PRB to start the Revolt.¹²⁵ In Singapore, the Socialist Front clearly stated their disagreement with Azahari's action.¹²⁶ Apparently, a few weeks earlier, Azahari had informed them of his intentions while seeking their help to find arms for his followers, but the Singapore associates did not like the idea because of the superior power of the British; they feared that their own struggle would face a set-back if things went wrong in Brunei. They were more keen on a constitutionally-based struggle, which Azahari himself had advocated earlier.¹²⁷

¹²² Interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor, Indonesia, 7th April 1994. As Sheikh Othman (Azahari's brother) said to Azahari on the 5th December 1962 at Johore, "first, you must not come back to Brunei. The Revolt will start any moment now. We will tell you. If you support us we'll call you leader. Otherwise we shall paint your name as Traitor in Blood". See Zariani, p. 119.

¹²³ Interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor, Indonesia, 7th April, 1994. See also Examiner, 14th December, 1962, p. 5.

¹²⁴ According to Azahari there were six PRB extremists who forced him to start the revolt. As he said "Are you crazy to start the revolt, Brunei would be devastated". They replied, "Who cares?." Interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor, 7th April 1994.

¹²⁵ Zariani said that Saibah (Azahari's wife) simply told the truth, that Azahari was not involved in the Revolt. She still remembered that in one of his speeches at the field (padang) Azahari had unequivocally told his followers, "if there is a revolt I will not take any responsibility". See Zariani, p. 148. In interview, Md Alinordin, one of the PRB's committee members at Kampung Air, confirmed that Azahari did not support or take any responsibility for the PRB revolt. According to Ampuan Yusof bin Ampuan Adul when he met Azahari in Indonesia in 1963, Azahari told him that he disagreed with the plan to start the revolt but he could not do anything so he had to accept the consequences. Ampuan Yusof Ampuan Adul interviewed by Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil, History Centre, Brunei, 1997.

¹²⁶ Interview with Lim Chin Siong (the leader of Socialist Party, Singapore in the 1950s and 1960s), Singapore, 11th April, 1994.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

According to Leon O. Ty, a Filipino journalist, who left Bandar Brunei exactly one week before the outbreak of the bloodshed in the 2,226-square-mile sultanate, there was absolutely no inkling of the impending revolt. As he said:

In the grocery and magazine stores, jewellery shops, restaurants and photo establishments, nobody even so much as dropped a hint of the terrible thing that was to happen a week later. The faces of the Bruneians who flocked to the movie houses did not show the faintest sign of anxiety or apprehension.¹²⁸

On 6th December, the Resident of Limbang, Mr. Richard Morris, received information from the Resident of Miri, Mr. Fisher, that disturbances would occur on 8th December. On the evening of 7th December, just before the Maghrib Prayer, Dato Setia Haji Mohd. Ali instructed the Private Secretary of the Sultan, Pengiran Haji Abd. Momin bin Pengiran Othman, to inform the Sultan that he had received information from Mr. Fisher, that the PRB would start a revolt at 2 a.m that night.¹²⁹ According to the information received, the rebellion would start with a power failure and total blackout. The rebels would then attack all the police stations and the residence of the Menteri Besar and then rush up to the palace. However, the PRB made a mistake in not seizing the Radio Station at Bandar Brunei, which would have provided them with a very important channel for propaganda.

Meanwhile, since receiving reports from the Miri Resident that the rebellion would start at 2.00 a.m. on Saturday 8th December, the Commissioner of Police, Dato Outram, was busy giving instructions to his officers to prepare emergency plans to meet all eventualities.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Examiner, 14th December, 1962, p. 5.

¹²⁹ Interview with Dato Haji Marsal bin Maun, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.

¹³⁰ H. James, & D. Sheil-Small, The Undeclared War: the Story of the Indonesian Confrontation 1962-1966, Leo Cooper, London, 1971, p. 6.

Several extra police officers were detailed to protect certain people and places such as the Sultan and his palace, and the Menteri Besar and his residence. All police stations were put on alert. At 9.30 p.m on Friday 7th December, about 2000 TNKU troops were silently moving towards the 1000 ft hill, Bukit Sumur, about two miles away from Brunei Town. They were ready to receive instructions from the head of the PRB army, Jasin Affandy. At Bukit Salilah, the PRB set up temporary headquarters and initiated a system of couriers to launch the attack.¹³¹ At the same time, Mesir Keruddin instructed district commanders to mobilise all PRB members in each district in Brunei and also Miri, Merapok, Lawas, Limbang, Labuan, Wiston and Sepitang.

According to *Menteri Besar*, Dato Marsal Maun, on the evening of 7th December, after seeing Lord Selkirk off at the airport, he visited Pekan Muara with the Secretary of State, Raja Azam.¹³² On their way, they saw a group of people from Kampong Air (the 'water village' adjacent to Brunei Town) paddling their perahu towards Kampung Kianggeh. Dato Marsal added:

Brunei Town and Muara Town were very quiet. Unfortunately a group of people crossed the Brunei River towards Kampung Kianggeh. It seemed that they were attending a funeral ceremony. Later, I realized that these people were PRB supporters who were attending the declaration of USKU at Bukit Salilah.¹³³

That evening, people who lived near Brunei Town went about their activities without knowing about the imminent outbreak of the revolt. Many people visited the Boon Pang Cinema to

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² A Malayan seconded officer who had studied at Kuala Kangsar Malay College and Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien's classmate.

¹³³ Interview with Dato Haji Marsal bin Maun, Brunei.

watch the Malay film, 'Korban Kasih'. The show started at 7.30 in the evening and lasted about two hours. In the meantime, some sources said that the PRB leaders had instructed their members to gather at the main field (Padang Besar) before midnight to hear the announcement from their party leader, A.M. Azahari, who had returned from the United Nations. They were not permitted to carry any potentially dangerous weapons, even a small needle.¹³⁴ At 2.00 a.m., once the power station in Bandar Brunei was cut-off, the gathering turned to violence when a group of TNKU men in green came out of the Civic Centre and towards the big field. They surrounded and attacked the Police Headquarters in the town centre, where 18 police were officers on duty.¹³⁵ They had three machine-guns on standby on the roof of the building, which at first they did not use, out of consideration for the safety of the rebels by shooting into the air. The officers (mostly Reserve Unit Personnel from Kuala Belait) warned the rebels not to advance closer to the station.¹³⁶ However, when the TNKU continued to shoot indiscriminately, the police had to fire at the advancing rebels for their own protection. As a result, some rebels, especially those who tried to climb over the fence to attack the police, were killed. According to one officer on duty that night, the rebels could have seized the police station if they had ambushed them from the courtyard, but they had not done so. This was also because TNKU rebels from Kampung Kilanas who were supposed to mount the attack from the Police Station courtyard, did not appear on schedule.¹³⁷ Rebel attempts to capture the Sultan's Palace and the Residence of the *Menteri Besar* also failed.

¹³⁴ Interview with Haji Mohd. Alinordin, Brunei, 14th September 1986.

¹³⁵ Interview with Haji Saman, Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, 1996. (Ex-police reserve unit who was on duty the night of the revolt. He was stationed at the roof of the police building, Brunei Town).

¹³⁶ Interview with Haji Saman, Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, 1996.

¹³⁷ Interview with Haji Ibrahim Haji Salleh, Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, Brunei, 1996.

The next morning, people from Kampong Air and Bandar Brunei went about their normal activities. According to Haji Tuah bin Haji Hitam, most children who came from the countryside went to school as usual. A daughter of a Malayan officer who studied at the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien College told a *Straits Times* reporter about what happened on the morning of 8th December 1962:

On Saturday morning, all students reported at the school as usual. But soon after the morning bell they were told to go home immediately and that the school had been closed indefinitely.¹³⁸

Evidently, not all the population in the area of Brunei Town knew what had happened the previous night, even though the people from Kampung Air had rushed to the Padang to see fighting between the police and the rebels. According to certain sources some of these people had been taken into custody by the police because of their presence at the incident, especially at the Padang Besar. In the morning of 8th December, the towns of Tutong,¹³⁹ Sengkuring,¹⁴⁰ Muara, Belait and Bangar¹⁴¹ were captured by TNKU.¹⁴² Outside the town, only the Panaga Police Station was not captured. There were no clear instructions from the leaders to their rank and file, although the TNKU were ordered not to kill their fellow citizens. Unfortunately,

¹³⁸ *The Straits Times*, 11th December, 1962.

¹³⁹ In Tutong Town, the rebels seized the police station and captured some of the government and political leaders. Most of them were sent to Jerudong Prison to await further instructions from their leaders.

¹⁴⁰ Two police officers who were on duty at Sengkuring Police Station were shot dead at the scene. They were PC Selasa bin Othman and PC 465 Mohamad bin Haji Tahir. See BA/2863/1983, Memorandum from Commissioner of Police, Brunei to State Secretary of Brunei, 20th December, 1962.

¹⁴¹ The District Officer of Temburong District, Pengiran Haji Besar bin Pengiran Kula and two policemen i.e., Sgt. 20 Pengiran Ali bin Pg. Ghani, PC 175 Chen Tong Seng were killed by TNKU, and several other government officers of Temburong District were captured. Those who could not escape were killed by the TNKU rebels. See BA/2863/1982, Memorandum of Commissioner of Police, Brunei to State Secretary of Brunei, 20th December, 1962.

¹⁴² *Pelita Brunei*, 31st December 1962.

some of them took the law into their own hands by shooting government servants and civilians.¹⁴³

Not all the PRB supporters from the countryside of Tutong and Belait districts were involved in the revolt, although some of them knew about the plan.¹⁴⁴ The outcome was felt mainly in the urban areas such as Bandar Brunei, Pekan Bangar, Pekan Tutong, Pekan Seria, Pekan Kuala Belait and other areas in Limbang, Miri and Lawas. Simultaneously, the revolt broke out in Limbang, Sundar, Lawas, Miri, Sipitang, Weston and Labuan in Sabah and Sarawak. This indicated that the rebels were supported not only by Bruneians but also by some people in the Lawas district of Sabah and the Bekenu, Sibuti, Miri and Limbang districts of Sarawak. In Bekenu, 400 Kedayans led by Brunei Malays rebelled.¹⁴⁵ In reality, not all members of the PRB took part in the rebellion. The rebels were mostly members of the TNKU. Moreover, those who joined the TNKU were not all PRB members; some of them were Indonesian volunteers or communists from the SUPP in Sarawak.¹⁴⁶ For example, in Seria, the residents believed the leaders of the rebels were Indonesians. As Nihal Singh said:

....in Seria, several old residents said that they had never seen some of the rebel leaders before - and Seria is a small town. Although the Dutch evidence is suspect, an interesting point made to me by a Dutch engineer in Seria was that some of the rebel leaders spoke the Indonesian variety of Malay¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ When I put it to Azahari, Yassin Affandy, Osman Latif, and other PRB leaders that the revolt was against the Sultan, they said that the rebels who killed the Bruneians were not the PRB people but other groups who sought to take advantage of the incident to pursue personal interests such as revenge. The PRB leaders confessed their mistake in not giving proper instructions to the TNKU. When I pressed the point that, because of these actions, the rebels were considered as traitors by Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III, one of the PRB leaders argued that at that time they were still young, and they had acted impetuously.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Awang Damit bin Salleh.

¹⁴⁵ Straits Times, 14th December 1962.

¹⁴⁶ This issue will be discussed in Chapter Six.

¹⁴⁷ Nihal Singh, S., Malaysia: A Commentary, p. 37.

However, according to the Deputy *Menteri Besar*, Dato Pengiran Haji Mohd Ali, government employees such as drivers and daily-rated labour took part in the Revolt.¹⁴⁸ Most of the people who were involved in the revolt were youths, both from the city and the countryside. According to Tom Harrisson, most of the rebels were ethnic Kedayans, especially in Miri, Bekenu and Sibuti.¹⁴⁹ It is difficult to accept that the rebels were mainly Kedayan, especially with regard to Brunei. The percentage of people involved in the rebellion was not more than 15% of the PRB membership of 20,000. The number of rebels captured by the government was roughly 2,000, and 100 were killed.¹⁵⁰ The revolt was not supported by the majority of people of Brunei and therefore, within one week, it had been crushed by the British army. The total casualties on the British side was twenty-eight wounded and seven killed.¹⁵¹ The army had no problem in retaking the towns that had been held by the rebels, especially in Limbang, Seria, Tutong and Temburong areas. As an *Examiner* reporter said:

The rebellion lasted exactly six days. It might have lasted longer but for the timely arrival of the Jesseleton cops. After that, it was all mopping up operations. On the part of the government forces, the casualty list included six men killed and 48 wounded. In Brunei Town fighting, only one cop was killed. Another cop sustained some wounds. The rebellion was a fiasco mainly because it was unpopular and unnecessary; its supposed leader, Azahari, was 700 miles away.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Tun Haji Rahman Yaakub (former Sarawak Cheif Minister) No. 17, Jalan Sepakat Off, Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur, 5th February 1997.

¹⁵⁰ *Borneo Bulletin*, 8th December 1962. According to Major Edgar O' Ballance, Jassin Affandy was supported by 3,000 unarmed men. Furthermore, he said that since the revolt began on 8th December 1962, 3,826 people had been detained, of whom 1,478 had been released. See Major Edgar O'Ballance, 'Revolt in Borneo', pp. 95-96.

¹⁵¹ Husseinmiya, *Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien...*, p. 311.

¹⁵² *Examiner*, 14th December 1962, p. 33.

3.6. The Reasons for the Revolt

The reason for the ordinary supporters joining the rebellion was not primarily because of the political manifesto of the PRB or the Malaysia proposal, though these were certainly primary motivations for the leadership. Some of them supported the revolt because they were misled by the rumours that the Sultan approved their actions.¹⁵³ But there was another reason which encouraged the PRB to take up weapons against authority, whether this was represented by the Sultan, the British or the monarchist-aristocratic group in Brunei's administration. They were dissatisfied with the government policies which could not provide social services and economic opportunities to improve their standard of living, especially in the countryside.¹⁵⁴ This was mentioned by the Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, Gordon Etherington-Smith:

The leaders of the State have shown themselves to be parochial in outlook and irresponsible in discharging their public functions. Although Brunei, for its size, is one of the world's richest States (with an annual income of around \$2000 per head of population) little has been done to improve the material condition of the mass of the people...¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ According to Tun Haji Rahman Yaakub, the Kedayan in Miri, Sibuti and Bekenu claimed that they joined the Revolt because they wanted to secure independence under the Brunei Sultanate. Interview with Tun Haji Rahman Yaakub.

¹⁵⁴ C.O. 1030/1457, Brunei Future Policy 'The Brunei Administration'. (The report mentioned that the advisory services (veterinary, agricultural), health services, public utilities (water, electricity, sanitation etc.) and community development and welfare services, had been sadly ineffectual, and that neglect of the needs of the population had given rise to widespread discontent and was one of the main contributory reasons for rebellion. According to Ibrahim Ariff the common people which he termed "common herd" had an anti-Pengiran (a line of royal blood or of noble descent) feeling who failed to show a completely unbiased approach in their official deals. See Ibrahim Ariff, p. 3.

¹⁵⁵ C.O. 1030/1457, Brunei Future Policy, 'Notes on Brunei by Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia', June, 1963.

So the Revolt, it was claimed, was also related to the economic and social services within the state and lack of consultation of the government. If the government had provided for the needs of the people more effectively, then there might have been less opposition, and the people might not have supported the PRB to establish the USKU. Let us, then briefly consider the development of economic and social services from 1950 up to the period of the rebellion.

The Sultan was convinced that the revolt was not caused by dissatisfaction with government services and facilities.¹⁵⁶ On the contrary, he proudly claimed that there were no needy persons in the State. The government had spent large sums on social services such as health and education. Brunei, the capital city, formerly a cluster of tin-roofed wooden houses on stilts in the Brunei River, had been established ashore. Solid buildings and wide boulevards had been constructed. Jungle tracts had been replaced with nearly 300 miles of paved roads. There were hospitals and clinics throughout the state. Schooling, compulsory for the primary grades, was free. Ports and waterways had been improved, and the city had been provided with a new airport and broadcasting station. Every Brunei citizen over 60 received an old-age pension.¹⁵⁷ Even Malays who did not find a steady job in town could survive by subsistence farming. Therefore, in the Sultan's view, it was unthinkable that people could have rebelled because of social and economic difficulties. As the Sultan said:

There was no reason to suspect a revolt, everyone was living in peace and calm.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ The Straits Times, 15th December, 1962. According to the reporter, the Sultan could not say why the rebellion had taken place, although he denied that its underlying cause was economic discontent. According to Haji Hanafi (PRB leader in Tutong District), after the revolt, a lot of development took place in the countryside, for example the main roads from Kampung Lamunin to Kampung Bukit, Rambai, Merimbun and Benutan were developed after 1962, and primary schools were introduced.

¹⁵⁷ New York Times, 8th February, 1960.

¹⁵⁸ Borneo Bulletin, 29th December, 1962.

To a certain extent, however, it was true that some people joined the rebellion because of economic difficulties and discontent with the government, because it had not improved their standard of living. In 1959, the population of Brunei was 85, 227 persons¹⁵⁹ and during that year, only 874 workers were registered as unemployed. Even though the number unemployed was apparently negligible, this did not mean that the percentage of people unemployed in Brunei was small, because in reality there were many unemployed or under-unemployed in the countryside. They lived by traditional economic activities such as fishing, farming and hunting. They considered themselves neglected by the government, which concentrated development projects mainly in urban areas.

Among those people in the town areas too, there was a feeling of dissatisfaction toward government educational policy which was mainly controlled by British officers. The government set up a large number of primary and secondary schools throughout the state, but there was no effort to accelerate the expansion of schools. Furthermore, the government was also reluctant to provide higher education for the people of Brunei. In 1959, only 39 students were sent overseas, to Malaya and the United Kingdom, for teacher-training. The number of students studying in overseas education institutions in 1959 was 116 (47 in the United Kingdom, 59 in Malaya, four in Egypt and six in North Borneo).¹⁶⁰ No Bruneian had acquired a degree by 1959.

¹⁵⁹ BAR, 1959, p. 6.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 68, 75.

Brunei became known as a “Shellfare State”,¹⁶¹ and by 1955 government pensions were given to the elderly, blind and disabled persons. About 3,223 persons received allowances of \$20 a month from the government; education and health services were free and there was no personal income tax. However, not everyone benefited from these policies. The government’s wealth, so far had been able to touch only lightly many aspects of the state. In the interior valleys, Dusun peasants still toiled with age-old implements in rain-soaked rice paddies. In the forests, Ibans continued to win a bare subsistence by hunting game and growing wild rice and bananas.¹⁶² Even in Bandar Brunei, some people were disadvantaged. A writer from the *New York Times* described Kampung Air as follows:

Kampung Air’s 15,000 water dwellers (about 1/5 of Brunei’s 80,000 people) shared in the social services-universal free medical care, old-age pensions and other benefits...But little of the \$40,000,000 in annual royalties paid into the Sultan’s treasury by the Brunei Shell Oil Company comes to the town in cash. Thousands of poor fishermen and others (live) in the shacks built on pilings in the middle of the Brunei River...The poverty of Kampung Air, a water settlement that has existed for hundreds of years, is emphasized by the contrast of the great golden dome of the (\$3 million) mosque.¹⁶³

There were still no proper roads to link rural areas with the town centre. For example in Kampung Rambai, Bukit, Panchong, Benutan, Ukong, in Tutong districts and also in Temburong and Belait districts, roads were built only after the Revolt in the 1960s, but could not be used until the 1970s.¹⁶⁴ It could be said that the Brunei’s First Development Plan, which was started in 1954, failed to achieve its objectives which were to:

¹⁶¹ *Economist*, London, 1st April, 1961.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 3rd February, 1960.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 24th September, 1961.

¹⁶⁴ The roads were paved in the 1990s. In the 1980s I had written to the Tutong District Officer about the problem. The letter was signed by nearly all the villagers from Kampung Bentuan. But there was no immediate action taken from the Government. Even when I sent the letter to the Tutong District Officer, he refused to discuss personally with me the problem.

1. diversify the economy so that it would not be so heavily dependent upon one industry (oil);
2. reduce and avoid any marked disparities in the prosperity and growth of different areas or regions of the country;
3. maintain a high level of employment;
4. achieve a more equitable distribution of income;
5. develop an adequate and comprehensive national system of education comprising all levels of education from primary to adult which would ultimately eradicate illiteracy and provide training of an adequate supply of teachers at all levels and training in trades, arts, crafts, technical skills and commercial subjects;
6. improve means of communication and transportation as a means of access to and connection with the various parts of the country;
- 7. provide an adequate water supply to people especially in the town area; and
8. encourage and promote participation by the private sector in fulfilling the broad purpose of the National Development Plan.¹⁶⁵

The people knew that the Government was rich. In 1960, it was estimated that the government's annual revenue, mostly from oil, was \$42 million (U.S. dollars) with reserves of \$224 million, mainly in sterling securities.¹⁶⁶ The government also neatly covered its recurrent expenditure with the interest from investments.¹⁶⁷ Brunei's interest from loans and investments alone provided enough money to finance more than half the annual budget.¹⁶⁸

One young and active PRB politician summed up the causes of the discontent in a few words:

¹⁶⁵ Brunei in Pictures, Pejabat Penerangan Kerajaan Brunei, The Light Press, Brunei 1961, p. 15.

¹⁶⁶ New York Times, 8th February, 1960.

¹⁶⁷ Economist, London, 1st April, 1961.

“Our country is rich but our people are poor”.¹⁶⁹ It had been estimated that \$100 million would be spent in the First Development Plan from 1954 to 1958. However, the government only spent a total of about \$76,495,823,¹⁷⁰ on communications (roads), education, electricity, agriculture, the airport, municipal services, water supply and health. The reason why the government did not use the budget was the anxiety of the British Officers,¹⁷¹ especially the British Resident, who looked after the revenue and expenditure of Brunei. It was feared that Brunei’s oil would be exhausted within a few years, and so the government would have had to be careful in spending the revenue. Therefore, on the advice of the British Government, the money was invested in the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries through the Crown Agents.¹⁷² For example, in 1954 the British Resident directed the Manager of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation to deliver a sum of \$6 million to the Crown Agents to be invested in the General Reserve.¹⁷³ Eventually, the Sultan might have realised that the reason for the revolt was also caused by the dissatisfaction with economic and social services.¹⁷⁴ This was mentioned in an interview with him in September 1972 when a reporter

¹⁶⁸ New York Times, 24th September 1961.

¹⁶⁹ Neue Zurcher Zeitung, Zurich, 7th September, 1961.

¹⁷⁰ BAR, 1958, p. 21.

¹⁷¹ According to Mr. E. Bevington, (The Commissioner of Development, incharge of the First Five-Year Development Plan 1954-1958) the British Officials at the Colonial Office and British High Commissioner for Brunei, Sir Anthony Abell opposed the allocation of \$100 million budget for the First Brunei Development Plan. Anthony Abell said that it was a silly thing to spend \$100 million on a Brunei development project. Furthermore, Mr Bevington said that there was no specific plan or programme in the First Brunei Development Plan so as a Project Officer, he had to prepare everything because there were not enough experts such as consultants and engineers. There were also no special projects for Temburong and Tutong, except school buildings. Interview with Mr. E Bevington, United Kingdom, 20th September 1997. See also BAR 1960, 1961 and 1962.

¹⁷² According to Raja Azlan there were no economic and social projects of benefits to the people of Brunei. In Seria, the British and Europeans who worked with the Shell Company enjoyed the modern way of life. See unpublished book by Raja Azlan, Ke Arah Kemerdekaan Brunei: Sumbangan Tun Abdul Razak, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, pp. 44-51.

¹⁷³ British Resident Office (B.R.O) /125/1951, British Resident to Manager, Hongkong and Shanghai Bank Corp., Brunei, 21st August 1954.

¹⁷⁴ Raja Azlan bin Raja Ngah Ali, pp. 44-51.

of the *Borneo Bulletin* asked if the Revolt had taught him anything. He leaned confidently across the table and said in a slow, steady voice: “We must do good. It is every man’s duty to protect his property, family and country. Even in religion it says this is man’s duty”.¹⁷⁵ In other words, the Sultan’s duty is to take care of his people and try his best to spend the state income for the good of his subjects.

3.7. Conclusion

In summary, it was true that the aim of the revolt was to establish the USKU but it is misleading to claim that most ordinary people involved in the revolt supported the political objectives of the PRB. Some did join the revolt because they were anti-Malaysia,¹⁷⁶ dissatisfied with the government, or anti-British.¹⁷⁷ Such feelings were exploited by PRB leaders to build up support from the people of Brunei for what was intended to be a general North Borneo uprising against the British and the Malaysia proposal. The PRB failed to achieve this objective because of the strong cultural heritage of Brunei society. This strong sense of loyalty towards the Sultan was an important factor that led to the defeat of the rebellion. Generally, the Bruneians did not want to take up arms against their Sultan. The support for the PRB through the ballot box was for the people’s representatives in the Legislative Assembly, and not for an uprising against the Sultan. Nearly all the people who were involved in the Revolt were released from prison after they convinced their captors that they had been misled and misused by the PRB. None of them, or the PRB leaders who were

¹⁷⁵ *The Borneo Bulletin*, 13th September, 1986.

¹⁷⁶ Raja Azlan bin Raja Ngah Ali, p. 44. Raja Azlan was an ex-Malaysian police officer who was seconded to Brunei as Superintendent of Berakas Detention Camp in 1964 to 1974. He was involved in the 1973 incident when prisoners escaped from Berakas.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.* p. 44.

directly involved in the rebellion, confessed that their actions were against the Sultan. As an

Examiner reporter said:

The rest of the rebels who had to be quartered in cinema houses-for lack of space in the local jails-confessed to the authorities that they didn't know what the revolt was all about. They were just told to join the uprising, and as good followers, they joined. And they didn't know what they were revolting against.¹⁷⁸

Therefore, in my view and on the basis of the evidence, the Revolt was not provoked, either by the Malayan Government in order to coerce Brunei into joining Malaysia or by the British as a tactic to maintain their position and power by continuing their role as Brunei's protector. The main reason for the PRB revolt was the struggle of certain PRB leaders to gain political power from the Sultan and to remove the traditional system of Sultanate rule. The PRB was convinced that the only way they could change the traditional system of government supported by the British was through military action. Without the revolt, it was the Party leaders' view that there would be no room for people to voice their demands or participate in the state administration.

It can be seen that the Revolt was effectively a conflict within a small 'family'. If the Revolt was not a family matter or problem, Azahari and the PRB would not have been allowed to be active in Brunei politics and even to criticize government policy and administration. If there had been no family or blood relationship between the PRB leaders such as Azahari, Zaini Haji Ahmad and Salleh Masri and the royal family and the Government leaders, the PRB might not have been allowed to operate from the beginning.

¹⁷⁸ *Examiner*, 14th December 1962, p. 33.

To sum up, the conflict was mainly caused by a conflict between different ideas of how to administer the country. The PRB leadership wanted the introduction of full democracy, whereas the Sultan wanted to maintain the tradition of the Malay Islamic Monarchy. The PRB also represented some members of the younger generation who wanted to introduce a new kind of political system. They wanted more voice and freedom in making decisions through the introduction of full democracy, whereas the monarchist-aristocratic group backed by the Sultan wanted to maintain monarchical rule. These different views led to a rift between some of his people and the Sultan.

However, the Malaysia proposal was also one of the main factors around which the disputes crystallized; it was essentially a tool which was used by the PRB to secure the support of the Brunei people and outside powers to achieve their aim in setting up USKU. Some of the ordinary people who were already discontented with the government also made the Malaysia proposal an excuse to join the revolt, in order to avoid being accused of treachery to the Sultan. Furthermore, the PRB leaders spread a rumour that the Sultan supported their struggle. The Sultan might have been in the same position as his subjects in opposing Brunei joining Malaysia, but he certainly disagreed with the PRB action of organizing the revolt to set up the USKU, and considered it as treason. If there had been no Malaysia proposal, the PRB would probably not have received support from its followers. The Malaysia proposal therefore became the trigger or catalyst for Azahari to achieve his own ambition to establish USKU.

CHAPTER FOUR

Brunei's Refusal to Join Malaysia

4.1. Introduction

The final meeting between the Bruneian, Malayan and British Governments which took place in London on September 1963, was an important historical event for Brunei specifically and Malaysia in general. According to the Senior Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, in retrospect, the decision ultimately taken by the Sultan of Brunei in declining to join Malaysia was a wise one.¹ He admitted that, “we (Singapore) were wrong because after two years (1965), Singapore was kicked out of the Federation of Malaysia.”² For the Sultan, the main reason for his refusal to enter Malaysia was his desire to safeguard the interests of the state, the people and his position as Head of State. This has been argued by some historians like Pehin Mohd. Jamil, Yusof Damit, Husseinmiya or even Brunei political leaders in the 1960s such as Pengiran Ali Mohd Daud, Dato Marsal Maun and Pengiran Haji Mohd. Yusof that the issue of oil revenue was one of the major factors in Brunei's refusal to join the Federation. Malaysia, on the other hand, offers a different explanation that the Sultan's concern was his own status within a Federation which operated a rotating Kingship. The refusal of Brunei to join the Federation became a factor in the tense relations between the two countries, especially after the formation of Malaysia, up to 1979, when Tun Abdul Razak died. However, it is the

¹ Interview with Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, Istana Negara, Orchard Road, Singapore, 17th June, 1994.

² In an interview with Berita Harian (Singapore), Senior Minister of Singapore, Mr Lee Kuan Yew said that a major objective of publishing his memoirs in 1998 was to give the picture to the young generation of Singapore as to why and how, initially, Singapore asked for a merger with the Federation of Malaysia and then was asked to leave two years later. This was because the UMNO wanted Malaysia for Malays whereas the PAP insisted on ‘Malaysia for Malaysians’. Mr. Lee was also convinced that the UMNO was responsible for the outbreak of ethnic conflicts in Singapore in 1964. See Berita Harian, Singapore, 16th and 18th September 1998. The Singapore Story: Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, 1998.

main objective of this chapter to study and determine the crucial reasons for Brunei not joining Malaysia.

4.2. Meeting between the Brunei and Malayan Governments

The first meeting to discuss the Malaysia proposal between the Bruneian and Malayan governments took place in Kuala Lumpur on 9th July 1962. Even though Brunei had been represented in the MSCC meetings in December 1961 at Kuching and January 1962 in Kuala Lumpur there had been no direct discussion of Brunei's entry to the Federation.³ In this first bilateral meeting in July 1962, the Sultan sent Pengiran Pemancha Muhammad Alam to confer with the Tunku's Government. The meeting was informal, and can be divided into two stages. Initially, the Bruneian delegation met the Deputy Minister of the Federation,⁴ Tun Abdul Razak and other Malayan officials, and then they discussed the issue with the Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman. The main objective of the discussion was "to try and clarify the form of association Brunei will have with Malaysia on a broader pattern".⁵ The meeting focused on the advantages Brunei would secure after joining Malaysia. The issue of Brunei's security in Southeast Asian international politics was also discussed.⁶

³ Mohd. Noor Abdullah, p. 44. See also C.O. 1030/1012, Letter from D.C. White to Mr. Eastwood, Colonial Office, 11th January 1962.

⁴ The Brunei delegation was led by Pengiran Pemancha Muhammad Alam and other members were Dato Setia Pengiran Haji Mohd. Yusof (Deputy State Secretary), Dato Abdul Aziz (Attorney General), Pengiran Kerma Indera Haji Mohammad (Director of Telecommunications) and Awang Osman Bidin. See Muhammad Abu Bakar, "Politik Brunei Menjelang Penubuhan Malaysia", Malaysia Dari Segi Sejarah, Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, p. 29.

⁵ The Borneo Bulletin, 29th September, 1963.

⁶ Straits Times, 10th July, 1962. It was mentioned in The Straits Times that the talks touched on various matters, including financial arrangements between Brunei and the central government of the proposed Malaysia, and the merger of the Brunei police and the recently-created army into the Malaysian Police and Armed Forces.

On 25th September 1962, a formal meeting was held between the Brunei and Malayan governments. A delegation from Brunei went to Kuala Lumpur to examine the various facets of the Malaysia plan and the position of Brunei therein and to make recommendations to the Sultan.⁷ In the meeting, the Brunei delegation stressed that within the Federation, Brunei's position should be regarded as different from those of the other territories⁸ such as North Borneo and Sarawak or the existing Malayan States. However, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaya, Tun Abdul Razak, said that within the Federation all member states would be treated equally.⁹ This might indicate that some of the Malayan leaders looked unfavourably on an attempt from the Brunei side to maintain its traditional character of monarchical rule.¹⁰ Ghazali Shafie, as Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that if Brunei insisted on retaining its traditional government "then it was better that Brunei should not join Malaysia".¹¹ Furthermore, he argued the "proposed federation of Malaysia would need a strong Central Government, therefore Brunei would, mutatis mutandis have to make certain sacrifices for the common good".¹² On the other hand, the Brunei delegation continued to uphold its stance that Brunei was not prepared to lose the existing constitutional authority and powers of the Sultan.¹³ Thus, if Brunei was not prepared to hold an election¹⁴ in order to

⁷ The Straits Times, 10th July 1963.

⁸ Ghazali Shafie Memorie..., p. 277. Furthermore, Brunei also considered her position to be different from those of North Borneo and Sarawak, in that Brunei was not a British colony.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

¹⁰ According to Ghazalie Shafie, if the Malayan government had met the demand from the Brunei Sultan, everything would have had to be changed, even the Malayan Constitution and the powers of the Malay Sultanates in the Federation. This was the problem faced by the Federation Government. The Sultan of Brunei had already indicated that he would not agree with any policy which would reduce his power, such as the introduction of Constitutional Monarchy as practised in Malaya. Interview with Ghazali Shafie, Alam dan Tamaddun Melayu Antarabangsa (ATMA), University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, 8th June, 1994.

¹¹ Ghazali Shafie Memorie..., p. 278

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 279.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

create a representative form of government, it would be difficult for the Malayan Government to accept any demands from the Brunei side. Generally, the Malayan Government found it hard to accept Brunei's proposal to maintain its traditional system of government, but Tun Razak gave an assurance that the Malayan government was prepared for further talks with the Brunei delegation.

Subsequent to the meeting, on 5th December 1962, the Sultan announced to the Brunei Legislative Council meeting that he accepted in principle the Malaysia plan, provided agreement was reached on "certain important conditions affecting matters of benefit and advantage to the people and the state of Brunei".¹⁵ By this proclamation, the Sultan gave a mandate to the Brunei State Council to discuss the proposal with the Malayan and British Governments. The Legislative Council then voted to accept by twenty-two to four, with one abstention, a motion endorsing the Sultan's message, and supporting, in principle, Brunei's participation in a Malaysian Federation.¹⁶ The members of the Council also advised the Sultan that the acceptance of Brunei's entry should be determined by the "terms which bring benefits to the state of Brunei and do not diminish the status of Brunei as a constitutional State".¹⁷

After the Brunei rebellion in December 1962, meetings between the two governments continued. In January 1963, the Sultan announced his intention to send a delegation to Kuala Lumpur to discuss further the conditions for Brunei's entry into Malaysia.¹⁸ The Malayan

¹⁵ The Times, London, 16th March, 1962.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ The Borneo Bulletin, 21st July, 1962.

¹⁸ Members of the delegation left for Kuala Lumpur in early January and also 3rd February 1963. The delegation was led by Pengiran Dato Setia Haji Mohd. Ali (Deputy Chief Minister), Idris Talog Davies (Attorney General),

Government took this opportunity to implore the Sultan to study carefully the terms set by Brunei if it wanted to join the new Federation of Malaysia. Before leaving on 15th January 1963, the Sultan tried to convince his subjects that the Malaysia proposal was important for the future of Brunei, but yet again that if Malaysia did not hold out the prospect of benefit to the state and the people of Brunei, then he would decline to join. As the Sultan said:

It concerns the future destiny of my people and citizens all over Brunei. The purpose of this visit is to negotiate the terms for our beloved Brunei's entry into Malaysia. The terms regarding Brunei's entry into Malaysia is a very important issue for it is related to the future destiny, peace and well-being of all my people and citizens. I hope my people realize its importance.¹⁹

The meeting between the two governments took place from 5th February to 3rd March 1963. The Malayan delegation was led by Tun Razak, who was assisted by Tan Siew Sin, the Minister of Finance.²⁰ The agenda of the meeting was to discuss various issues such as finance (Brunei's revenue and taxation), the Sultan's position in the Council of Rulers, the special rights and privileges of the Brunei people and the representation of Brunei in the Federal Parliament.

The meeting was divided into two sessions. The first session comprised formal lobbying to discuss the basic draft relating to an agreement and also to prepare an agenda for the formal

Pengiran Dato Setia Haji Mohd. Yusof (Deputy State Secretary), Pengiran Dato Setia Haji Mohammad (Director of Telecommunications), Haji Awang Mohd. Jamil (Chairman of Education Committee), Dato Paduka Neil Lawson Q.C. (Constitutional Advisor to the Sultan). See also Pelita Brunei, 6th February 1963 and Bertia Harian, 2nd January 1963.

¹⁹ Titah 1959-1967:..., pp. 169-170.

²⁰ Ranjit Singh, 'Brunei and Malaysia Negotiations', Journal of International Relations, Jabatan Sejarah, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1975/1976. According to some sources, Tan Siew Sin played an important role in making Brunei refuse to join Malaysia. This was because in the meeting he proposed that after ten years the Federal government should control Brunei's oil revenue. Tunku Abdul Rahman regretted this suggestion. Interview with Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, ATMA, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, 8th June 1994.

meeting. The formal meeting started on 8th February, when two committees were set up. Brunei's delegation met the Tunku and several Cabinet Ministers of the Federation of Malaya at Rumah Awang Alak Betatar (the Sultan's Palace in Kuala Lumpur). The Tunku personally stressed that there would be no change in the Malayan stance regarding Brunei's position in the Federation: i.e. his government would treat Brunei as an "equal partner"²¹ with other states in the Federation of Malaysia.

Two Working Committees were set up to deal with constitutional and financial matters separately. One was known as the Constitutional and General Matters Working Committee, and the other as the Finance Working Committee. The first Committee met three times and the second Committee five times. Both sides were satisfied with the results of the meeting, as Pengiran Haji Mohd. Yusof said, the prospect of Brunei joining Malaysia was much better than before. Furthermore, he said that the meeting was "the first and the last" because the Sultan had already given his consent in principle for Brunei to join Malaysia. High-ranking Bruneian officials believed it was only a 'matter of time' before Brunei joined Malaysia but they could not predict the date when this would happen. The Tunku expected that the signing of the agreement would take place after the return of Tun Razak from the London meeting. Thus, both sides seemed confident that Brunei genuinely wanted to join Malaysia. Even the Sultan indicated that Brunei would join Malaysia soon, as he said:

²¹ According to Ghazali Shafie, it would be impossible for a state like Brunei to retain its traditional character i.e. "if it was to practise" democracy like other states in the Federation of Malaysia. Interview with Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, ATMA, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, 8th June 1994.

I am very satisfied with the outcome of the talks. They were concluded in an atmosphere of friendliness and understanding. We will definitely join Malaysia by 31st August this year.²²

With regard to the special position of the Brunei Sultan and his subjects,²³ the Malayan Government guaranteed that a provision would be written into the Constitution of the new Federation,²⁴ so that the Brunei Government could spend its revenues on education and welfare for the people of the state, and the Sultan's subjects would be treated in the same way as Malaysian citizens. As regards Parliamentary representation, Brunei would be given 10 seats in the Federal Parliament.²⁵ This number was acceptable to the Brunei Government with regard to the proportional principle, in that the representatives from Brunei were more than enough to voice the interests of a population of fewer than one hundred thousand.

But in reality, and despite the apparently encouraging public statements, the results of the meetings did not indicate a bright prospect for Brunei entering Malaysia. Two issues, the financial one and that of the Sultan's position, remained unresolved. They were, in fact, major issues which proved intractable. The disagreement over Brunei's financial contribution to the Federal Government mainly focused on the amount of the contribution, what it should be called, and the minimum period over which the financial arrangements should apply to the Central Government.²⁶ The dispute was not only between the Sultan and the Tunku but also

²² The Borneo Bulletin, 30th March 1963.

²³ According to provision in the Brunei Constitution 1959.

²⁴ The North Borneo and Sabah Times, 8th February, 1963.

²⁵ The Malayan Times, 12th March 1963.

²⁶ Ghazali Shafie Memoir..., p. 285.

between the Sultan and his constitutional advisor.²⁷ According to Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil (Chairman of the Education Committee), Dato Paduka Neil Lawson (Constitutional Advisor to the Sultan) and even Pengiran Ali Mohd. Daud (Deputy Chief Minister)²⁸ tried to persuade the Sultan to accept Malaya's terms, but the Sultan declined to accept their suggestion.²⁹ Regarding the financial issue, Brunei wanted to control her own revenues from oil, it being agreed by the Malayan Government that there should be special protection for the oil wealth and the reserves of Brunei.³⁰ Dato Lawson emphasised that Brunei did not want other people to control her own revenue.

At the same time, the Sultan discussed the financial issue with the Tunku personally. On the question of Brunei's contribution, the Sultan emphasised that it was up to Brunei to decide the amount and the terms of the contribution. The Sultan added that he agreed to give \$40 million of Brunei's annual revenue (which totalled about \$90 million), but the contribution should be known as an 'annual voluntary donation'. For defence, the Sultan would make an additional outright contribution of \$5 million only in the first year of Malaysia's formation.³¹ However, the Malayan Government did not accept Brunei's offer of \$40 million per annum and argued that \$5 million for the first year was not enough to cover the cost of handling Brunei's foreign

²⁷ Neil Lawson always argued with the Sultan on the issue of the terms and amount of the contribution and the question of imposing taxes on mineral resources in Brunei (other than oil). See F.O. 371/169703, Brunei's Reasons For Not Entering Into Federation of Malaysia, 3rd July 1963.

²⁸ According to Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil, the Sultan was annoyed by Pengiran Ali's advice. Consequently, the Sultan's decision not to join Malaysia disappointed some Brunei political leaders. Although as MacKintosh said "the decision had signs of anxiety, on the part of those few who have hitherto openly advocated Malaysia (including Pengiran Ali) that they may suffer as a result". See D.O. 169/261, 'Greater Malaysia - Brunei problems', Talks with Sultan of Brunei, 3rd July 1963.

²⁹ Interview with Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Haji Awang Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

³⁰ F.O. 371/169703 Brunei's reasons for not entering into the Federation of Malaysia, 3rd July, 1963.

³¹ Ibid. See also Ghazali Shafie Memorie.., p. 288.

affairs, defence and internal security expenditure.³² Tan Siew Sin, Malayan's Minister of Finance, produced figures which showed that the Federation Government would be subsidising Brunei to the extent of \$11 million a year. Federal expenditure on services would be \$29 million, on additional defence \$20 million and on internal security \$10 million, a total of \$59 million, against which should be set Brunei's \$40 million annual contribution to the Federation.³³ The Sultan for his part, argued that it would be impossible to estimate exactly the amount of expenditure incurred for the defence and internal security of Brunei. As Ghazali said:

The Sultan said that the Tunku's suggestions were quite unrealistic compared to what was claimed to have been already agreed to in the schedule to the proposed Malaysia Agreement. The Sultan was generous enough to offer a handout of \$40 million to meet the immediate problems that the creation of Malaysia might entail.³⁴

Furthermore, the Tunku argued that if oil revenue was excluded, the taxable capacity of Brunei would be very small, and it was fair for the Central Government to share in any additional revenue that accrued in Brunei, because every year the revenue from oil would increase. So the Malayan Government proposed that after the end of the 10-year period, the full Federal tax arrangement should apply to Brunei.³⁵

³² See Borneo Bulletin, 7th September 1963. The British Official at the Colonial Office argued that if Brunei did not join Malaysia, the Malayan Government would get nothing. Therefore, it would be better if the Malayan Government accepted the terms offered by Brunei, in order to get something. Furthermore, the Federal Government could decide for themselves how much they could spend on Brunei. The inclusion of Brunei would not materially affect Federal defence expenditure. See F.O. 371/169703 Brunei's Reasons..., 3rd July 1963.

³³ D.O. 169/261, 'Greater Malaysia - Brunei Problems', Talks with the Sultan of Brunei, 4th July 1963.

³⁴ Ghazali Shafie Memorie..., p. 290.

³⁵ D.O. 169/261, 'Greater Malaysia - Brunei Problems', Talks..., 4th July, 1963. See Ghazali Shafie..., p. 290.

On the question of the term by which the financial contribution would be known the Federal Government also argued that Brunei's contribution should be referred to as a "gift" (*hadiah*) and not a 'voluntary donation' (*sumbangan sukerela*). The Sultan rejected this suggestion on the ground that if "voluntary donation" was replaced by "annual gift", then it would be a form of "tribute" which implied that Brunei was a vassal of the Federation.³⁶ Then, the Tunku suggested another term, which he thought would be appropriate and acceptable to the Sultan, namely, an "annual contribution".³⁷ Unfortunately, no agreement was reached regarding the contribution issue. A British Official from the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office in London said:

...the Sultan is reluctant to describe the \$40 million annual payment as an "annual contribution". He wishes the phraseology to reflect the voluntary nature of the payment. Lawson has advised him that the words "annual contribution" should be in English, and that any verbal refinements should be for the Malay text. The Sultan told Lawson that this will not be a sticking point if all other matters are settled, but the High Commissioner is not so sure...³⁸

The Tunku's attorney, Dato Sheridan, made some alteration to the wording and showed it to Dato Paduka Neil Lawson for his views. Dato Lawson replied that he would make the wording better than that, but wondered what would be the suitable Malay words for the alterations if the agreement was drawn up in the Malay language.³⁹ Upon hearing this, Dato Sheridan immediately withdrew his suggestions, and everybody was silent except the Malayan Minister of Home Affairs, Dato Dr. Ismail, who nodded his head in agreement.⁴⁰ The Tunku

³⁶ Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

³⁷ *Ghazali Shafie...*, p. 288.

³⁸ F.O. 371/169703 'Brunei's Reason...', 3rd July 1963.

³⁹ Interview with Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

then informed the Sultan that he would consult his cabinet before further discussion regarding Brunei's financial contribution.

Aside from the financial issues, the main problem in the talks apparently arose when the Brunei delegation demanded that the Sultan should be a member of the Conference of Rulers on the same footing as the Rulers of the other Malay States; the Sultan's position in the list should be based on the date of his accession to the throne (1950), not on the date that Brunei joined Malaysia.⁴¹ The Brunei delegation argued that, since the Federation of Malaysia would be a new nation and not a continuing Federation, "all rulers including the Brunei Sultan should take their places in the order of precedence according to the date when they ascended the thrones of their respective States".⁴² However, in March 1963, the Conference of Rulers had already decided that the precedence and the position of the Sultan of Brunei should relate to the date of Brunei's accession to Malaysia, so his name would be the last in the election list⁴³ to be appointed as a Yang Di-Pertuan Agong⁴⁴ of the new Federation of Malaysia. Like the financial issue, this too seemed to be one without any resolution.

Overall, the Brunei Government wanted the Malayan Government to guarantee that the special position of the Brunei Sultan and his subjects would be safeguarded "by provisions to be written in the constitution of the new federation",⁴⁵ agreed by the Malayan Government.

⁴¹ Ghazali Shafie..., p. 282.

⁴² Ibid., p. 287.

⁴³ Ghazali Shafie..., p. 287.

⁴⁴ The Yang Di-Pertuan Agong is the federal head of state, usually known in English as the King. His election and tenure of office are governed by article 32 of the Malaysian Constitution, in clause 32 on the election, removal and duties of the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong. See Sheridan, L. A., The Federation of Malaya Constitution, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1961.

⁴⁵ The North Borneo and Sabah Times, 8th February, 1963.

This would mean, inter alia, that the Brunei Government should continue to retain its oil reserves and its substantial accumulation of investments. Dato Lawson said that “there should be special protection for the oil wealth and the revenues of Brunei”,⁴⁶ and that she should be “entitled to spend what she earns”.⁴⁷ The people would also continue to enjoy certain social benefits and free education which were absent in other states.⁴⁸ That is why, in all meetings, the Tunku tried to compromise with Brunei’s demands in order to persuade the Sultan to come to an agreement with the Malayan terms. As he said:

I do not like to prejudice that issue. But I would say this; Malaya will show the same generosity to Brunei as it has shown to Sarawak and North Borneo.⁴⁹

Although there was still clearly disagreement on the financial and precedence issues, both governments were convinced that the outcome of the meeting was positive. The Sultan said that he still agreed in principle to join Malaysia, provided the conditions offered by the Malayan government would benefit the people and State of Brunei.⁵⁰ The *Borneo Bulletin* reported that “the Malayan Government had given assurances of the special position of Brunei people and on other matters relating on the Sultan’s position and the Brunei constitution”.⁵¹ Brunei’s Deputy Chief Minister, Pengiran Dato Setia Haji Ali, also said that the meeting had come to an agreement on the conditions for Brunei joining the Federation. Speaking to the people of Tutong and Belait district on the result of the meeting, he said:

⁴⁶ Malayan Times, 28th February, 1963.

⁴⁷ The Borneo Bulletin, 2nd March 1963.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ The North Borneo and Sabah Times, 12th February 1963.

⁵⁰ Titah 1959-1967, Kebawah DYMM..., pp. 169-170.

⁵¹ The Borneo Bulletin, 9th February, 1963.

Within the Federation of Malaysia, you should not be worried especially about the income tax and other privileges that you are receiving at the moment; old age pensions and benefits for disabled, blind and other needy people will still be maintained. Joining Malaysia shouldn't mean that we sell our beloved state to Malaya or make Brunei a colony of Malaya.⁵²

The other main question which could not be resolved concerned the arrangements after a ten-year period with regard to the financial agreements which would apply. This issue was deferred for discussion until the next meeting. As regards finance, the Brunei Government had already indicated that within the Federation, "Brunei wants to keep its oil revenues in perpetuity",⁵³ although the Malayan Government had tried to press for direct control over the revenues after ten years had elapsed. Therefore, Brunei considered the financial issue to be an important one which had to be resolved by both parties. From the point of view of the Sultan, if the conditions of entry in respect of the prosperity and welfare of the people of Brunei were not acceptable, the participation of Brunei in Malaysia would be a retrograde step.⁵⁴

4.3. The Ultimatum

On 8th June 1963 Dato Marsal bin Maun, Chief Minister, led the Brunei delegation to continue the negotiations with the Tunku and his cabinet.⁵⁵ However, the negotiations reached an impasse. The Brunei delegation said that they needed to consult the Sultan on the entitlement to any revenue arising from new sources, including new oil discoveries made

⁵² Pelita Brunei, 15th May, 1963.

⁵³ Ranjit Singh, 'Brunei and the Malaysia Negotiations', p. 26.

⁵⁴ Ghazali Shafie..., p. 278.

⁵⁵ Members of the delegation were Pengiran Dato Setia Haji Mohd. Ali (Deputy Chief Minister), Pengiran Dato Setia Haji Mohd. Yusof (Deputy Secretary of State), Dato Paduka Neil Lawson QC (Constitutional Advisor to the Sultan), Idris Talog Davies (Attorney General), John Lee (State Financial Officer), Haji Mohd. Jamil Umar (Chairman of Education Committee), and Awang Isa bin Pehin Datu Perdana Menteri Haji Ibrahim (Interpreter).

during the ten-year period.⁵⁶ Dato Lawson sent a telegram requesting the Sultan to come immediately to Kuala Lumpur. On 15th June, the Sultan and his entourage flew to Kuala Lumpur to join the Brunei delegation in the final negotiations regarding Brunei's entry into Malaysia.⁵⁷ On 17th June 1963, a meeting took place between the Tunku and the Sultan in the Cabinet room in the Parliament Building. At this juncture, there were four important issues still to be resolved that did not include the issue of precedence.

1. The question of new oil discoveries during the ten-year period of Brunei joining the Federation;
2. the term, 'annual voluntary donation';
3. the question of mines and minerals; and
4. the question of the arrangements after the first ten years of Brunei's membership of the Federation.⁵⁸

During this meeting, the Sultan was asked to replace the word "annual voluntary donation" by the word "annual voluntary gift". Secondly, it was suggested that the annual payment of 40 million ringgit imposed on Brunei would be reviewed again after ten years. Both the suggestions were rejected by the Sultan. As regards the financial issue, Brunei agreed that there would be a review ten years after Brunei joined Malaysia, but it would not include the reserves.⁵⁹ In addition, Brunei was not prepared to accept terms that imposed an obligation to

⁵⁶ Ghazali Shafie..., p. 393.

⁵⁷ Pelita Brunei, 19th June 1963.

⁵⁸ Ghazali Shafie..., p. 294.

⁵⁹ Brunei invested its money overseas, mostly in the United Kingdom. The investments were handled by a Crown Agent until 1979, when the Brunei Investment Agency (BIA) was established.

pay a share of revenues from future oil discoveries.⁶⁰ No agreement was reached and the negotiations ended in a deadlock. Dato Lawson, the Sultan's Constitutional Advisor, said:

...last February (1963) the Sultan had received an assurance from the federation that the special interests of Brunei would be protected. Subsequently, negotiations in Kuala Lumpur had resulted in drafts of Agreement. This however, was followed by a letter from the Tunku to His Highness the Sultan, and further exchanges, which showed that there were in fact wide differences between Malaya and Brunei. Negotiations were resumed in Kuala Lumpur in June, but the results have been unsatisfactory.⁶¹

Thus, it was already clear there was still disagreement between the two governments about the issues of future oil discoveries in Brunei, taxation of mines and minerals and the appropriate name for and amount of the annual contribution. The Tunku then gave a grace period of 48 hours to the Brunei Government, to consider whether they wanted to join the Federation of Malaysia. He then left Kuala Lumpur for Kedah. When the Sultan was told about this, he immediately ordered the Brunei delegation to return home without waiting for the 48 hour deadline. On 19th June the Sultan and his entourage flew home to Brunei in a British Royal Air Force plane. The Sultan returned to Brunei immediately after the Tunku made an embarrassing remark in reply to the Sultan's suggestion that Brunei would enter Malaysia on the basis of a loose federation. The Tunku replied by saying that it was better for Brunei not to join Malaysia.⁶² The Sultan felt bitter and left immediately,⁶³ and said that in future he would

⁶⁰ For Brunei proposals to the Malayan government, please refer to F.O. 371/169703 Brunei's Reasons for not Entering.... See also Ghazali Shafie..., p. 298.

⁶¹ D.O. 169/261 'Greater Malaysia - Brunei Problem', Talks with the Sultan of Brunei, 3rd July, 1963.

⁶² Pehin Orang Kaya Digadong Haji Abd. Rahman who also attended the meeting in Kuala Lumpur said that the Sultan was very angry with the Tunku's statement; that if Brunei wanted to join on the basis of a loose Federation (which Pehin termed co-federation) than it would be better for Brunei not to join.

⁶³ The story was told by Pehin Orang Kaya Haji Abd. Rahman in the Committee of the Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Memorial Museum, Brunei 1996.

not come to Kuala Lumpur just to discuss Brunei's conditions for joining Malaysia.⁶⁴ This gave every indication that the Sultan had already made up his mind not to join Malaysia.

At Kuala Lumpur International Airport, the Sultan was sought out by Malayan Cabinet members led by Tun Abdul Razak. Having consulted his cabinet about the unresolved matters, Tun Razak asked the Sultan's permission to present a letter to the Brunei delegation. The Sultan, however, refused to accept it. Apparently, the letter was then sent to Brunei by post on 21st June 1963. It contained an "ultimatum"⁶⁵ from the Federation Government which can be summarised as follows:

- a) The Brunei Government was to pay annual tax to the Malayan Government on any new sources of revenue from oilfields discovered after the first five years of the initial period of membership of Malaysia;
- b) the Malayan Government agreed to review Brunei's annual contribution, provided that Brunei accepted (a) above;
- c) In the event of Brunei's default in paying the annual contribution of \$40 million at any time during the first ten years, Articles 109 and 110 of the Constitution would apply (i.e. full Federal powers over taxation) but Brunei could opt to retain a special concession on oil "provided that such retention was agreed by the Federal Government";
- d) the Malayan Government proposed that the special financial arrangements would be reviewed after 10 years. In default of agreement, then the existing arrangements would be continued. This proposal was made subject to acceptance of the proposal made in (a) above

⁶⁴ Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

⁶⁵ F.O. 371/169703, Brunei's reasons for not entering into Federation of Malaysia, 'Brunei: Present State of Negotiations', Far Eastern Department, 3rd July, 1963.

regarding new sources of revenue including oil fields which may arise at any time after the first five years of the initial ten-year period had lapsed;

e) the Malayan Government was not prepared to agree that mines and minerals other than oil in Brunei should be exempted from Federal taxation but would give an undertaking “that any taxing powers vested in Federal Government in respect of mines and minerals and of profits to be derived from working thereof will not be used to prevent proper exploitation of Brunei’s resources in this sector of the economy”; and

f) the Malayan Government proposed that the sum of \$40 million should be described in English as an “annual contribution” and that in the Malay version this should be translated precisely.⁶⁶

According to the Tunku, the basic principles within the Federation of Malaysia allowed for no special exception; all member states had equal duties, rights and responsibilities to the Central Government as units of the Federation. If there was inequality of treatment among the member states, the proposed Malaysia would become a very strange Federation.⁶⁷ In practice, however, the Central Government did not deal equally with its member states, especially Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore.

On the matter of precedence, Ghazali Shafie said that the Sultan agreed to discuss his position later and suggested that the meeting should proceed with other important issues for Brunei. Even in Tun Abdul Razak’s ultimatum which was sent to Brunei on 21st June 1963, this issue

⁶⁶ F.O. 371/169703, Letter from Tun Abdul Razak to the Sultan of Brunei 21st June 1963.

⁶⁷ Ghazali Shafie..., p. 297.

was not mentioned. This may suggest that it had already been decided by the Conference of Rulers that the position of the Brunei Sultan would be last on the list.

On 21 June, a Malayan newspaper reported that the Brunei delegation was disappointed with the latest development and regarded the Tunku's press statement on the latest offer as closing all doors for further negotiations.⁶⁸ This report was true, because when the Sultan suggested some kind of loose Federation to the Tunku, the latter had already indicated that the door was closed for Brunei to join Malaysia. This might be the reason why the Sultan was reluctant to accept the letter given to him by Tun Abdul Razak at the airport, because the Sultan considered that the meeting between the two governments had already ended. Furthermore, the Sultan had also ordered the members of the Brunei delegation not to accept Tun Abdul Razak's letter.

The Sultan replied to the letter on 29th June 1963, saying that he could not accept the proposals of the Malayan Government, even as a basis for further discussion.⁶⁹ The Sultan might have accepted the proposals, if they had conformed with the basic principles of Brunei's terms and accorded with the assurances which had been given to him regarding the special position of Brunei. This was indicated in his reply to Tun Abdul Razak, as he said:

My friend, thank you for your letter dated 21st June which I received in Brunei on 23rd June, 1963. The proposals contained in your above-quoted letter are so incompatible with the basic principles set out in my official statement issued

⁶⁸ Utusan Melayu, 22nd June 1963.

⁶⁹ Ghazali Shafie ..., p. 299.

on the morning of 21st June, 1963 that I regret to say that I find them unacceptable even as a basis for further negotiations.⁷⁰

The 48-hour deadline given by the Tunku to the Sultan of Brunei became a front-page leader in the Malayan newspaper. It stated that whether or not the final offer was accepted by Brunei, the government of the Federation of Malaya would still stick to the decision to end all negotiations. It said that the final offer had been deliberated over for three hours and decided by the Malayan Cabinet in the Operations Room of the Ministry of Rural Development, and was submitted to the Sultan of Brunei on the very next day.⁷¹ Nadzir Nong, a spokesman for the leader of the People's Party of Malaya,⁷² said that the 48-hour deadline given by the Tunku to the Sultan of Brunei to join Malaysia was an ultimatum unacceptable to Brunei as it ignored the wishes of its people.⁷³ Meanwhile, Pengiran Dato Setia Haji Mohd. Yusof made the following comments on the ultimatum:

All the while Brunei had shown great interest in joining Malaysia. Not only were we willing to shuttle to and from Kuala Lumpur, but even our Sultan also readily made himself available to come to Kuala Lumpur so that negotiation could be concluded smoothly. However, if Malaya does not wish to accept us, what can we do? ... Brunei had never shown itself as desiring to withdraw from the proposal to merge with the Federation of Malaysia.⁷⁴

Evidently, neither side wanted to lose. The Malayan Government felt that the Brunei side should agree with its proposals if they were genuinely interested in joining Malaysia. On the

⁷⁰ F.O. 371/169703, Telegram from A.M. Mackintosh, Brunei to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, London, 30th June, 1963.

⁷¹ Utusan Melayu, 22nd June 1963.

⁷² The Parti Rakyat Malaya (PRM) had had close relations with the PRB since 1957. The party supported the PRB's objective of establishing a Federation of Borneo Territories (Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei).

⁷³ Utusan Melayu, 22nd June 1963.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 20th June 1963.

other hand, the Brunei side thought they had the right to set terms which were acceptable to the Sultan and the government. Informally, the Sultan's decision on the Malayan ultimatum - that Brunei would not join the Federation of Malaysia - was final.

4.4. The British Position towards Brunei in 1963

The British considered that joining Malaysia was the best way forward for Brunei, and, therefore, HMG tried to encourage and even pressure Brunei saying it would be dangerous for Brunei to stay alone and that it would be a target for Indonesian intrigue and subversion.⁷⁵ This policy was parallel with British interests in Southeast Asia.⁷⁶ Poulgrain for example, argues that in the postwar process of decolonisation the British employed two guiding principles: one, that the new political leaders who assumed the reins of power when the Colonial Office departed should be known to be amenable to continued British investment;⁷⁷ and the other, that the political environment envisaged by the British as best suited to such regional developments did not include Sukarno as leader of neighbouring Indonesia.⁷⁸ In

⁷⁵ D.O. 169/262, Malaysia: the Position of Brunei - the London Talks June/July 1963, 'Note by the Colonial Office for Discussion with the Secretary of State and the High Commissioner for Brunei', 24th July 1963.

⁷⁶ According to Poulgrain, after the Second World War, Britain was not prepared to lose its source of dollars not only in Brunei but also in Malaysia, Singapore and North Kalimantan (Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei). Malaysia was an important producer of tin, rubber and palm oil. North Kalimantan, in the case of Brunei, was a major source of oil while Singapore, apart from its importance as a transit port for Southeast Asian imports and exports, was also a centre of regional control and power exerted through intelligence operations or by supplying arms and troops. Furthermore, he said that after the war, Britain faced a financial problem, in that she could not pay her war debt to the USA. Therefore, to resolve the problem, Britain needed to continue her presence in Brunei and other areas in order to gain the flow of dollars that she could extract from Malaya, Singapore and North Kalimantan (Brunei). (See Poulgrain, G., "forward", p. viii).

⁷⁷ Undoubtedly, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III preferred the continuity of the British presence in Brunei, in order to ensure the safety and security of his rule from internal and external threats such as from Indonesia and from communists.

⁷⁸ The British considered that Sukarno's influence in the 'North Kalimantan States' should be eliminated. The anti-Indonesia policy had been adopted by the British since the end of World War II, when British troops had attempted to reclaim the Indies on behalf of the Dutch. Sukarno's dream of Indonesia Raya threatened British interests in Southeast Asia. And to make sure that Sukarno did not dominate these areas, the British and the American CIA cooperated in making a plan to destroy Sukarno. According to a CIA memorandum dated June 1962, the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and the American President John Kennedy "agreed to

addition, the British could no longer guarantee to protect Brunei against internal threats because her foreign policy depended on the political party in power at Westminster at the time.⁷⁹ As the Secretary of State said:

Moreover, HMG could not guarantee on future occasions, as had happened in December 1962, to resist with British troops the demands of the people of Brunei for a larger measure of democracy. In addition, once Britain's defence system in SEA had been largely merged with that of Malaysia, it would be more difficult than in the past for Britain to discharge her responsibilities for the protection of the State and government of Brunei.⁸⁰

Furthermore, the concept of self-determination was a well-established norm in international law. In December 1960, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution known as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People.⁸¹ As a consequence, after the formation of Malaysia, the British warned the Sultan that they could no longer stay in Brunei.⁸² In fact, this policy was just a threat to make the Sultan change his mind about joining Malaysia. It was suggested by the Colonial Office that, if the Sultan still refused to join Malaysia in 1965, then the British Government would have to take immediate measures to transfer all powers to the people of Brunei.⁸³ However, there appeared to be no

liquidate President Sukarno, depending on the situation and the available opportunities". See Poulgrain, G., The Genesis of Konfrontasi, "foreword" by Pramodya Ananta Toer, p. xi and 6.

⁷⁹ The British Government warned the Sultan that he should not count on British aid in the event of further internal trouble. The British Parliament would not approve the use of British troops to protect an autocratic and inefficient regime against a popular movement. See D.O. 169/262, 'Note by the Colonial Office...', *Ibid.*, 24th July 1963.

⁸⁰ D.O. 169/261 Greater Malaysia-Brunei problems, 'Note of Meeting between the Secretary of State and the Sultan of Brunei', 8th July 1963.

⁸¹ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), 14th December 1960.

⁸² Although the British did not guarantee to protect Brunei from external threats, the Sultan was convinced that the British would not leave Brunei alone, if the Sultan still remained outside Malaysia. Indeed, a Gurkha Regiment remains in Brunei until the present day.

⁸³ If the Sultan refused to join Malaysia, the British Government would pressure the Sultan to prepare a programme of political advance in his state as soon as possible. This was just a threat which was used by the British Government to make Brunei join Malaysia no later than 1965. See D.O. 169/262, 'Note of Discussion...',

intention on the British side of either preventing or forcing the Sultan to join Malaysia.⁸⁴ The British position was that it was ultimately in the hands of the Sultan and the government of Brunei to decide. Furthermore, the then Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, retrospectively acknowledged the wisdom of the Sultan's decision not to join Malaysia, as he said:

The Sultan of Brunei at the London meeting, was not forced in making his decision towards Malaysia. The decision came from the Sultan himself. It is a wise decision because he was right but we were wrong.⁸⁵

Nevertheless, HMG, through the Secretary for Colonies, advised and encouraged the Sultan to join Malaysia,⁸⁶ because the British thought that the best future for Brunei lay there.⁸⁷ Even Prime Minister Macmillan had advised the Sultan to reconsider his decision when they met in London in July 1963. However, the Sultan stuck to his decision.⁸⁸ Other sources have suggested that third parties were involved in trying to influence the Sultan's decision, namely the Brunei Shell Company, Dato Lawson and Lord Selkirk, the British High Commissioner. B.A. Hamzah, for example has argued that the Brunei government's decision not to join Malaysia was influenced by a telegram sent by Brunei Shell during the meeting with the Malayan Government in Kuala Lumpur. Hamzah argues that this telegram was sent

24th July 1963, C.O.1030/1457, Telegram between Mackintosh and the Commonwealth Relations Office or Secretary of State, 28th October, 1963, 2nd November 1963, 7th November 1963.

⁸⁴ See the statement by Secretary for Colonies, Mr Lennox-Boyd in his meeting with the Sultan in September 1957 which said that for nearly 50 years, HMG had never forced Brunei (the Sultan) to accept any advice given by the British Officers. (According to the Protectorate Agreement 1905/06). See C.O. 1030/460 Minutes of meeting between the Sultan and the Secretary for Colonies, London, 30th September 1957.

⁸⁵ Interview with Lee Kuan Yew, Istana Negara, Singapore, 17th June 1994.

⁸⁶ Titah 1959-1967 DYMM..., p.106.

⁸⁷ F.O.371/169709, Brunei's reasons for not entering into the Federation of Malaysia, 'Brunei: Tactics', 11th July 1963.

⁸⁸ Sabihah Osman and Muhammad Hadi, Sejarah Brunei Menjelang Kemerdekaan, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur, 1995, pp. 182-183.

deliberately by the company, whose directors preferred that Brunei should stay out of Malaysia, in order to protect their oil interests in Brunei:

Evidently, during the course of negotiations, Brunei Shell sent a telegram to the Sultan indicating a large commercial discovery, presently known as the Southwest Ampa field. This piece of information raised new hopes for additional money and undoubtedly strengthened the Sultan's bargaining position. As a result, the Sultan became less reconcilable to the demand that the federal government control and manage new discoveries.⁸⁹

Brunei Shell further warned the Sultan in the telegram that if Brunei joined Malaysia, the control and management of Brunei's oil resources would be taken over by the Federation. So Hamzah concluded that "the Sultan eventually has succumbed to Brunei Shell pressures".⁹⁰ However, this allegation contradicts HMG's policy of encouraging Brunei to achieve independence within Malaysia and the UN declaration of self-determination.

In this regard, during his stay in Kuala Lumpur in June 1963, the Sultan was visited by Lord Selkirk, the British High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, who advised the Sultan to bring Brunei into the new Federation. Furthermore, it has been suggested that Lord Selkirk stressed that Her Majesty the Queen had the authority to bring Brunei into Malaysia.⁹¹ This statement might have been the personal opinion of Lord Selkirk as, in practice, HMG had always maintained that the decision depended on the wishes of the Brunei people.⁹² It also

⁸⁹ Hamzah, p. 225.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 226.

⁹¹ Interview with Pehin Haji Awang Jamil Al-Sufri.

⁹² The policy of the HMG on Brunei's decision towards Malaysia was stated in the paper called 'Brief for discussion in the Committee of Twenty-Four' thus "At the beginning of July the Sultan and his government decided not to enter the Federation of Malaysia at the present time. This decision was one entirely for the Sultan and the Government of Brunei". See F.O. 373/169716, Malaysia and the United Nation, September 1963.

contradicted Lord Selkirk's own statement in his letter to Sir Leslie Fry, British Ambassador in Jakarta, dated January 1963. He said:

On Brunei, I only can say that it is not and never has been HMG's policy to bulldoze the Sultan into Malaysia. We have commended Malaysia to the Sultan; but the only pressure we have brought to bear has been our explanation of the indefensibility before world opinion, in the long and even in the medium term, of the status quo.⁹³

The British Government also concluded that it was up to the Malayan Government whether to accept Brunei's terms or to form Malaysia without Brunei. By accepting Brunei's terms, the Malaysians would lose nothing. The Malaysian Government would receive new income of at least \$400 million (47 million pounds sterling) over ten years, plus some 11.75 million pounds sterling that would be collected as Federal revenue.⁹⁴ Although Malaya would have to spend money on Federal services in Brunei and internal security, the amount involved would be relatively small. Furthermore, if Brunei did eventually become part of Malaysia, all problematical issues would be subject to Federal influence, including the review of Brunei's contribution from new oil discoveries and other financial policies. Indeed, Ghazali Shafie has subsequently claimed that Tun Abdul Razak made a mistake in not accepting the Sultan's terms, especially when the Sultan asked him in the last meeting before signing the Malaysia Declaration in London, "How about my position?" Tun Abdul Razak replied that the Conference of Rulers had already made a decision not to accept his terms.⁹⁵ Ghazali said that Tun Razak could have been more diplomatic in his response. Tun Razak knew the Sultan well

⁹³ F.O. 371/169694, Policy Towards Malaysia, Brunei, Borneo, and a note on "Using Azahari".

⁹⁴ F.O. 371/169703, Brunei reasons for not entering into the Federation of Malaysia, 'Brunei: tactics', 11th July 1963.

⁹⁵ Interview with Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.

since they had both studied at Kolej Kuala Kangsar in Perak. As a close friend and a fellow “royal”, the Sultan might have expected some consideration from Tun Razak, at least an acknowledgement of the Sultan’s wishes and a suggestion that he would bring them to a further meeting with Members of the Conference of Rulers.⁹⁶ However, no acknowledgement from Tun Razak was forthcoming.

4.5. Final Decision

The Sultan of Brunei took five high ranking officers to London for the very final discussion of Brunei’s entry into Malaysia in July 1963. Some members of the Brunei delegation hoped that any obstacles could be overcome in these talks, but the Sultan stressed that the Malayan Government must reconsider its last offer to Brunei; otherwise, Brunei would close the door against the scheme. Following the July meeting, both sides gave different opinions on the failure of Brunei to join the Federation of Malaysia. Tunku Abdul Rahman stressed that the question of precedence was the main reason for Brunei’s withdrawal. According to the Tunku, when he initially discussed the problem with the Sultan, the Sultan claimed that it was not the most important factor for Brunei.⁹⁷ However, the Tunku commented, if this factor was not important for the Sultan, why did he raise the question again in a subsequent meeting in London in July 1963?⁹⁸ The Tunku insisted that he did not want the Sultan of Brunei to “jump the queue”⁹⁹ in order to be appointed Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Malaysia. On the other

⁹⁶ Ibid. According to Ghazali, Tun Abdul Razak should replied to the Sultan like this; “Mohonkan ampun, titah Tuanku patik junjung untuk dibincangkan oleh Majlis-Majlis Raja”.

⁹⁷ Hamzah also claimed that the order of precedence was not crucial to the Sultan’s decision. See Hamzah, p. 224.

⁹⁸ In the meeting between the Sultan with Tun Abdul Razak and Ghazali Shafie the Sultan revealed his position which was considered by Tun Abdul Razak as primarily to do with the precedence of the Sultan of Brunei. Interview with Ghazali Shafie. See also Ghazali Shafie Memorie.

⁹⁹ Brunei Bulletin, 13th July 1963.

hand the Sultan replied that he was not interested in becoming the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong,¹⁰⁰ saying that the main reason was that Malaya had failed to accept “Brunei’s terms”. The Sultan argued that he and his delegation would not meet the Malayan leaders again until he had been assured that they had accepted his terms without modification.¹⁰¹ Besides that, he insisted that the “final terms” of the Malayan Government did not give any advantages to the people and the State of Brunei. As a reporter wrote:

He and his government had come to the conclusion that the interest and welfare of Brunei and her people could not be safeguarded if Brunei joined Malaysia.¹⁰²

According to Ghazali Shafie, the Tunku had also misunderstood the Sultan, in their last meeting in London. The Sultan was not exactly referring to the question of his position as Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Malaysia when he raised the question of his position. The term he used, “my position”, referred not only to the question of the appointment of Yang Di-Pertuan Agong, but also to his position as a monarchical ruler possessing absolute power in Brunei and the position of the Brunei Constitution in the Federation of Malaysia.¹⁰³ Overall, it seems likely that the Sultan might have wanted to retain his autocratic power within the Federation,¹⁰⁴ although, for obvious reasons, it was not mentioned in the meeting between the two governments.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

¹⁰¹ F.O. 371/169703, Brunei’s reasons for not entering into Federation of Malaysia, ‘Brunei : Tactics’, 11th July 1963.

¹⁰² The North Borneo and Sabah Times, 19th July, 1963.

¹⁰³ Interview with Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie.

¹⁰⁴ Tun Razak said the Sultan did not understand the meaning of Federation; he thought that anything which belonged to Brunei must continue to belong to Brunei and that all Brunei had to do to join Malaysia was to make

The Deputy State Secretary of Brunei also accused the Malayan Government of giving a one-sided picture of Brunei's rejection of Malaysia.¹⁰⁵ In his view, other factors than the question of precedence had led the Sultan to reject the Federation.¹⁰⁶ He claimed that:

There had never been any Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Negeri Brunei Darussalam who wanted to become a ruler outside the territory of Negara Brunei Darussalam.¹⁰⁷

In 1963, commenting on the Sultan's decision to reject Malaysia, Pengiran Dato Setia Haji Mohd Yusof said that Brunei would not waver from its final stand on the issues negotiated with the Government of the Federation of Malaya, and that the latter's uncompromising attitude had frustrated any hope of Brunei joining Malaysia on the terms and conditions announced by the Tunku several months earlier. According to Ghazali Shafie the failure of Brunei to reach agreement on joining Malaysia was welcomed by the Sultan who had not favoured the practice of democratic elections, whereas Malaysia would be doomed if a part of its territory was not subject to democratic elections and a government of one of its states was a feudal autocracy.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, it is suggested here that Brunei's refusal to join Malaysia was not mainly because of the position of the Sultan in the office of Yang Di-Pertuan Agong. As Ghazali Shafie said, the Malaysian Federation was just like "a golf club which had its own club rules"¹⁰⁹ and, it appeared that Brunei did not like the club rules, specifically the necessary democratisation of Brunei. Ultimately, it was a difference of ideology: Malaysia

a voluntary donation to cover Federal expenses. See D.O. 169/126, 'Talks with the Sultan of Brunei', 4th July, 1963.

¹⁰⁵ The Malayan Times, 16th July, 1963.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ New Straits Times, 28th September, 1983.

¹⁰⁸ Ghazali Shafie..., p. 275.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 301.

was a parliamentary democracy, whilst Brunei under the Sultan was an absolute monarchy. This difference was irreconcilable, because the Sultan personally refused to compromise his own position of power.

More importantly, the Brunei Government from its side, and at least in public, considered that the financial issue and Brunei's contribution were the main factors that obstructed a solution. The Brunei Government wanted to retain its control over revenue and any income relating to oil. According to Pengiran Mohd. Yusof, if the Brunei Government had complied with the Malayan conditions, "Brunei would have nothing more of her own".¹¹⁰ Brunei did not want to share her wealth and revenue with other states. Furthermore, Brunei envisaged that by joining the Federation, she would gain little benefit in economic terms. The Sultan was convinced that Brunei should only join the Federation if the Malayan Government could accept all Brunei's terms, as was mentioned in the Sultan's correspondence with the Tunku between July 1961 up to October 1963.¹¹¹ When on 8th July 1963 the Sultan made his final decision not to sign the Malaysia Agreement,¹¹² HMG and also the Malayan Government tried to pressure him to change his mind and join Malaysia, but the Sultan said that the "discussions on Malaysia have finished and the door is now closed".¹¹³

¹¹⁰ The Malayan Times, 24th June 1963.

¹¹¹ However, another interpretation relating to Brunei's rejection of Malaysia has been given by A.C. Brackman. He said that the bloody rebellion on 8th December 1962 played an important role in influencing Brunei's decision. He said that the Sultan was concerned that another rebellion might take place soon, if Brunei joined Malaysia, as he realised that the majority of the population continued to oppose the idea of Brunei joining the Federation. Brackman, Anorid C., Southeast Asia's Second Front: The Power Struggle in the Malay Archipelago, Pall Mall, London,, 1966, p. 143 -145. See also Borneo Bulletin, 26th January, 1963.

¹¹² D.O. 169/262, Malaysia: the Position of Brunei, Telegraph from Foreign Office to certain of Her Majesty's Representatives, 11th July 1963.

¹¹³ D.O. 169/262, Malaysia: The Position of Brunei-The London Talks June/July 1963, Telegram from British High Commissioner, Brunei, to Commonwealth Relation Office, 13th December 1963.

Despite some pressure from the HMG and the Malayan Government to persuade the Sultan to sign the Malaysia Agreement at the final meeting in London in July 1963, the Sultan did not change his mind. As a result, HMG had to adopt a new policy in the hope that Brunei would join Malaysia at least by 1965. The adoption of the policy was also to avoid any allegation that Britain was attempting to maintain colonial control over Brunei. Therefore, the interpretation that British officials in Brunei played an important role in obstructing Brunei from joining Malaysia is difficult to accept.¹¹⁴

4.6. Conclusion

The Malaysian issue was laid to rest once and for all towards the end of 1963. Brunei announced in December 1963 that, after careful thought, she had “decided to close her doors to Malaysia”.¹¹⁵ In the final analysis, it looks as if the Sultan was never genuinely interested in joining Malaysia. Even if the Malayan Government had accepted the Sultan’s terms, he might well have tried other ways to make them unacceptable to the Malayan Government. According to the Colonial Office, the Sultan made many excuses for not signing the Malaysia Agreement on the last day of the meeting in London to discuss the Malaysia Proclamation. For example, on 8th July 1963, when the Secretary of State asked the Sultan whether he was

¹¹⁴ The British officials in Brunei were Roy Henry (Head of Special Branch for Brunei and Sarawak) and ‘Hector’ Hales (the managing director of the oil company in Brunei and Sarawak, British Malayan Petroleum). Roy Henry admitted his role in starting the Brunei revolt. (Poulgrain’s interview with him at the Royal Commonwealth Society, London 15th August 1991. See Poulgrain., p. 6) The outbreak of revolt was considered as a British provocation by Azahari (my interview with A.M. Azahari) in order to maintain British influence in Brunei. Poulgrain supported this theory, based on documents in the Public Record Office which mentioned that in early 1957 the Colonial Office adopted the plan to eliminate Azahari by hatching a scheme for a rebellion in Brunei which led to a influx of British personnel in Brunei, and resolved the political situation in Brunei. He added that this plan was initiated by the ‘upper echolons of British intelligence, together with a few Colonial Office representatives’. Poulgrain, p. 8. See also Mazlan Abdullah, *Sejarah Malaysia Timur*, Utusan Publication and Distribution, Kuala Lumpur, 1978, p. 96.

¹¹⁵ *The North Borneo and Sabah Times*, 11 December 1963 and 13th December 1963.

willing to sign the Malaysia Agreement, the Sultan replied that “there was a Malay proverb which said that to join in a hurry was to regret later”.¹¹⁶ Once more, the Secretary of State asked the Sultan the same question. The Sultan replied, “too many matters remained unsettled and I could not sign it”.¹¹⁷ In fact, there were only two matters unresolved, the Sultan’s precedence and the financial contribution and the term used to refer to it.

The British High Commissioner for Brunei “was also doubtful whether the Sultan wished to join Malaysia, even on his own terms”.¹¹⁸ The issue of the Sultan’s precedence was not a major issue on the agenda of the meeting between the Brunei and Malayan Governments, especially in London. Indeed, the Sultan did not want to discuss the matter because it had already been concluded by the Council of Rulers that the Sultan would be last on the list. It is clear that the reason the Sultan did not want to discuss it, because he wanted to hold it in reserve, should he need it as an excuse for not joining Malaysia. It was reported by the British Foreign Office that:

even had all the Sultan’s requirements been conceded, he would still have found some means of not signing. His underlying reason for this is his increasing distrust of the Malaysians, and his feeling that he is better off under the present arrangement.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ D.O. 169/261, Greater Malaysia-Brunei Problem, ‘Talks with the Sultan of Brunei’, 8th July 1963.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. In this meeting the Sultan raised three more issues which he thought still unsettled, in addition to other major issues. One was the question of the Brunei Malay Regiment within the Federation; the Sultan wanted the Malayan government to agree to recruit Brunei Malays only. Second, the question of the Overseas Officers Agreement with the United Kingdom should be continued when Brunei joined the Federation. Thirdly, the Sultan could not sign either the Heads of Agreement or the Formal Agreement on Malaysia until he had ample time to study the Malay texts of both documents. In fact, the Sultan had had ample time to study them. In reality, these matters had already been resolved in the previous meeting. At last, the Sultan just gave an excuse that he could not sign the agreement.

¹¹⁸ F.O. 371/169703, Brunei’s reasons for not entering into Federation of Malaysia, ‘Brunei tactics’, 11th July, 1963.

¹¹⁹ D.O. 169/262, Malaysia: Position of Brunei - The London Talks June/July 1963.

The Sultan's policy of accepting Malaysia in principle at the initial stage of negotiation was a political strategy, so as not to embarrass the Malaysians with his real attitudes towards the proposals, and it also related to the internal political situation in Brunei. The Sultan needed to retain British and Malayan support in the face of increasing pressures from the PRB and the popular opposition to Malaysia. The British High Commissioner had also advised the Sultan not to make any potentially embarrassing statements to the Malayan Government about Brunei's position with regard to Malaysia. As Mackintosh said:

I particularly stressed the need to avoid saying anything which would either close the door upon Brunei's entry into Malaysia or might worsen relations with the Malayan states.¹²⁰

Therefore, in subsequently explaining his decision to his people, the Sultan never explained in any detail why he had not felt able to sign the Malaysia agreement. He could not do so without criticizing the Malaysians and it was not his intention to criticize them unless they first attacked him.¹²¹ But ultimately the Sultan did not follow the High Commissioner's advice to say that the door was still open for Brunei to join Malaysia. Instead, he had absolutely refused to say anything positive about the possibility of joining Malaysia at some future date. In July 1963, when the High Commissioner mentioned to the Sultan that the British Prime Minister would like to discuss the question of Brunei's entry into Malaysia after the signing of the Malaysia Agreement, the Sultan replied that he was not prepared to have any such

¹²⁰ Ibid., 'Letter from Mackintosh to Secretary of State', 18th July, 1963.

¹²¹ Ibid.

discussion.¹²² It was thus clear to HMG that there was no further hope of Brunei joining Malaysia.

As the result of Brunei staying out, the negotiations between the Sultan and HMG were resumed after the Malaysia Agreement. The initial stages of the meeting took place in Brunei on 19th July 1963, between the Brunei High Commissioner and the Sultan. In the discussion, “the Sultan and the *Menteri Besar* said that they did not want independence for Brunei in the near future”.¹²³ Instead, the Sultan argued that he wanted to strengthen his agreement with the United Kingdom. Even while the final meetings on Malaysia were taking place in London in July 1963, the Sultan had already indicated that he wished to discuss the future relationship of his State with Great Britain and had referred to the possibility of “strengthening Brunei’s defence treaty with the United Kingdom”.¹²⁴

It is clear from the detailed examination of the material that the Sultan was never interested in joining Malaysia, even from the very beginning, when the Tunku made the announcement about the proposal in May 1961. The acceptance of Malaysia in principle was simply a political manoeuvre and diplomatic device on the part of the Sultan to ensure the survival of the Brunei Sultanate in its then form as a Malay Islamic Monarchy under British protection. The Sultan’s position in Brunei required a careful balancing of political and popular opinion in the State, and the views of a powerful neighbour - the Federation of Malaya - and an influential protector - Britain. In these circumstances, it was in the interests of the Sultan to buy time and

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid. Telegram from Mackintosh to Secretary of State, 18th July 1963.

¹²⁴ F.O. 371/169703, 11th July, 1963, Ibid.

continue to play to all the audiences involved. The disagreements over the issues of revenue, finance, taxes and precedence were presented as just cause for the Sultan to reject the idea of joining the Federation.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Limbang Dispute

5.1. Historical Background

Limbang, the Fifth Division of Sarawak, includes the Trusan and Lawas districts, although, for the purpose of this study, the term 'Limbang' refers to the Limbang *district* only (1,536 square miles) and does not include Trusan and Lawas. In 1960, the population of the Limbang District was 15,438.¹ Of these, there were 5,317 Malays, 3,317 Ibans, 1,450 Chinese, and 5,230 other indigenous races.² The Limbang district separates Temburong district from the main part of Brunei, a result of its annexation by Rajah Charles Brooke of Sarawak in 1890. From Brunei's perspective, this separation posed several problems relating to national security and administration. In the view of the Brunei government, the return of this territory is not only politically, historically, geographically and culturally desirable but there was also seen to be a strong moral obligation to do so.³ Furthermore, Brunei's case is based on historical right in accordance with Islamic teaching, as we shall see later. This chapter provides a preliminary examination of the Limbang problem in relation to Brunei's claim against the British and Malaysian Governments, from the period of Limbang's annexation by Sarawak in 1890 up to the formation of Malaysia. Its main focus is the question of how far the Malaysia proposal played a role in preventing the return of Limbang to Brunei and its position in Brunei-Malaysia relations.

¹ The Borneo Bulletin, 19th May 1962. See also D.O. 169/54 Telegram from Sir A Waddell, Governor of North Borneo to Secretary of State for Colonies, 31st December 1962.

² Ibid. See also D.O. 169/54/42219, Telegram from Governor of Sarawak (Mr. Waddell) to Secretary of State, 31st December 1962 and D.O. 169/54/42219, Brunei Claim..., 'Annexation of Limbang'.

³ D.O. 169/54, Secretary of State for the Colonies to D.C. White, British High Commissioner, 28th August, 1962.

Historically, Limbang had been part of Brunei territory, but it was taken by Charles Brooke without the consent of the then Sultan of Brunei, Sultan Hashim Aqamaddin (1885-1906). Prior to 1890, Her Majesty's Government had advised the Sultan of Brunei to cede the Limbang area to Sarawak on the grounds that she was unable to control the area.⁴ But the Sultan firmly refused to do so. In March 1890, without prior reference to Her Majesty's Government,⁵ the Rajah of Sarawak annexed the district of Limbang on the grounds that the people there preferred to be ruled by Sarawak.⁶ Before the event took place, Sultan Hashim had already tried to prevent an attempt by Charles Brooke to take any more territories belonging to Brunei.⁷ On 17th March 1890, Charles Brooke used his military superiority to occupy the Limbang region⁸ by raising the Sarawak flag at Pengkalan Tarap,⁹ without prior approval from HMG.¹⁰ Sultan Hashim and his Members-in-Council opposed the action, calling on the British Government to intervene.¹¹ On 21st April 1890, the Sultan wrote a letter

⁴ C.O. 1030/1296, Limbang Claim, 'Annexation of the Limbang District', FED 385/5/02, p. 1.

⁵ The Rajah's action, without approval, was embarrassing for HMG which, since a treaty of 1888 with the Sultan, had been the protecting power of the state. See D.O. 169/54, 'Tunku Abd. Rahman Suggestion that Sarawak or part of it should be returned to Brunei'.

⁶ According to Mr. Holloway (Colonial Office Officer) Sultan Hashim denied that at the time of the annexation there was any trouble between the Brunei Government and the people of Limbang. Instead, the Sultan blamed the Rajah of Sarawak, accusing him of influencing Limbang people against the Brunei Government. The Sultan also denied that the majority of headmen of Limbang had expressed a preference to be ruled by the Rajah of Sarawak. See Minutes by C.O. 1030/1296, Limbang Claim, Mr. Holloway, 11th January, 1961, XC 19952. See also the Sultan's letter to A. Keyser, British Consul for Brunei in March, 1899, Borneo 115/99, National Archive of Malaysia.

⁷ The first time that Charles Brooke declared Limbang as part of Sarawak territories was on 26 February 1887, but he failed to secure it at that time. See Straits Times, Singapore, 25th May 1887.

⁸ C.O. 1030/1296, Limbang Claim, 'Annexation of the Limbang District', FED 385/5/02, p. 1. "Rajah visited Limbang with a fleet of three steamers and promised to protect them if the Sultan attacked." See also Crisswell, C.N., 'The Origins of the Limbang Claim', JSEAS, Vol. II, No.2, September 1971, p. 223.

⁹ Pengkalan Tarap is the former name of the present Limbang Town. Pengkalan means a small jetty or wharf. Tarap is a traditional fruit which is only found on the Island of Borneo.

¹⁰ D.O. 169/54, 'Annexation of Limbang District', Far Eastern Department, Colonial Office, January 1963.

¹¹ On 14th April 1899, the Sultan sent a letter to the British Consul for Brunei. He stated that "we are asking the help of our friend and the English Government because we were always in difficulties caused by the Rajah of Sarawak and his Government, so we ask to return all the territories, districts and rivers of the Government of

to Sir Frederic Weld, the Governor of the Straits Settlements, asking for the withdrawal of Rajah Brooke and his people from Limbang River. However, the British Government were reluctant to help; instead, all the officials and Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, the Governor of the Straits Settlements, favoured Rajah Brooke.

In an attempt at resolution, the British Government suggested that the Rajah should pay some kind of compensation to the Sultan. However, Sultan Hashim declined to receive the compensation money offered by Charles Brooke in order to have Limbang recognized as part of Sarawak, because the Sultan had never agreed to cession. This decision was supported by the Sultan's two *wazirs*.¹² The Sultan opposed the action, not only because it was contrary to the *Amanat*¹³ of 20th February 1885 of the late Sultan Abdul Mumin (1852-1885) but also for economic and political reasons. As he said, "The River Limbang is Brunei; Brunei is the River Limbang."¹⁴ From the economic perspective, Limbang was fertile land and a source of income from supplies of food, rice, fish, construction goods and sago.¹⁵ At last, the Sultan

Brunei which were ceded to the Rajah of Sarawak...". See letter from Sultan to British Consul for Brunei, Borneo 115/99, National Archive of Malaysia.

¹² The *wazirs* who supported the Sultan's decision were Pengiran Bendahara and Pengiran Di Gadong, who sent a letter to the British Consul-General in Singapore. See C.O. 1030/1296, The Claim of Limbang, Minutes by Hollway, 11th January, 1961, XC 19952.

¹³ The *Amanat* is the Sacred Will of the late Sultan Abdul Mumin. The important point in the 'Will' was that Limbang and other territories should not be leased or ceded to other nations. After 1885, the 'Will' played an important role in influencing the behaviour, actions and policy-making of the Brunei Sultan. If this 'Will' was not executed properly, then this would have been a sin against Islam because the Will was considered a part of their religion. According to B.A. Hamzah, the *Wasiat* (will) had influenced Sultan Hashim's refusal to cede Limbang. See B.A. Hamzah, p. 29. See also D.E. Brown, 'Sultan Mumin's Will and Related Documents', *BMJ*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1974, p. 168.

¹⁴ *Straits Times*, 18th April 1890. See also letter from the Dutch Consul General to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Holland, 21st April, 1890. A copy of the letter is available at Brunei History Centre, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.

¹⁵ Haji Abd. Karim Haji Abd Rahman, *Peristiwa di Pengkalan Tarap 17th Mac 1890*, unpublished article, Brunei History Centre, Brunei. 1997. p. 4. According to Haji Karim, when Limbang was taken by Rajah Brooke the export of sago from Brunei declined. For example, in 1898 Brunei could export only 600 to 700 bags of sago compared with nearly 2,000 bags previously. Sultan Hashim described Limbang as his 'periok nasi' or 'rice pot' which supplied forest products, material for housing construction, domestic equipment and fresh water fish.

sent a letter of protest to Mr. Keyser, British Consul for Brunei in March 1899.¹⁶ As the Sultan said:

We do not agree, nor acknowledge that the Government of Her Majesty the Queen can allow the Rajah of Sarawak to take and to possess the Limbang river and Pengkalan Tarap, and also we will not agree nor will we acknowledge the Rajah of Sarawak to have it on lease, or to take the same. We pray that our friend Her Majesty the Queen and her Government cause the said Limbang river and Pengkalan Tarap to be returned to us...¹⁷

According to the Protectorate Agreement of 1888, the cession of any part of Brunei territory to other powers should have been referred to the Sultan for confirmation. Julian Pauncefote, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office,¹⁸ told the Brunei Consul General, Peter Leys, that according to the traditional law or the Sacred Will of Sultan Momin, the assent of the Sultan, Ministers and Pengirans was necessary before any territories could be ceded or leased to foreigners.¹⁹ However, the British Government changed its stand on the Limbang issue by consenting to the action of Charles Brooke in 1890,²⁰ even though the Sultan argued that Limbang was an integral part of Brunei. As the protecting power of Brunei, although considering the Rajah's action was wrong and condemning the annexation, the British Government suggested that the Sarawak Government should pay some kind of compensation

Therefore, the Sultan argued that the loss of Limbang had already crippled him, like the loss of a limb. In 1904, McArthur made a report that Brunei had lost annual revenue estimated at about \$200,000, because of Limbang's annexation. See Ranjit Singh, *Brunei 1839-1983:...*, p. 96. See also Horton, *Report of Brunei in 1904 by M.S.H McArthur*, Monographs in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 74, Ohio University, 1987.

¹⁶ A.L. Keyser, was a Consul for Brunei 1899-1900. He arrived at Labuan in October 1898 and was gazetted as Consul for Sarawak on 19th May 1899.

¹⁷ Letter from Sultan Hashim, Brunei to A. Keyser, British Consul for Brunei, March 1899, Borneo, 115/99, National Archive of Malaysia.

¹⁸ C.N.Crisswell, p. 222.

¹⁹ Bruneians considered the Sacred Will as part of their religion or beliefs. See Stubbs, Sir Reginald Edward, 'Two Colonial Office Memoranda on the History of Brunei', *JMBRAS*, Vol. 41, Pt.2, 1968, p. 97.

²⁰ See the letter from Sir Cecil Smith, the Governor of the Straits Settlements to Sultan Hashim of Brunei, Sarawak Document of 12th August, 1891, p. 636. Crisswell, C.N., p. 227.

to Sultan Hashim. This proposal was put forward by Mr. Trevenen, British Consul in Brunei,²¹ and accepted by both the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office.²² The Sarawak Government deposited \$6,000 in the bank for the Sultan. If the Sultan did not claim these payments from the bank in which they were lodged within a period of three years ending in April 1895, the money was to be withdrawn by the Rajah of Sarawak and used for the benefit and development of the people of Limbang.²³ Thereafter, the Rajah would be absolved from making any further payment to the Sultan. However, Sultan Hashim rejected the payment of compensation for the annexation of Limbang and refused to negotiate. He refused to draw the money and after the three years had elapsed, the sum in the bank, \$6,000, reverted to the use of the Rajah of Sarawak.²⁴ This was reported by the *Straits Times* in Singapore in 1891:

...a large Malay Council held at Brunei and attended by Mr. Trevenen, the British Consul, the Sultan of Brunei, with the approval of his chiefs, refused to consider the proposed pecuniary compensation for the seizure of Limbang by the Rajah of Sarawak... He would not touch it. If he was to be robbed of his country by the strong man, he might be robbed but he would not sell his land and his people.²⁵

Even until his death, the Sultan never accepted the offer from the Sarawak Government. He considered that Limbang belonged to Brunei, and that the action of Charles Brooke, undertaken without his consent, was a gross injustice and a flagrant breach of the 1888 Treaty. The Sultan considered that the British decision to consent to Charles Brooke's action was

²¹ N. P. Trevenen, British Consul for North Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak (1st March 1890 to 30th November 1898), resided at Labuan. He confirmed that of the fifteen Limbang chiefs, thirteen favoured Sarawak rule. On the contrary, the Sultan said that the result of the vote was the opposite. The Sultan did not accept Trevenen's report because he claimed the latter was drunk during the meeting with the Headmen of Limbang.

²² C.O. 1030/1296, Limbang Claim, Minutes by Mr. Hollway, 11th January 1961, XC19952.

²³ Stubbs, R.E., p. 103.

²⁴ D.O. 169/54/42219, Brunei Claim to Limbang District of Sarawak, 'Annexation of the Limbang District'.

²⁵ *Straits Times*, 7th September, 1891.

unacceptable, although the Sultan knew that he had to abide by the decision of her Majesty's Government.²⁶ From the Sultan's point of view, according to Article 1 of the 1888 Agreement he would continue to govern his State, and Her Majesty's Government had no right to interfere with the internal administration of the State.²⁷ Therefore, as the Head of State, his approval or consent was necessary in any matter related to it, such as the Limbang annexation. In other words, the Limbang annexation was considered as an interference in the internal affairs of Brunei by a foreign power (Sarawak). The Sultan had therefore the right to invoke the 1888 Agreement for protection, which the British failed to provide. Before signing the 1888 Agreement, Sir Hugh Low, British Resident of Perak, Malaya also assured the Sultan that no one could make him cede any more territory, either to Rajah Brooke or to the British North Borneo Company unless he was willing to do so. The Sultan argued that according to Article 1 of the Protection Agreement of 1888, Her Majesty's Government should protect Brunei from foreign invasion instead of allowing Charles Brooke to annex Limbang. Some British officers such as Frank Swettenham,²⁸ MacArthur, Stubbs²⁹ and Lord Salisbury³⁰

²⁶ Article 111 of the 1888 Treaty Agreement stated "... if any difference should arise between the Sultan of Brunei and the Government of any State the Sultan agrees to abide by the decision of HM Government and to take all necessary measures to give effect thereto." See also B.A. Husseinmiya, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III..., p. 392.

²⁷ See the Article 1 of The Protection Treaty of 1888. Refer to B.A. Husseinmiya, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III...

²⁸ Sir Frank Swettenham recommended the restoration of Limbang to Brunei in 1905 but this was refused by the Rajah of Sarawak. See D.O. 169/54, Brunei Claim to Limbang District of Sarawak, Letter from Sultan Brunei to Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations Office, 27th July 1963, p. 58.

²⁹ Stubbs, officer in the Colonial Office, in a minute in 1906, agreed that Sarawak's seizure of Limbang had been an outrage, in which Her Majesty's Government would never have acquiesced if their representatives had kept them properly informed. See "Compiling Documents on Limbang", Brunei History Centre, Brunei.

³⁰ In an official report to the Colonial Office, it was mentioned that Lord Salisbury had on 18th June 1887, assured Sultan Hashim that HMG would not allow Rajah Brooke to take the Limbang River from him by force. The report went on, "...for the honour of old England it is therefore to be hoped that Rajah Brooke may soon get orders from Her Majesty's Government to return to his own State and leave the State of Brunei in peace". See "Compiling Documents on Limbang", History Centre, Brunei.

were sympathetic to the Sultan, who considered Brooke's rule to be unfair and unjust.³¹

During the reign of Sultan Muhammad Jamalul Alam (1906-1924),³² the Brunei government did not highlight the question of Limbang, though British Officials in the Colonial Office made suggestions regarding the possible resolution of the issue.³³ Unfortunately, nothing was done to resolve it. The main reason why the question was not raised by Sultan Jamalul Alam during his reign was because he was still too young to deal with political issues;³⁴ even the power to administer the state was in the hands of the Pengiran Bendahara and the Pemancha, who in turn were controlled by the British Resident.³⁵ This situation continued during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin (1924-1950)³⁶ who succeeded to the throne in 1924, when he was 13 years old.³⁷

In 1920, 1931 and 1933 the British Resident in Brunei made decisions relating to the Limbang issue without prior discussion with the Sultan. By making agreements with the Sarawak

³¹ The British officials such as Lucas, the Assistant Under Secretary, Sir Charles Mithell, Governor of the Straits Settlements (1894-1899) seemed to respect Sultan Hashim's rights over Limbang territory. See C.N. Crisswell, 'The Establishment of a Residency in Brunei 1895-1901', *Asian Studies*, Vol. X, No. 1, April 1972, UPP, p. 98 and 106.

³² He was the son of Sultan Hashim, and was enthroned at the age of seventeen in 1906. During his reign in 1907, the State Council was set up. In 1922, he moved his palace from the water village to the land, when it was known as Istana Majlis. He died in 1924.

³³ According to Holloway, (a Colonial Office Officer) in 1919 there was some thought about asking the Rajah of Sarawak to return Limbang to Brunei. In the event, however, it was decided not to pursue the matter for the time being. See C.O. 1030/1296, Limbang Claim, Minutes by Mr. Holloway, 11th January 1961, XC19952.

³⁴ He was enthroned at age of 17 and hold the power until his death 35 years old.

³⁵ According to Ranjit Singh, the British High Commissioner threatened to cut the Sultan's salary and depose him, when he tried making any claim on the issue. As a result, the Sultan had to be co-operative with the British Resident and High Commissioner. See Ranjit Singh, *Brunei 1839-1983...*, p.112.

³⁶ He became the Sultan of Brunei in 1924 at the age of thirteen years. In 1932, he visited the United Kingdom and other European countries. He married a daughter of the Sultan of Selangor in 1934. Most of his time after marriage was spent in Kuching. He died in Singapore on his way to the United Kingdom in 1950.

³⁷ Between 1906-1918 and 1924-1931, Brunei was administered by a 'Council of the Regent' which comprised Pengiran Bendahara and Pengiran Pemancha because the Sultans were too young.

Government relating to the border problem, the Brunei Government, without the Sultan's consent,³⁸ effectively recognized Limbang as a part of Sarawak territory. Among the agreements that were signed between the British Resident in Brunei and the Sarawak Government were those of 1920 (Sultan Muhammad Jamalul Alam), 1931 (Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin) and 1933 (Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin). None of these agreements were signed by Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin or the Council of Regents.³⁹ In other words, the British Resident used the clause on 'advising the Sultan' in the Protection Agreement 1905/6 to justify signing the border agreements of 1920, 1931 and 1933. In fact, the Resident should have obtained consent⁴⁰ from the Sultan in making any agreement with a foreign power, as it was stated in the Anglo-Brunei Agreement of 1905/06 that the duty of the Resident was to give advice rather than to act.⁴¹ The border agreement of 1933 between Sarawak and Brunei was signed by the British Resident on behalf of the Brunei Government, and F. H Kortright, Resident of the Fifth Division, representing the Sarawak Government.⁴² As a result, the Brunei Government could consider the agreement invalid because the role of the Resident was purely "advisory" and because of the absence of the Sultan's official stamp.⁴³ If there was an agreement signed by the British Resident, "that would have been wrong as the role of the Resident was only to give advice. In the case of the above agreement, legally, only agreements

³⁸ The consent was necessary in order to consider the validity of the agreement. Consent could be given through the presence of the Sultan's seal on any territorial agreements. In the case of Limbang, no agreement existed with the Sultan's seal between the Brunei and Sarawak or British Governments.

³⁹ Refer to Appendix Seven border agreements 1920 and 1933.

⁴⁰ Any agreements made between Brunei and a foreign power should be stamped with the Sultan's seal in order to make the agreement valid.

⁴¹ The 1905/06 Agreement stated that "the Resident will be the agent and representative of His Britannic Majesty's Government...and advice must be taken and acted upon on all questions in Brunei...". Please refer to appendix 1.

⁴² Refer to appendix 7.

⁴³ My interview with Mr. R.H.Hickling, London 1995. However, during the reign of Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien (1950-1967) the role of the Resident had been changed because the Sultan was reluctant to accept any advice from the Resident.

signed by the Rajah of Sarawak and the Sultan of Brunei are binding”.⁴⁴ That is why, in 1970, the Seri Begawan Sultan forbade the making of any maps showing Limbang as separate from Brunei⁴⁵.

In conjunction with the celebration of a hundred years of Brooke rule in Sarawak, in 1940 the Rajah of Sarawak once again raised the Limbang issue by suggesting that Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin accept a lump sum of \$20,000 with an annual payment of \$1,000 in perpetuity as compensation for the loss of Limbang.⁴⁶ However, the offer was cancelled by the British High Commissioner because, according to the 1888 Anglo-Brunei Treaty, negotiations dealing with foreign matters should be carried out through Her Majesty’s Government.⁴⁷ Moreover, the consideration of this offer was also disturbed by the Second World War from 1941-45. In 1948, after the cession of Sarawak to the British Government, the Government of Sarawak once more put forward the original proposal of the Rajah of Sarawak, which had been approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, of an annual payment of \$1,000 to Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin as an ex-gratia gift for his lifetime only,⁴⁸ with effect from 1940.⁴⁹ However, this payment did not include the lump sum of \$20,000 in compensation for Limbang.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Speaking at the opening of a book exhibition at the Language and Literature Bureau, the Seri Begawan Sultan said that the map-makers should not draw boundaries between Brunei and Limbang as the two were in one and the same territory. See the Borneo Bulletin, 3rd October 1970.

⁴⁶ C.O. 1030/1296 Limbang Claim, ‘Annexation of the Limbang District’, FED 385/5/02, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Crisswell, C.N., ‘The Origins of Limbang Claim’, p. 228.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

⁴⁹ The first payment of \$2,000 (for the year between 1940-41) was paid to the Sultan. See C.O. 1030/1296, letter from Sultan to Mr. Pretty, British Resident in Brunei, 23rd April 1949.

The compensation money was paid in May 1949 to Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin. A cheque for \$7,000 (for the payment from 1942-48) was sent by the Accountant General in Kuching to the British Resident in Brunei on 9th May, 1949.⁵⁰ As a result, on 26th May 1949, Mr. Pretty, the British Resident in Brunei, sent back a receipt, signed by the Sultan, to the Accountant General in Kuching. The question is whether the acceptance of this payment by Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin could be considered to imply agreement that Limbang belonged to Sarawak. There was no clear statement from the British Government regarding the status of Limbang as a result of the payment. The Sultan was also not informed by the Sarawak Government or the Colonial Office that if he accepted the compensation, he and his heirs could not claim Limbang in the future.⁵¹ However, the Sultan argued that the payment was *ex-gratia* and not legally binding so that Limbang had merely been “leased” on certain conditions. In 1948, L.H.N. Davis reported that, according to Sir Shenton Thomas, the High Commissioner, these payments should not be regarded as an admission that Limbang was properly taken by Sarawak, but merely as compensation for rights taken from Sultan Abdul Mumin.⁵² Therefore, the issue was still not settled, even after the Sultan had received an annual compensation payment.

⁵⁰ C.O. 1030/1296 Limbang Claim, Cockie, H. M., (Acting Accountant-General, Sarawak) to The British Resident, Brunei, 9th May 1949, TRY: 171/2/34.

⁵¹ D.O. 169/54, ‘Annexation of the Limbang District’, Far Eastern Department, Colonial Office, January 1963. However, on 5th May 1950, the Secretary of State for the Colonies informed Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin that once he received the compensation of \$1,000 a year, he and his predecessors would not have any rights over Limbang. This answer led Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin to argue that Limbang was never sold or given but leased to the Sarawak Government.

⁵² Compilisation of documents related to Limbang Problem, History Centre, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.

In May 1950, Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin tried to obtain the lump sum of \$20,000 originally proposed by the Rajah of Sarawak in 1940.⁵³ It was stated by the Secretary of State in replying to the Sultan's request on 5th May 1950 that "the receipt of \$1,000 per annum from the Sarawak Government was a final extinguishment any rights my friend and his predecessors may have had in Limbang, and the decision of His Majesty's Government in such a matter is final and conclusive."⁵⁴ The problem was that Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin had not been informed, as he claimed, that the \$1,000 per year finally extinguished any rights to Limbang, because the earlier letter only mentioned "a final and irrevocable decision" instead of "extinguishment of rights".⁵⁵ In other words, Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin continued his opposition to the absorption of Limbang by the Rajah of Sarawak. This was mentioned in the Sultan's letters in 1949 to D.C. White, Resident Kuching.⁵⁶ Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin said that:

Limbang, as far as I know, had not been sold away, neither had it been given as a gift but it was leased away with certain conditions which were agreed upon.⁵⁷

After the Second World War, the Brooke Dynasty ceded Sarawak to His Majesty's Government⁵⁸ and Limbang automatically became part of the new British colony. The change of Limbang's status was not discussed with the Brunei Government or Sultan Ahmad

⁵³ C.O. 1030/1296, 'Annexation of the Limbang District', FED 385/5/02, p. 2.

⁵⁴ D.O. 169/54/42219, Brunei Claim... 'Annexation of the Limbang District'.

⁵⁵ Ibid. "A final and irrevocable decision" means that the decision on giving compensation money of \$1,000 a year to the Sultan would not be changed whereas "extinguishment of rights" means that once the Sultan received this compensation money, he or his heirs would have no right to Limbang territory in the future. The Sultan had received \$9,000 (1940-1948) as an ex-gratia gift which he considered as payment for the lease of Sarawak. On the other hand, the British Government viewed the acceptance of the payment by the Sultan as a resolution of the transfer of Limbang's sovereignty to Sarawak.

⁵⁶ Straits Times, 19th June, 1891.

⁵⁷ C.O. 1030/1296, Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin to White, D.C., (Resident Kuching), 11th May 1949, XC19952.

⁵⁸ In July 1946 by the order of Privy Council in London Sarawak became a Crown Colony and ended Brooke Rule in Sarawak. See Sylvia Brooke, Queen of the Head-Hunters, pp. 167-172.

Tajuddin himself.⁵⁹ If the Limbang territory had been returned to Brunei in 1946, on the basis of historical right and for administrative reasons,⁶⁰ it seems highly likely that the people of Limbang would have accepted the fact that, after the end of Brooke rule, Limbang had to be returned to its original owner.⁶¹ But this was not done by the British Government. Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin only asserted his claim to the area in 1949, when he ordered Gerard MacBryan⁶² to send his appeal to His Majesty's Government, saying:

You will clearly understand and make known to His Majesty's Government on my behalf that the cession of Sarawak by the Rajah Sarawak was quite wrong and that my authority for it was never asked nor ever given.⁶³

Furthermore, when this matter was raised again by the British High Commissioner in his letter to Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin on 5th June 1950, the letter was not delivered, owing to the Sultan's sudden death in Singapore.⁶⁴ The letter was shown to the new Sultan by his Private Secretary in 19th April 1952.⁶⁵ The letter stated that the receipt of \$1,000 per annum from

⁵⁹ At this time (World War II), there existed an Anti-Cession Movement in Sarawak. Some people wanted to be ruled by Rajah Brooke, others preferred to be returned to the Brunei Sultanate (Limbang, Lawas and Miri).

⁶⁰ It was difficult for Sarawak (Kuching) to administer Limbang because it was separated by Brunei territory. In the 1960s the Brunei government provided social services such as schools and roads to some villages. Some inhabitants joined the Brunei civil service.

⁶¹ Other factors which influenced the Limbang people (especially the Malays and Kedayans) to support the return of Limbang to Brunei were: (1) Family factors: generally the people of Limbang and Brunei were connected by family relations. (2) The prosperity of Brunei attracted the Limbang people. (3) Both communities shared the same culture and religion, particularly the Malays, Kedayans and Bisayas (4) If the British could return Hong Kong to China, it was seen as not impossible for Limbang to be returned to Brunei.

⁶² MacBryan was appointed by Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin as his political advisor in June 1949. He was eighteen when MacBryan joined the Sarawak Government service in 1920 after a brief career in the Navy. Then he became Vyner Brooke's private secretary. MacBryan had converted to Islam when he married a Malay woman from Kuching. He made the hajj to Mecca with his Malay bride. See Sylvia Lady Brooke, Queen of the Head-Hunters, Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 1970, pp. 138-140, 177-181. See also The White Rajahs of Sarawak, pp. 166-169.

⁶³ Horton, A.V.M., 'A Centenary W.H. Treacher and the Limbang Revolt 1884-1885', SMJ, Vol. 34, 1985, p. 91.

⁶⁴ C.O. 1030/1296 Limbang Claim, 'Annexation the Limbang District', FED 385/5/5/02, p. 3.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

the Sarawak government by Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin was a final extinguishment of rights over Limbang. However, the uncertainty over the precise meaning of the letter remained.

5.2. Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien's Claim

Malcolm MacDonald suggested to the Colonial Office that Limbang be returned to the Brunei Sultanate as a gift in conjunction with the Sultan's enthronement in 1951, but this idea was turned down by the British Government.⁶⁶ In December 1960 after a long period of investigation and research, the Sultan decided to make a formal request to HMG for the return of the Limbang district to his rule. However, there was no action taken by the Brunei government until 10th February 1962, when the State Secretary for Brunei asked the British High Commissioner to obtain the copies of documents relating to Limbang from the Colonial Office. There was no reply from the Colonial Office which led the High Commissioner to send second letter on 28th August 1962. Again, the Colonial Office did not reply. This led to the Sultan sending a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on 22nd November 1962, in which he stated that his government was of the view that the District of Limbang should be returned to its original status as a part of Brunei, and that the time was most opportune for Her Majesty's Government to consider this return on the grounds that Brunei had, in fact, a right to it.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the Sultan urged the Colonial Office to organize a meeting in London with the High Commissioner for Brunei, Mr. White, on behalf of the Brunei Government. The Sultan argued that there were precedents for the return of territories which had been occupied or leased by the British, for example the return of Dinding and Pulau Pangkor in Malaya to Perak and also Brooketon from Sarawak to Brunei in the 1930s.

⁶⁶ Malcom MacDonald visited the Sultan in the early 1950s.

Consequently, the Sultan addressed a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies requesting copies of the relevant documents. But again there was no response from the Colonial Office. The Colonial Office did not entertain the Sultan's claim because they believed it had no legal basis. Although Limbang had been annexed by the Rajah of Sarawak it had been part of Sarawak's territory for nearly 75 years.⁶⁸ Furthermore, Sir John Martin, from the Colonial Office, who visited Limbang after the 1962 Revolt, found that the majority of the inhabitants of the Limbang area did not favour its return to Brunei.⁶⁹

After receiving advice from the Colonial Office, the British High Commissioner in Brunei, Mr. White, discussed the matter with the Sultan and promised to deliver the Sultan's next letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.⁷⁰ According to the Sultan the wish of the Limbang people for the return of the territory to Brunei was very strong, especially among the Malays, Bisayas and Kedayans of Brunei origin.⁷¹ The Sultan's decision was also supported by the resolution passed by the Legislative Council in December 1960, on a motion by Dato Setia Pengiran Haji Abu Bakar bin Pengiran Pemancha Mohamed Salleh, calling on the Brunei Government to investigate whether there was an agreement between Brunei and Sarawak regarding the Limbang territory. The motion stated that:

This council approves that the government of Brunei reviews the written agreement between the governments of Brunei and Sarawak, if any, which has caused the Limbang district to be under Sarawak. If there is no agreement made at all between the previous government of Brunei and the government of Sarawak, the present government of Brunei should negotiate with the

⁶⁷ D.O. 169/54/42219 Brunei Claim to Limbang District of Sarawak, 'Annexation of Limbang'.

⁶⁸ D.O. 169/54 'Annexation of the Limbang District', Far Eastern Department, Colonial Office, January 1963.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ C.O. 1030/1296 Limbang Claim, White, D.C., to Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 28th August, 1962.

⁷¹ Ibid.

government of Sarawak for the return of Limbang district to the government of Brunei.⁷²

The Sultan voiced his claim officially to the British Government for the return of Limbang in February 1962, presumably at that time convinced that Brunei would not join the Federation and perhaps mindful that he could also use the claim as a further bargaining counter in the Malaysia negotiations. The Sultan wished to secure Limbang before the formation of Malaysia,⁷³ and argued that no documents had been signed by the governments of Sarawak and Brunei that proved Limbang belonged to Sarawak.

The correspondence between the British High Commissioner for Brunei, the Secretary for the Colonies, the Sarawak Governor and the North Borneo Governor on the Limbang issue shows clearly that both Governors were reluctant to see Limbang returned to Brunei.⁷⁴ They feared that if the question of Limbang became known to the people of Sarawak and North Borneo, especially the inhabitants of Limbang, it could create a problem for the establishment of the Malaysian Federation because the people of both territories might prefer to become part of Brunei rather than join the Federation of Malaysia. The British Government's strategy was to propose that the Limbang problem be dealt with after the formation of Malaysia. In practice, the British never took the issue seriously from the beginning.⁷⁵ The British knew that the

⁷² BA/13849/78, Majlis Meshuarat Kerajaan yang ke 88, pada 30hb Oktober, 1963, National Archive of Brunei.

⁷³ D.O. 169/54 Brunei Claim to Limbang District of Sarawak, Mr Golds, Commonwealth Relations Office to Sir Geofroy Tory, Kuala Lumpur, 6th December 1962.

⁷⁴ Both the Sarawak and Sabah Governors were against the Secretary of State for Colonies' decision to return Limbang to Brunei before or after the formation of Malaysia. See D.O. 169/54, Letter from Sir William Goode to Secretary of State, 28th December 1962 or Letter from Sir A. Waddell to Secretary of State for Colonies, 31st December 1962.

⁷⁵ Mr. Higham from the Colonial Office suggested that D.C White handle the issue with the Sultan in a 'minor key'. The Colonial Office did not reply to the Sultan's letters dated 28th August 1962, 22nd November 1962 and 27th July 1963 until 14th August 1963, when it said that HMG could not return Limbang to Brunei because it

Sultan could do nothing about it since Brunei depended entirely on British protection. The Far Eastern Department, Foreign Office, London was convinced that the Brunei Government could not challenge or bring proceedings against Her Majesty's Government in the International Court on the matter.⁷⁶

From the viewpoint of the British High Commissioner to Brunei, D.C. White, in 1962 the only solution to the border problem was to return Limbang to its original ownership. This could be done by using a referendum in the Limbang territory to determine the inhabitants' wishes. White mentioned this in his letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in August 1962:

I suggest that we should take the line with them that we cannot have a referendum at this stage but if, in the light of the Sultan's guarantees, a substantial majority of the Limbang people favour reunion with Brunei, we should have no objection.⁷⁷

The Malayan Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, took a rather different approach to handling the problem. He wanted to exploit the issue to make the Sultan agree to join the Federation. Indeed, he favoured the transfer of more territory and population to Brunei than just Limbang. This was stated in the Tunku's memorandum to HMG relating to the Malaysia proposal. According to the Tunku 'it would be better, of course, if Sarawak could be returned

was part of Malaysia and the Colonial Office suggested to the Sultan that any claim should be forwarded to the Malaysian Government. In 1963, A.M. Mackintosh, High Commissioner said that the British should be blamed because they could not recover Limbang for Brunei or at least support Brunei's claim. See D.O. 169/54.

⁷⁶ The reason why Brunei could not challenge the British was the 1888 Agreement which stated that the foreign affairs of Brunei were handled by Her Majesty's Government. See also C.O. 1030/1296 Limbang Claim, 'Annexation of the Limbang District,' FED 385/5/02, p. 4.

⁷⁷ C.O. 1030/1296, Limbang Claim, D.C.White, The High Commissioner for Brunei to the State Secretary, London, 28th August, 1962.

to Brunei, at least the northern part of Sarawak, where the population is mainly Malays and Dyaks'.⁷⁸ This idea was supported by the Colonial Office,⁷⁹ who wanted to use the Limbang issue to hook the Brunei Sultan for Malaysia. The stand was clearly stated by Mr Golds (an administrative officer in the Commonwealth Relations Office) who wrote that:

We and the Colonial Office have been discussing with D.C. White (British High Commissioner for Brunei) various kinds of "bait" which we might help the Tunku to hook the Sultan. So far we have not been able to think of much. D.C. White himself considers that Limbang would be quite the most effective lure.⁸⁰

Furthermore, this policy could prevent the Sultan from making any formal or public claim to Limbang or even demanding a referendum.⁸¹ His already difficult position over Brunei's accession to Malaysia would, of course, be aggravated if the British Government rejected directly his claim over Limbang on the grounds that Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin had received compensation money from 1942-48.⁸² The only way to tackle this problem was by using 'delaying tactics' until the formation of Malaysia. D.C. White suggested that if the British Government bluntly refused the Sultan's request, it might provoke him to make it public (perhaps calling for a referendum) and that "we therefore play him along".⁸³ Furthermore, if

⁷⁸ C.O. 947/2 or D.O. 169/54/42219, Tunku Abd. Rahman's Paper on Proposed Federation of Malaysia Commission of Enquiry, entitled 'Brunei: Tunku Abdul Rahman's Suggestion that Sarawak or part of it should be returned to Brunei'.

⁷⁹ The Secretary of State for Colonies agreed with the Tunku's idea but was opposed by the Governors of Sarawak and North Borneo. See 169/54, the letter from the both governors to the Secretary of State, 28th and 31st December 1962.

⁸⁰ D.O. 169/54/42219, Brunei Claim..., Letter from Mr. Golds A.A., Commonwealth Relations Office to Sir Geofroy Tory, Kuala Lumpur, 6th Disember 1962.

⁸¹ D.O. 169/54/42219 Letter from J.D., Higham, Colonial Office to A. Golds, Commonwealth Relations Office, London, 18th October 1962.

⁸² D.O. 169/54, Draft of meeting between D.C. White, Dato Lawson and Secretary of State, Commonwealth Relation Office, 4th December 1962.

⁸³ D.O. 169/54/42219, Brunei Claim..., Telegram from Commonwealth Relation Office to British High Commissioner, Kuala Lumpur, 28th September, 1962,

the Sultan announced publicly his claim towards Limbang, the people of Sarawak would be seriously upset at any mention of Limbang's return to Brunei, which might consequently lead them to have second thoughts about Malaysia. That is why the British Government delayed answering the Sultan's request about the return of Limbang.⁸⁴ Moreover, after the formation of Malaysia, the British Government could argue that Limbang was no longer its concern. In the end, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien realised the game, and that he would have to pressure the British Government in order to get the Limbang territory back.

However, the Tunku never revealed to the Sultan his idea of returning Limbang to Brunei. No one knows whether the Sultan would have joined Malaysia if the Tunku had offered to return Limbang as part of the agreement, but it seems unlikely. According to D.C. White, the Limbang claim might have been the bargaining point for his taking Brunei into Malaysia and also a means to win over his own people by letting it be known that he had taken the decision partly in order to effect the return of Limbang to Brunei.⁸⁵ This was mentioned by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his letter to the Governor of Sarawak, in which he commented that the Tunku's views about the return of Limbang might be interpreted as telling the Sultan that 'nothing can be done except if Brunei were to enter Malaysia. It might then be possible to examine the problem, perhaps with the aid then of a referendum in the area'.⁸⁶ According to the Tunku's memorandum to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, there was a possibility of the return of Limbang after the formation of Malaysia, if Brunei joined Malaysia. However, if Brunei declined to join, there was no prospect of Limbang's return to

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ C.O. 1030/1296, Limbang Claim..., Letter from White, D.C., to Secretary of State, 28th August 1962.

⁸⁶ D.O. 169/54 /44219 Brunei Claim..., Secretary of State to Governor of Sarawak, 6th December 1962.

Brunei, before or after the creation of Malaysia. The Secretary of State's views were different in Gold's letter to Sir Geofroy Tory,⁸⁷ the British High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, dated 6th December 1962 in which he wrote:

If the transfer of Limbang is going to tip the balance in favour of Malaysia with the Sultan without seriously upsetting the Sarawaks, the Secretary of State's present view is that we ought to agree with the Malaysians to offer it to him, either before or after Malaysia, or at least offer him a promise of a referendum to decide Limbang's future after Malaysia.⁸⁸

But the Sultan had already discussed the matter with the Colonial Office and, as a result, on 29th July 1963 "the Secretary of State told the Sultan that any claim respecting Limbang should be addressed to the Government of Malaysia."⁸⁹ It was stated during negotiations held in London between the British and Brunei Governments on 29th July 1963 that:

Her Majesty's Government was unable to consider Brunei's request. The reason given was that Limbang is part of the State of Sarawak, within Malaysia, Brunei's claim respecting the District of Limbang should therefore be addressed to the Government of Malaysia and not to Her Majesty's Government.⁹⁰

Her Majesty's Government no longer saw the matter as its responsibility, though this position contradicted the 1959 Brunei-Great Britain Agreement which stated that anything relating to foreign matters was Britain's responsibility. Nevertheless, the British High Commissioner,

⁸⁷ The Secretary of State for the Colonies had changed his previous support for the Tunku's offer to the Sultan after receiving views from the Sarawak and Sabah Governors.

⁸⁸ D.O. 169/54/42219 Brunei Claim..., Mr. Golds A. A., Commonwealth Relations Office to Sir Geofroy Tory, Kuala Lumpur, 6th December, 1962.

⁸⁹ D.O. 169/54/42219 Brunei Claim to Limbang District of Sarawak, Record of a Meeting between the Secretary of State and His Highness the Sultan of Brunei, Commonwealth Relation Office, 29th July 1963.

⁹⁰ D.O. 169/54, Return Of Limbang to Brunei, 16th November, 1963, Executive Council Paper No. 237/63.

who was more sympathetic to the Sultan,⁹¹ felt that the British Government should have supported his claim. As the High Commissioner stated in his letter to Mr. Harris at the Commonwealth Relations Office, London:

...Her Majesty's Government should have recovered Limbang for Brunei long ago, or at least should support the Brunei claim now. He (the Sultan) insisted Her Majesty's Government was blameless in the past because Brunei had not formally lodged a claim to Limbang until after the Malaysian Agreement had been signed, and that now with Sarawak part of Malaysia, the matter was no longer for Her Majesty's Government.⁹²

If this is true, why did the British Government not take any action to return Limbang to Brunei before the formation of Malaysia? In 1962, the Brunei Sultan had already discreetly mentioned to the British Government his intention to reclaim Limbang territory. This was all because of the Malaysia proposal. It was the British who did not want to discuss the problem, because HMG felt that the action could jeopardise the Malaysia Proposal.⁹³ Aside from the fundamental grounds for his claim, the Sultan also argued that his case was based on:

1. the contents of the paragraph of the Cobbold Commission's report concerning the state of opinion in the Fifth Division of Sarawak (of which Limbang forms a part);
2. the contents of paragraphs 10 and 11 of the communiqué issued in June 1963 by the Governments of Indonesia, Malaya and the Philippines following their meeting in Manila;
3. the close and daily ties between the people of Limbang and Brunei; and

⁹¹ According to Alastair Morrison, life was very comfortable for British High Commissioners in Brunei, especially if they agreed with or supported everything Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien did. See Alastair Morrison, Fair Land Sarawak, SEAP, Cornell University, New York, p.143.

⁹² D.O. 169/54/42219, Brunei Claim to Limbang District of Sarawak, High Commissioner for Brunei (Mr. Mackintosh) to Mr. Harris, Commonwealth Relations Office, London, 16th November, 1963.

⁹³ C.O. 1030/1296, Limbang Claim..., Letter from White, D.C., to Secretary of State, 28th August 1962.

4. the fact that the administration of Limbang is dependent upon facilities provided by the Government of Brunei.⁹⁴

Therefore, in 1962 the Sultan of Brunei suggested to the British Government that the territory of Limbang should be excluded from the relinquishment of Her Majesty's sovereignty over Sarawak by 16th September 1963 and that no change in sovereignty affecting this area should take place until proper steps had been taken to ensure that any change of sovereignty was in accordance with the genuine wishes of the Limbang people.⁹⁵ For as the Sultan emphasised:

Brunei will not allow and will not give permission that Limbang become part of Malaysia, because Limbang belongs to Brunei. Brunei's claim on Limbang is based on the teaching of Islam.⁹⁶

The Sultan also promised that the Brunei Government would grant Brunei nationality to every British subject (meaning essentially the Chinese) in Limbang, either by cession or by birth, and accord them all the privileges enjoyed by his own citizens.⁹⁷ He guaranteed them, particularly the Christians, freedom to practise their own religions as stated in the Brunei Constitution of 1959. As he said:

⁹⁴ D.O. 169/54/42219 Brunei Claim to Limbang District of Sarawak, Sultan Brunei to Mr. Duncan Sandys, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations Office, London, 27th July 1963.

⁹⁵ Ibid. The Sultan's letter to the Secretary for the Commonwealth in July 1963.

⁹⁶ Translation from the original text of the ex-Sultan's speech (Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien) which was read by Acting Secretary of State, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Aziz. The original Malay text read: "Brunei tidak izin dan tidak akan memberikan keizinan bagi Limbang yang mana hak kepunyaan Brunei menjadi sebahagian dari Malaysia. Sebagaimana yang telah dijelaskan, Brunei menuntut Limbang berasaskan ugama Islam menurut hukum Shara' dan Ijma' Ulama-Ulama Islam".

⁹⁷ In September 1964, it was estimated about 600 men, women and children (mostly Kedayan) had abandoned their homes at Kampong Ranggau in Limbang district, and about 400 people who were still left behind would migrate to Brunei a week later. They were leaving their homes behind because they did not want to be part of Malaysia. One of them said, "We decided the only way to be reunited with our relatives and become subjects of the Sultan again was to abandon Ranggau and settle here". They were given permission to establish a new village at Brunei River, known as "Kampong Setia" or "Loyal Village". They received the same privileges and facilities

...the Limbang people were substantially in favour of a return to Brunei. The Chinese would be in favour, if nationality difficulties were resolved. He was unable to speak for the Dayaks. Hundreds of Sarawak children had been sent to Brunei schools and the people took advantage of other Brunei facilities.⁹⁸

The Sultan's voice was also supported by political parties in Brunei. The Deputy Leader of the Brunei People's Alliance (BPA), Syed Mashor, urged the Brunei and British Governments to consider the matter carefully before the formation of Malaysia.⁹⁹ In the BPA's view, Limbang was an occupied territory and belonged to Brunei by right. Therefore the party argued:

Brunei's future survival depends on Limbang, Brunei will never be happy. Limbang was taken away from her without any proper agreement or treaty.¹⁰⁰

There were undoubtedly large numbers of Malays, Kedayans and Bisayas in Limbang who had Brunei connections and were probably Brunei sympathizers; others, particularly Chinese, might also have been less hostile if given all the perquisites of Brunei nationality that is, no education charges, no income tax, old age pensions, free medical attention and so on.¹⁰¹ In other words, the Limbang people might not have entirely rejected the idea of returning to Brunei rule. This was especially true of the Malays, the majority of whom wanted their district to be reunited with Brunei.¹⁰² Unfortunately, the Sultan did not succeed in achieving his objective, even by the time of the formation of Malaysia in September 1963. The reality was

as Brunei citizens. Furthermore, the Sultan also gave them the status of Brunei citizenship. See Borneo Bulletin, 12th September, 1964.

⁹⁸ C.O. 1030/1296 Limbang Claim, White, D.C., to Secretary of State, 28th August 1962.

⁹⁹ BAR, 1971, p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ Borneo Bulletin, 28th May 1966.

¹⁰¹ D.O. 169/54, Secretary of State for Colonies to D.C. White, 28th August 1962.

¹⁰² Michael Beckett Leigh, The Development of Political Organization and Leadership in Sarawak, East Malaysia, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Cornell University, 1971, p. 81.

that the British Government would not return Limbang to Brunei. C.G. Eastwood, in the Colonial Office, stated firmly that:

There can of course be no question of Her Majesty's Government agreeing to the severance of the Limbang district from Sarawak and its return to Brunei as a condition of merger. Other considerations apart, this would effectively kill Greater Malaysia so far as Sarawak is concerned.¹⁰³

The British Government, for its part, found that there was no substantial majority of Limbang inhabitants in favour of the return of Limbang to Brunei, except for the Kedayans and the Malays and on 14th August 1963, Mr. Duncan Sandys, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, replied to the Sultan's letter, saying that HMG could not consider the Brunei request because the British Government had entered into an Agreement under which Sarawak was to join Malaysia.¹⁰⁴ However, the Sultan and the Brunei government still could not accept the British decision and continued to pursue the claim encouraged by the positive response from Limbang's inhabitants.

5.3. The Wishes of the Limbang People

In the 1960s, there was no evidence of a specific percentage or number of inhabitants in favour of Limbang being returned to Brunei rule or against the Malaysia Federation. The Commission headed by Lord Cobbold which visited Sabah and Sarawak between 19th February to 18th April 1962¹⁰⁵ had generalised its findings by concluding that one third of the

¹⁰³ C.O. 1030/1012 Greater Malaysia-Brunei Aspects, C.G., Eastwood C.G. to D.C., White, Brunei, 8th January, 1962.

¹⁰⁴ D.O. 169/54/42219, Brunei Claim..., Mr. Duncan Sandys to Sultan of Brunei, 14th August, 1963.

¹⁰⁵ Ariff, M.O., The Philippines' Claim to Sabah: Its Historical, Legal and Political Implications, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1970, p. 54.

population of Sarawak and North Borneo would like to join Malaysia, one third would accept the Federation subject to conditions, and a third had different attitudes towards the Federation of Malaysia.¹⁰⁶ Based on these findings, the Limbang people were considered to be in favour of the Federation of Malaysia. In fact, there should have been a referendum specifically for the Limbang inhabitants to determine their future position, whether to join Malaysia or return to Brunei.¹⁰⁷ But this was not done. The only attempts to ascertain the people's wishes were the Cobbold Commission Inquiry in 1962 and the United Nations Survey in September 1963.¹⁰⁸ The findings of these two surveys were not representative of the specific wishes of the Limbang people.

The main issue was the people's wishes. Although the British did not accept Brunei's claim to the Limbang territory based on historical, cultural and geographical factors, other elements such as the people's wishes might have been considered, in accordance with the General Assembly Resolution 1541(15), and the Manila Declaration.¹⁰⁹ The British Government upheld this principle of self-determination of the people; as D.C White mentioned, "Her Majesty's Government could not transfer the territory unless it was the wish of the substantial majority of the people concerned. That included Chinese, Dayaks and others, as well as those

¹⁰⁶ C.O.1030/1027, Greater Malaysia:- Consideration of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry, Summary of Cobbold Report, 'Assessment of Evidence', Paragraph 143.

¹⁰⁷ The Secretary of State for the Colonies had suggested that a referendum be offered for the self-determination of Limbang's people whether to join Malaysia or return to Brunei. But this suggestion was opposed by the Sarawak and Sabah Governors. See D.O. 169/54, Meeting between D.C. White, High Commissioner with Secretary of State for the Colonies and Lord Lawsdowne at the Commonwealth Relations Office, 4th December 1962.

¹⁰⁸ The Mission was set up in September 1963 with the aim to ascertain the views of the people in Sarawak and Sabah towards Malaysia in accordance with the Manila Accord July-August 1963.

¹⁰⁹ Tripartite Summit Meeting Manila, 30th July - 5th August 1963, Federal Department of Information Malaysia, 1964, pp. 1-8. According to the Manila Accords, Indonesia and the Philippines would recognize the Malaysia Federation if an impartial United Nations agreement confirmed the support of the peoples of Sarawak and Sabah. See Alastair Morrison, Fair Land Sarawak, SEAP, Cornell University, New York, p. 144.

with Brunei connections".¹¹⁰ In the Limbang area itself, there were groups of Malays, Bisayas and Chinese who presented an anti-Malaysia letter. Their petition which, according to a Colonial Office document, contained 252 signatures and thumbprints, was sent by the SUPP which also demanded the return of Limbang to Brunei.¹¹¹ Moreover, Malay fishermen from the Limbang and Rangau areas asked to be returned to the rule of Brunei, in view of similarities of language and religion.¹¹² The Headmen and Dayak Political Party of Limbang preferred to join the Borneo Federation before contemplating Malaysia.¹¹³

After the publication of the joint statement at the conclusion of the talks in London related to the Tunku's proposal for a Malaysia Federation in November 1961, the British and Malayan Governments agreed on the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry¹¹⁴ to ascertain the views of the peoples of North Borneo and Sarawak¹¹⁵ which included Limbang. The Sultan was asked whether he wished the Commission to include Brunei in its inquiries. The Sultan declined the offer and set up his Brunei commission, led by the Chief Minister, Dato Marsal Maun. The Commission of Inquiry for Sarawak and North Borneo which was known as the Cobbold Commission was set up in 16th January 1962,¹¹⁶ led by Lord Cobbold. Other members were Sir Anthony Abell, Sir David Watherston, Dato Wong Pow Nee and

¹¹⁰ C.O. 1030/1296 Limbang Claim, D.C., White, to Secretary of State, 28th August, 1962.

¹¹¹ C.O. 947/3 Solidarity Consultative Committee, Notes of Commission Hearing-Limbang, 10th March 1962.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ C.O. 947/2 Solidarity Consultative Committee, Proposed Federation of Malaysia Commission of Inquiry, 'Paper for British Members'.

¹¹⁵ C.O. 1030/1027 Greater Malaysia: Consideration of the Report of the Commission of Enquiry, Introduction, pp. 1-9. See also Harold MacMillan, *At the End of the Day*, MacMillan London Ltd., London, 1973, p. 253.

¹¹⁶ C.O. 1030/1027 Greater Malaysia: Consideration..., pp. 1-9. (In Brunei the Commission was set up in 5th January 1962).

Muhammad Ghazalie Shafie.¹¹⁷ Based on the memorandum sent by the people of Limbang to the Brunei Sultan and also the findings of the Cobbold Commission to Sarawak and Sabah, it appeared that a large number of the Limbang population, especially the Malays, desired the return of Limbang to Brunei.¹¹⁸

Specifically, the Cobbold Commission stated that the majority of the Malays and the Kedayans in Limbang demanded the return of the area to Brunei.¹¹⁹ The Commission said that no clear racial attitude towards the Malaysia proposal was apparent. However, this was not true in the case of the Malays and Kedayans.¹²⁰ The views of the Muruts and Bisayas were unclear and, generally, the Ibans and Muruts felt they needed time to think about the Malaysia proposal, whereas the Chinese were mostly anti-Malaysia.¹²¹ As stated in the Commission of Inquiry on Malaysia:

The bulk of the evidence submitted to us from Chinese sources did not favour Malaysia. Numerically a very high proportion of the Chinese who actually appeared before us came in groups putting SUPP views which we recorded later.¹²²

Furthermore, on 27th February 1962, 21 community leaders claiming to represent the 8,000 Limbang population signed a petition which was sent to the Governor of Sarawak, Sir Alexander Waddell, British High Commissioner for Brunei, Sir Dennis White and Brunei

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 114.

¹¹⁸ Penyata Surohanjaya Penyiasat Borneo Utara dan Sarawak, Knebworth House, Hertfordshire, 21st June, 1962, p. 22.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 60-61.

¹²⁰ According to the Cobbold Commission's report, the views of the Murut and Bisaya were not clear but some of them supported the SUPP. See Penyata Surohanjaya Penyiasat Borneo Utara dan Sarawak, pp 25-26.

¹²¹ C.O. 1030/1027 Greater Malaysia: Consideration..., p. 71-73.

¹²² C.O. 1030/1027 Greater Malaysia: Consideration..., p. 72. See also Zariani, p. 202.

Chief Minister, Dato Marsal Maun.¹²³ The petition appealed for the return of Limbang territory to Brunei before the formation of Malaysia. A.M. Azahari, the PRB leader, supported the demand of the Limbang people and asked the Sultan to reconsider the request because it had been made through the proper channels. Furthermore, this petition also seemed to demonstrate that the Limbang people at least saw their interests in the Brunei Sultanate.¹²⁴

On 8th May 1962, F.D Jakeway, Sarawak Chief Secretary, visited Limbang Town to investigate the position of the Limbang people. This visit led to a rally taking place there, involving an estimated 3000 people, who “wished Limbang District to be given back to the Government of His Highness the Sultan of Brunei”.¹²⁵ They sent four petitions which were signed by their leaders and demanded that “the enclave of Limbang should be returned at once to the Brunei Government”.¹²⁶ Furthermore, the leader of the demonstrators, Awang Aming bin Awang Bakir, said that Limbang had been neglected by the Sarawak Government and asked for a referendum to determine the wishes of the Limbang people regarding the cession of Limbang territory to Brunei. Awang Aming argued that the Sultan of Brunei had a legitimate claim, since he had not agreed to cede Limbang to Sarawak. Therefore, if the Sarawak Government did not take any action, the pro-Brunei group would deal directly with the Colonial Office to discuss the matter with Her Majesty’s Government.¹²⁷

¹²³ The Borneo Bulletin, 24th March, 1962.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 24th March, 1961.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 19th May 1962.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

The Sarawak Government denied that any demonstration had taken place in Limbang. Instead, they said it was a rumour to mislead the public about the claim by the Limbang people. At the same time, the pro-Brunei group in Limbang sent the same petition to Tunku Abdul Rahman, and Lee Kuan Yew, the Secretary of State in the Colonial Office in London, Lord Cobbold, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. In the petition, they argued that the Tunku and Lee Kuan Yew should support the wishes of the Limbang people. They demanded that Limbang territory should be returned to Brunei before the formation of Malaysia.

At the same time, there were rumours in Limbang that the Sultan's agents and the PRB had tried to influence the Limbang people to support the Limbang claim. As a result of these rumours, on 5th April 1963, Limbang District Council put forward a motion condemning the action. This resolution also demanded that the Sarawak Government take immediate action to contain the activities.¹²⁸ Among the inducements promised in return from the Sarawak government were old age pensions and the abolition of rates, land rent and gun licence fees.¹²⁹ These promises were a tactic by the government to persuade the people not to support the Brunei claim, and to convince them that there would be no difference in terms of social benefits if Limbang joined Brunei. Awang Aming, as the leader of "the return Limbang to Brunei Group", denied any involvement with the activities. He argued that there were no such agents operating in Limbang, as claimed by the rumours. Nevertheless, he still stood for the return of Limbang to Brunei.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 27th April 1963.

¹²⁹ D.O. 169/54/42219 Brunei Claim..., Sarawak Monthly Intelligence Report, 1963.

At last, Aming's group sent "open letters" to the editors of newspapers in Borneo and the Federation of Malaya to get attention and support from them. They outlined two main reasons in support of their claim that Limbang should be returned to Brunei. Firstly, Limbang legitimately belonged to Brunei and, secondly, the Limbang people wished the territory to be returned to her former owner. They argued that the separation of Limbang from Brunei was against the wishes of the people, and that the people of Brunei and Limbang had blood ties that "cannot be broken".¹³⁰ Finally, the 1963 Sarawak Election demonstrated that the people of Limbang rejected the Malaysian Federation; in Limbang the Independent Party¹³¹ won 93% against the Alliance parties 6.9% votes.¹³² I suggest that one can conclude from the evidence that, within Limbang, the voices of those who did not accept Malaysia were in the majority, but within Sarawak as a whole, they were in the minority. That is why the report did not represent the wishes of the Limbang people. R.H. Hickling was convinced that:

the Cobbold Commission were a bunch of dishonest people whose report did not reflect the real wishes of the people of Sarawak because the Commission found that the people of Limbang did not want to join yet carried on recommending the formation of Malaysia.¹³³

Further evidence for this view is that on 30th August 1963, seven leaders of the Limbang people sent a memorandum to the United Nations delegation who had visited Limbang Town. However, the Cobbold Commission of Inquiry had already reported that the inhabitants of Sarawak, including Limbang, were in favour of Malaysia. As the report stated:

¹³⁰ Borneo Bulletin, 31st August 1963.

¹³¹ Independent candidates were mostly against the Malaysian Federation and the Alliance's stand was pro-Malaysia. See Leigh, M.B, The Rising Moon, Sydney University Press, Australia, 1974, p. 57.

¹³² Leigh, M. B., p. 57.

¹³³ Interview with R. H. Hickling, London, 10th August, 1995.

About one-third of the population in each territory (Sarawak or North Borneo) strongly favours early realisation of Malaysia without too much concern about terms and conditions. Another third, many of them favourable to the Malaysia project, ask, with varying degrees of emphasis, for conditions and safeguards...The remaining third is divided between those who insist on independence before Malaysia is considered and those who would strongly prefer to see British rule continue for some years to come.¹³⁴

The above findings suggest that the substantial majority of the Limbang people did not favour Malaysia,¹³⁵ and that the Cobbold Report and the UN Commission findings were not a valid basis for determining the future of Limbang.

5.4. The Malaysian Argument

There is a contrary argument from the Malaysian side that the Brooke Dynasty, the British and then Malaysian governments had continued to exercise effective jurisdiction over Limbang since 1890, and this was sufficient to make the annexation legal.¹³⁶ Furthermore, in the plebiscite to decide whether Sarawak should merge with Malaysia, it was pointed out that the people of Limbang voted that they wanted to be part of Malaysia.¹³⁷ This gave them the legal right to remain within the Malaysian Federation. It was stated in the Cobbold Commission's

¹³⁴ C.O.1030/1027, Greater Malaysia:- Consideration of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry, Summary of Cobbold Report, 'Assessment of Evidence', Paragraph 143.

¹³⁵ The Secretary-General of the United Nations said that, based on the evidence of the team of UN officials who visited Sabah and Sarawak, he unhesitatingly decided that there was "no doubt about the wishes of a sizeable majority of the people of these territories" to join the Federation. See The Straits Times, 2nd October 1970.

¹³⁶ The Rajah and then the government of Sarawak viewed the Limbang territory as already part of Sarawak because the vote showed that the majority of Headmen of Limbang had expressed a preference to be ruled by the Rajah of Sarawak. This cession was also recognized by Her Majesty's Government, although the Sultan did not want to receive the compensation paid by the Rajah of Sarawak in the 1890s. See Minutes by Hollway, 11th January 1961, XC 19952, CO 1030/1296, Limbang Claim.

¹³⁷ Malaysia's view was that the United Nations Survey in September 1963 therefore established that the people of Limbang had exercised their right of self-determination and had expressed their desire to join Malaysia. This principle of self-determination is enshrined in the United Nations Charter, General Assembly Resolution 1541 (XV) Principle IX. See United Nations Malaysia Mission Report, Department of Information, Malaysia, September, 1963.

Report¹³⁸ in January 1963 and the United Nations Mission Report, that the majority of the Sarawak's population but not specifically Limbang's, would like to join Malaysia. In other words, the process of ascertaining the wishes of the people of Sarawak met the requirement for the validity of the treaty of cession, in accordance with the principle of self-determination within the requirements of the General Assembly Resolution 1541(XV).¹³⁹ The 1963 Malaysia Agreement concluded that the cession of Limbang within the Federation of Malaysia constituted a treaty of cession in international law. By this agreement, the sovereignty of Limbang was transferred from the British Government to the Malaysia Federation. That is why any claim by the Brunei Government after the formation of Malaysia in September 1963 was considered invalid. According to Tun Abdul Razak:

Brunei has no basis to start negotiations either with Sarawak or the Central Government on any claim of Limbang.¹⁴⁰

For this reason, from the formation of the Malaysian Federation up to the 1970s, no serious negotiations took place between the Malaysian Government and Brunei. Instead, the Malaysian government used many tactics to avoid discussing the claim and even threatened the Sultan to deter him from continuing to pursue it.¹⁴¹ Furthermore, the Sarawak Government rejected the demand from the Limbang people who wanted to be ruled by Brunei. It said that the request did not represent the wishes of the majority of the people of Limbang. The

¹³⁸ According to one of the Limbang population during the Cobbold Commission's visit to Limbang Town, it was estimated that 95% of the people were against the Malaysia Plan and 80% maintained that Limbang should be returned to Brunei. See 'Suara Rakyat Limbang', The Borneo Bulletin, 27th October 1963.

¹³⁹ Ariff, The Philippines of Sabah, p. 57. See also General Assembly, Resolution 637A VII.

¹⁴⁰ Borneo Bulletin, 21st May 1966.

¹⁴¹ Tun Abdul Rahman Yaakub (former Chief Minister of Sarawak) warned the Seri Begawan Sultan (ex-Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien) not to try to weaken "the sleeping lion", otherwise Brunei would get undesirable consequences. See the text of transcription of Tun Abdul Rahman's speech from Radio Sarawak at Brunei History Centre, Brunei.

Sarawak Government argued that it was not aware of any grounds on which a claim for a change of status could be founded.¹⁴²

Following the formation of Malaysia in October 1963, Brunei started to voice her claim to the Malaysian Government. The Brunei claim was forwarded to the Malaysian Government after getting the green light from the British Government, but there was no response from Malaysia. In April 1965, the Brunei Government followed up its previous correspondence by contacting Malaysia's Foreign Minister asking for discussions about Brunei's claim to Limbang. The Sultan explained that the claim was based on historical fact and religious obligation. On 22nd April 1965, in replying to the Sultan's letter, the Tunku explained that he could not negotiate with the Brunei government directly because the foreign affairs of Brunei were still dealt with by the British under the 1959 Agreement.¹⁴³ Therefore, the Malaysian Government could only discuss the matter with the British Government. The Sultan might have known the contents of the 1959 agreement, but he purposely ignored it. Moreover, the Secretary of State for the Commonwealth advised the Sultan to forward his claim to the Malaysian Government. As stated in his record of meeting the Sultan on 29th July 1963 at the Commonwealth Relations Office:

...he merely wished to make it clear that if any such claim were to be made then it should be addressed to the Government of Malaysia and not to Her Majesty's Government.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² The Borneo Bulletin, 5th May, 1962.

¹⁴³ According to article 3 (1) of the Brunei Agreement 1959, the Sultan agreed that he would not, without the knowledge and consent of Her Majesty's Government, make any treaty, enter into any engagement, deal in or correspond on political matters with or send envoys to, any other state. D.O. 169/54 Brunei Claim to Limbang District of Sarawak, Mr. Harris to Mr Golds, 27th November 1963.

¹⁴⁴ C.O. 1030/1671 Record of a meeting between the Secretary of State and His Highness the Sultan of Brunei, at Commonwealth Relations Office, 29th July 1963.

After learning that permission had been given by the British Government for Brunei to handle the issue directly with the Malaysian Government, the Tunku gave another excuse by saying that the Malaysian Government could not entertain Brunei's claim because the latter was still under British protection. Furthermore, the Malaysian Government argued that it was impossible for Brunei to claim Limbang (which was now part of an independent state), as Brunei was not yet independent. The Tunku argued that Brunei's claim would make Limbang once again a British colony, and this would be impossible. The Tunku said that the border between Brunei and Malaysia had also been agreed even before the formation of Malaysia.¹⁴⁵ Besides, the people of Sarawak and Sabah also opposed any suggestion to return Limbang to Brunei.¹⁴⁶ An underlying reason why the Malaysian government would not return the Limbang territories to Brunei was because it could have a negative impact on the position of the main ruling party (the Barisan Nasional) in Malaysian politics. The Malaysian Government responded immediately to the announcement of the claim on the radio and in the local newspapers, giving clear assurances that not an inch of Limbang would be returned to Brunei. In addition, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Abdul Razak, said that the United Kingdom did not support Brunei's claim.¹⁴⁷ In practice, therefore there was no prospect for Limbang to be returned to Brunei after the formation of Malaysia in September 1963.

¹⁴⁵ Sarawak Tribune, 16th October 1970.

¹⁴⁶ Borneo Bulletin 10th October 1970.

¹⁴⁷ Sin Chiew Jit Poh, 22nd and 23rd April 1974.

5.5. Epilogue

The Limbang issue surfaced specifically in the context of discussions and negotiations on the Malaysia proposal and both Brunei and Malaya attempted to use the territory in their strategy - Malaya to entice Brunei into the Federation, Brunei to include yet another element in the bargaining and counter-bargaining process. What is more, the Malaysian Federation was the main factor which eventually eliminated any possibility for the return of Limbang to Brunei. If there had been no Malaysia proposal, the British Government might have considered returning Limbang to Brunei on certain conditions. Instead both the British and Malaysian governments tried to deflect any claim by the Brunei Government. But Brunei never gave up the claim. The former Sultan of Brunei, having failed to regain Limbang during his reign, continued, after his abdication in 1967, to advise the present Sultan to press the claim to Limbang by arguing that the Malaysian Government should not keep something that did not belong to it, but should return it to its legitimate owner.¹⁴⁸

The Malaysian Government was equally convinced that, based on the Cobbold Commission's Report and the UN Commission Report on the question of self-determination of Sarawak's people, Limbang was legitimately part of Malaysia, so that Brunei's claim was baseless. However, Brunei has argued that, in the 1960s, no specific referendum had taken place to determine the wishes of the Limbang people (whether to join Malaysia or return to Brunei).

¹⁴⁸ The former Sultan of Brunei (Omar Ali Saifuddien) said Limbang had been taken away from Brunei without Brunei's consent and under Islamic law, a usurper is not entitled to ownership. Therefore, Malaysia had no absolute right over Limbang because it was the duty of the usurper to return Limbang to its rightful owner. See Daily Star, 9th October 1970.

At present, the issue remains unresolved. Brunei wants to settle the issue “between four eyes” (between the two leaders of the states) without the interference of a third party or middleman, so it is not known if the issue has been the subject of recent negotiations. However, it cannot be denied that the formation of Malaysia was a crucial element in preventing the return of Limbang to Brunei.

CHAPTER SIX

Foreign Involvement

6. 1. The Revival of TNKU

Two aspects of the effects of the Brunei Revolt need to be discussed. Internally, the Revolt sounded the death-knell of popular representative government in Brunei (to be discussed in Chapter Seven), while in the wider regional context, it served as the catalyst for Indonesia's policy of Confrontation with Malaysia.¹ It is the aim of this chapter to discuss this latter effect of the Revolt. Briefly, it will highlight the revival of the National Army of North Kalimantan (TNKU), the military left-wing of the PRB after the Revolt of December 1962. It will also analyse the connections of foreign powers such as the Philippines and Indonesia with the PRB. Its main theme will be to ascertain the nature and degree of Indonesian and PKI involvement in the Brunei conflict, particularly in terms of their relations with the TNKU. The involvement of outside powers also involved the deployment of multi-national forces in Borneo during the era of Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation from 1963 to 1966.

At first President Sukarno appeared to be indifferent to the idea of the Federation of Malaysia, but he later changed his mind; this was partly a response to the unsuccessful rebellion in Brunei in December 1962.² The armed struggle organised by the PRB did not end with the eventual capture of its field commanders, Sheikh Nikman³ and Jassin Affandy⁴ in April 1963 near Brunei Town.⁵

¹ The term "Confrontation" was coined by Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio, in January 1963, and it came to refer to Indonesia's efforts at that time to destabilise the new Federation, with a view to breaking it up. The actual war began when Indonesia launched a series of cross-border raids into Malaysian territory in early 1963. William Blum, 'Killing Hope'. [thirdtraveler.com/Blum/Indonesia 65 KH.htm](http://thirdtraveler.com/Blum/Indonesia%2065%20KH.htm), 2001).

² D.P. Mozingo, Sino-Indonesian Relations: an Overview, 1955-1965, United States Air Forces Project Rand, The RAND Corporation, California, 1965, p. 58.

³ Zariani, pp. 185-187.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 194-195.

⁵ Guy Arnold, Wars in the Third World since 1945, Cassel Villiers House, London, 1995, p. 95. See also Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, The People's Party of Brunei: Selected Documents, INSAN, the Institute of Social Analysis, Petaling Jaya, 1987, pp. 39-40.

Instead, the movement continued within the state on a small scale and then the conflict spread throughout the entire island of Borneo, and involved multi-national forces from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, and Malaysia. As Lord Selkirk said, "It would be rash to assume that the emergency in Brunei is over...The situation will continue to be precarious".⁶ Internally, although the Revolt had ended, the British army continued to protect Brunei from external aggression throughout the Confrontation period. Brunei continued to face enemies from within, namely, the dissident PRB element, supported by communist elements from outside. In other words, although the British army succeeded in crushing the Revolt by capturing the TNKU leaders, the struggle for the formation of USKU went on.

According to a Brunei Special Branch Report, in 1964 an attempt was made to unite dissident PRB elements in Ulu Temburong by using a different name, "Pasukan Perjuangan Kalimantan Utara" (PPKU) or "The North Kalimantan Struggle Group".⁷ In other words, PPKU represented the TNKU's continuing political goal of establishing USKU but under a different name.⁸ The TNKU revival was the brain-child of the PRB hierarchy in Berakas Detention Camp⁹ and Indonesia, with the intention of continuing the struggle halted by the failure of the December 1962 rebellion. Instructions and advice came from their PRB leaders at Berakas Detention Camp, through the wives of the detainees. This advice took the form of verbal messages encouraging ex-detainees to remain loyal to the struggle and to listen to news and commands broadcast over Radio Indonesia.¹⁰ Besides this underground movement, the wives of detainees and widows of TNKU personnel killed

⁶ David Lee, *Eastward: A History of the Royal Air Force in the Far East 1945-1972*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1984, pp. 202-203.

⁷ In Sarawak the movement took a different name but had the same objectives as PPKU, of opposing the Malaysia proposal and independence for NKKU. In Sarawak the communist elements who fled to the Indonesian border after the Brunei Revolt set up 'Pasukan Rakyat Kalimantan Utara' (PARAKU) and 'Pasukan Guerrilla Rakyat Sarawak' (PGRS) with the help of the PKI. All these groups worked together to fight for the independence of NKKU under the name of TNKU.

⁸ Poulgrain, G., p. 261.

⁹ D.O. 164/547, 'Preliminary paper on Investigations into Organisation in Temburong District of Brunei Commencing with discovery of Pasukan Perjuangan Kalimantan Utara (PPKU)' by Head Special Branch, Brunei.

¹⁰ Ibid.

in the December rebellion had set up a women's section of the PPKU in the Temburong area. It was believed that the membership comprised ten women, eight of whom were either wives of detainees and ex-detainees or widows of TNKU personnel. This was mentioned in the Report that:

...in September 1964, the wife of a detainee in Berakas Detention Camp received a letter from Berakas which was an encouragement to her to carry on the struggle in the certainty that they would eventually win and achieve independence for Kalimantan Utara.¹¹

According to Brunei's Special Branch: the branch was set up in the area of the Panduan River on the border with the Limbang district of Sarawak in May 1964.¹² According to a Special Branch Report, "PPKU had been brought into the area by a Limbang Malay who lived in the Ulu Temburong area and who travelled frequently between the two states".¹³ However, the organisation was actually promoted by Indonesian infiltrators working out of Long Bawan and by PRB leaders in the Berakas Detention Camp, according to an ex-TNKU corporal who was re-detained on 5th November 1964.¹⁴ According to him, after his release from Berakas, he was approached by another ex-detainee who was a PPKU member in the Temburong area in 1964.¹⁵

PPKU consisted of Malay nationalists who wanted to establish a Unitary State of Kalimantan Utara with Indonesian assistance. The backing from external sympathizers most probably came from Indonesian-based infiltrators via Long Bawan.¹⁶ After the 1962 Revolt, it seems that the Indonesian

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ In Long Bawan, the PRB leaders such as Yusof Ibrahim (he was enrolled in military training at Bandung Military Academy between late 1963 to January 1964) and Ampuan Yusof (who came to Jakarta from Brunei before the Revolt) together with Ahmad Zaidi (who came from Sarawak after the outbreak of the Revolt in Sarawak) had set up TNKU early in 1964. The trio joined the Indonesian Army and three battalions of Indonesian volunteers to fight the British Gurkha soldiers defending the border area. See Zariani, p. 206.

¹⁵ D.O. 164/547, Ibid.

¹⁶ Early contact between the TNKU personnel and the Indonesian army had taken place in January and April 1962. According to the Governor of North Borneo, three Kedayans from Merapok District in Sarawak had joined a group of 46-PRB members, who were selected for training at the Kalimantan-Indonesia border in April 1962. In May to June they moved to a place named Paking and stayed there for two months. While they were there, an Indonesian Army Lieutenant questioned them and told them that they had no travel documents. They returned to Sarawak. Shortly afterwards, in July 1962 they moved to Pulau Sapi near Melinau to a secret clearing. Again, the Indonesian Army

infiltrators might have contacted local residents¹⁷ in the Ulu Temburong area between November 1963 to September 1964.¹⁸ In September 1964, the group of infiltrators were fed by a Chinese shopkeeper at Ulu Belaban rubber estate.

PPKU's objective could only be achieved by violent means.¹⁹ The movement wanted to continue the struggle of the PRB to set up USKU.²⁰ However, the PPKU also co-operated with a subversive group which was influenced by the Communists. The Communist group in the area was linked with CCO²¹ (Communist Clandestine Organization) in Sarawak,²² which had an indirect connection with the PKI, especially after the outbreak of the revolt.²³ Overthrowing the Brunei government was the ultimate objective of the PPKU. Practically, the organisation was a revival of TNKU in modern guise. PPKU believed that its objective could not be reached without Indonesian assistance and acknowledged the need to be ready and waiting for the arrival of Indonesian reinforcements. Therefore, in preparation for this time, the members of the PPKU regularly listened to Radio

captain ordered them to return to Sarawak because they had no instruction or authority letter from Azahari or from the top leaders to train in Indonesia. This led to 18 of them starting back to the Tenom District of North Borneo and on 12th December 1962 they were arrested. See C.O. 1030/1012 Greater Malaysia-Indonesia Attitudes, Letter from Governor North Borneo to State of Secretary for the Colony, 22nd December 1962.

¹⁷ The historical background of PRB's contact with the Indonesians before and after the Revolt is explained in detail by Poulgrain, pp. 252-259.

¹⁸ D.O. 164/547, 'Preliminary paper on Investigations into Organisation in Temburong District of Brunei Commencing with discovery of Pasukan Perjuangan Kalimantan Utara (PPKU)' by Head Special Branch, Brunei.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ According to Poulgrain, even Pasukan Guerrilla Rakyat Sarawak' (PGRS) which worked with TNKU was aligned with Azahari's political goal of Kalimantan Utara. See Poulgrain p. 261.

²¹ The CCO was also known as the Sarawak Communist Organisation (SCO) and the North Kalimantan Communist Party (NKCP). Poulgrain, p. 275. See also Hara Fujio, 'The North Kalimantan Communist Party: a Preliminary Study', Borneo 2000, Proceedings of the Sixth Biennial Borneo Research Conference, Sarawak, 10th-14th July 2000, p. 203.

²² According to Hara Fujio in his article 'The North Kalimantan Communist Party', the CCO started to establish relations with TNKU in early 1963. The TNKU and CCO jointly participated in a riot in Sibu, Sarawak in August 1963. Some of the CCO leaders such as Tian Nong, Yap Choon Ho and Yang Zhu Zhong and Lay Choon operated jointly with Azahari on the Kalimantan border in January 1963. Lay Choon was appointed as Minister of Finance of USKU, a PRB-led government in exile in Jakarta. See Hara Fujio, pp. 203-204.

²³ The members of SUPP who were accused of belonging to the communist element began to be arrested by Sarawak Special Branch although they were unconnected with the rebellion. As a result, some of the communist elements fled to the Indonesian border and started to establish relations with the PKI. They made contact with Sofian who took charge of PKI pemuda groups and set up 'Pasukan Guerrilla Rakyat Sarawak' (PGRS) and 'Pasukan Rakyat Kalimantan Utara' (PARAKU). All these groups worked together with PRB under the name of TNKU under the command of Ahmad Zaidi (Sarawak) and Azahari (Brunei) in the fighting against Commonwealth troops. See Poulgrain, pp. 261-163.

Indonesia²⁴ and Radio Peking, and also recruited new members amongst ex-detainees. The PPKU and the Communist group had their administrative centre at the town of Bangar in Temburong; and comprised approximately 80 to 90 members,²⁵ divided into ten subversive groups. The communist groups were controlled by a thirty-year old Chinese from Sibu, a former school-teacher turned shopkeeper in Bangar, who appeared to have CCO links stretching back from Miri. However, the members of PPKU regarded the Communist group as identical under the umbrella of TNKU.²⁶

A branch of this movement was also set up in January 1964 in the Public Works Department at Bandar Brunei, where it was also known as PPKU. During 1964, there were reports of frequent subversive activity in the PWD workshop, mainly organised by a former leading figure in PRB who was the President of the Government Workers' Union (GWU). This was stated in the *Brunei Monthly Intelligence Report* by the Head, Special Branch of Brunei for March 1964:

From late January 1964, Ibrahim Bongsu and other former leading figures in PRB employed in the PWD Workshop in Brunei Town commenced to rally around them a group of workers, especially ex-detainees. The object of gathering these workers was ostensibly for the purpose of recruitment into GWU but a secondary and secret aim appears to have been to instill in them a sense of loyalty towards Azahari.²⁷

However, this movement was unsuccessful in getting support from the public within Brunei. The existence of PPKU was a sign of the TNKU's revival through the co-operation with the communist elements, namely, the CCO or SCO²⁸ and the support from Indonesians. Porritt was convinced there was ample evidence that CCO was working with the TNKU as he said:

...young Chinese communists, communist sympathizers and left-wing SUPP members who had fled from Sarawak to escape detention during the Brunei

²⁴ Radio USKU broadcasted in East Kalimantan area between 1963-1965. See Zariani, p. 199. See also Porritt, V.L., British Colonial Rule in Sarawak, 1946-1963, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1997, p. 105.

²⁵ D.O. 164/547 'Preliminary paper on Investigations on into Organisation in Temburong...'

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Sarawak Tribune, 10th June 1964.

uprising provided new recruits for the Tentara Nasional Kalimantan Utara (TNKU).²⁹

A key factor for the continuation of the TNKU's struggle under the name of PPKU within the state was the involvement of Indonesia, as a consequence of the Malaysia proclamation, which was immediately followed by Indonesia's Confrontation. Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad argued that the Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation was made possible by the outbreak of the Brunei revolution.³⁰ However, this view might be difficult to accept because the Revolt was just one of the reasons for Sukarno opposing Malaysia. As Saunders argued, "Indonesia was using the Brunei revolt as evidence to support its contention that Malaysia was a neo-colonialist plot which would maintain colonial rule in South-East Asia".³¹ In other words, the continuation of the military conflict in Borneo territories could be seen as the result of Sukarno's policy supporting the struggle of the Northern Borneo people to gain independence from the colonialists.³² To assess the foreign involvement in the Brunei conflict, a deeper study is needed of the initial contact before the outbreak of the Revolt, between the PRB and the foreign powers, namely, the Philippines and Indonesia.

6. 2. The Philippine Connection

The Philippine government became indirectly involved with the Brunei Revolt through the arrival of Azahari and his colleagues on the mainland of Luzon before the outbreak of the revolt, on 8th December 1962.³³ In the Philippine capital, Manila, Azahari had proclaimed the United States of

²⁹ Porritt, p. 105.

³⁰ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, The People's Party of Brunei: Selected Documents, INSAN, the institute of Social Analysis, Petaling Jaya, 1987, p. 41.

³¹ Saunders, p. 156.

³² Gelora Konfrontasi Mengganjang "Malaysia", Department of Information, Republic of Indonesia, 1st June 1964, p. 14. Both the Philippines and Indonesia were at odds with Malaya on the formation of the Malaysia Federation. So were the communists, who feared a strengthening of the anti-Communist bastions in the territories which would be included within the Federation of Malaysia. See Examiner 18th February 1963, p. 29.

³³ Azahari reportedly arrived in Manila from Singapore in early December 1962, and Zaini Haji Ahmad came directly from Brunei on the same day. Six other Borneans (not yet arrived in Manila) planned to leave on December 11 for the United Nations. See RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 9th December 1962.

Kalimantan Utara on the morning of the 8th December 1962, when he became the 'Prime Minister'.³⁴ The main question is, why did the Philippine Government permit Azahari to organise his political activities there, which could jeopardise its relations with Malaya and the British government.³⁵ The answer is clear. The Philippines disagreed with the British-sponsored Malaysia Plan, which included Northern Borneo.³⁶ President Macapagal of the Philippines, in a state of the nation speech, unleashed a blunt attack against the proposed organization of a British-sponsored Malaysian Federation, and reiterated emphatically the validity of the Philippine claims on North Borneo on legal³⁷ and security grounds.³⁸ The President, in opposing the proposed Malaysia Federation, argued that it would embrace North Borneo, which he considered went against the principle of self-determination, and indeed encouraged the continuation of colonialism.³⁹ Besides, the claim had been a useful issue as a diversion from the internal problems of the Philippines.⁴⁰

There was also the fear expressed in many responsible quarters in the Philippines that a military build-up in Indonesia, assisted by the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, posed a grave threat to Philippine security at her backdoor in the south. The result of an anti-Communist policy adopted by the Malaysia Federation, supported by the US and Britain, could escalate the

³⁴ Zariani, p. 170. See also A.G. Mezerik, Malaysia-Indonesia Conflict, International Review Service Vol. XI No. 86, New York, 1965, p. 67.

³⁵ A week after the revolt, Azahari and Zaini were evacuated from their hotel rooms by Philippine security staff. They were moved to Salvacion Apartment, in Central Manila and then to the Araneta Coliseum in Makati, in order to hide from the British authorities. See Zariani, p. 170.

³⁶ See Philippine Claim to North Borneo, Manila Bureau of Printing, 1964, p. 6.

³⁷ The Philippine government claimed that the Sulu Sultanate had sovereignty over Sabah from 1704 onwards; and in 1878, it had leased but not ceded Sabah to Overbeck and Dent and subsequently to the British North Borneo Company; nevertheless, the Sulu Sultanate retained possession of and sovereignty over Sabah. 29th April 1962, the heir of the Sultan of Sulu, Ismail Kiram, in a Deed of Cession, ceded to the Philippines its executive sovereignty over Sabah. See Symposium on Sabah, The National Historical Commission, Manila, 1969.

³⁸ Examiner, 18th February 1963, p. 4. See also Philippine Claim to North Borneo, Manila Bureau of Printing, 1964, p. 6.

³⁹ Philippine Claim to North Borneo, p. 6.

⁴⁰ Lau Teik Soon, Conflict Resolution in ASEAN: The Sabah Issue, Occasional Paper Series, Department of Political Science, University of Singapore, p. 4.

conflict.⁴¹ Macapagal indeed claimed that the formation of Malaysia would escalate the conflict between the communist and non-communist blocs in the region. Both President Macapagal and Vice-President Pelaez made it quite clear that the Philippines' Borneo claim would be pursued through the United Nations or the World Court, should the British refuse to discuss the matter further.⁴² Philippine politicians, first speaking on behalf of the heirs to the Sultan of Sulu, and later in the name of the Philippine Government, demanded the "return" of North Borneo.⁴³ Sukarno also supported the Philippine claim on a portion of North Borneo, in return, for which the Philippines must help Sukarno frustrate the Malaysia Federation.⁴⁴ More importantly, the establishment of Malaysia would also make Philippine's claim of sovereignty, jurisdiction and proprietary ownership of North Borneo even more difficult, if not unreasonable, to pursue.⁴⁵

Although the Philippine Government was worried about Indonesia's expansionist policy, reflected in Jakarta's support for the Brunei Revolt, President Macapagal agreed with Sukarno's later policy of opposing Malaysia until the creation of the Maphilindo Concept in January 1964.⁴⁶ The Philippine Government believed the establishment of Malaysia would prompt Sukarno to attempt to take over Sarawak, Brunei, and North Borneo. Macapagal insisted that Malaysia was nothing less than an unnatural, illogical British device and, furthermore, that the British lacked the stomach to defend it against Sukarno. He believed that the ideal solution would be an independent nation of the

⁴¹ SEATO was established in 1954 in Manila. It consisted of Australia, France, Pakistan, Philippines, United Kingdom, United States, Thailand and New Zealand as members. It was a defensive military alliance, similar to NATO. See Benjamin B. Domingo, The Making of Filipino Foreign Policy, The Foreign Service Institute, Manila, 1983, pp. 164-167.

⁴² Examiner, 18th February 1963, p. 4. The Colonial Office thought the Philippine's claim ridiculous and refused to negotiate about it. However, the British government invited the Philippine government to discuss the security problem in the areas which indirectly could change the latter's claim on Sabah. See F.O. 371/169678, North Borneo.

⁴³ RG 59 1960-63, Memorandum prepared for Senator Mansfield, 'The Borneo Territories', p. 2.

⁴⁴ Examiner, 11th March 1963, p. 6.

⁴⁵ In Sabah the people had already given their answer to the Philippines that they did not want to be ruled by Manila. They considered the claim was invalid and unproven. See Berita Harian, Singapore, 28th December 1962.

⁴⁶ The Philippines refused to recognise Malaysia when it was formed in September 1963, and recalled its Ambassador from Kuala Lumpur. This was because the Philippines considered that the UN report regarding the wishes of the people of Sabah was unacceptable. See Lau Teik Soon, 'Conflict Resolution in ASEAN: The Sabah Issue', Occasional Paper Series, Department of Political Science, University of Singapore, 1974, p. 8.

entire island of Borneo under a United Nations guarantee.⁴⁷ Macapagal said that Sukarno was committed to the principle of self-determination for colonial peoples and once Sarawak-Brunei achieved independent status, Sukarno would have to respect a United Nations guarantee.⁴⁸

Initially, it looked as if the PRB's struggle was supported by the Philippine Government⁴⁹ but in reality, Azahari was only supported by Nick Osmena, a private lawyer, and grandson of a former Philippine President,⁵⁰ who also represented the heirs of the Sultan of Sulu in their claim to ownership of British North Borneo.⁵¹ The reason for Osmena's support for Azahari's struggle was mainly financial. He hoped that it would make it easier for him to pursue the claim to North Borneo against the British. Furthermore, in return, if Azahari succeeded in setting up his government, Osmena would gain royalties from oil production in Brunei, and even a timber concession in North Borneo.⁵² The PRB was also supported by the Muslim movement in southern Mindanao, which was also anti-colonialist.⁵³ It seemed that the Sultan of Sulu and other Muslim groups in the southern Philippines signified their support for Azahari's struggle for Borneo's independence by offering him the titles of Dato and Raja,⁵⁴ but Azahari had not confirmed his acceptance of the titles.

⁴⁷ RG 59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 9th January 1963.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ On 14th December the Tunku told the UK High Commissioner, Mr. Tory, that he believed that the Government of Philippines was not involved in the Brunei Revolt. Therefore, the Tunku agreed with the Philippine policy of letting Azahari continue his political propaganda in Manila, where he was less dangerous than he would be elsewhere. The Tunku was particularly anxious about Azahari reaching Jakarta. The government of the Philippines had told the Tunku that it would not deport Azahari unless pressed. At the same time, the Tunku would not ask for deportation and wanted HMG to follow the same course. See RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Kuala Lumpur to Department of State, 15th December 1962.

⁵⁰ David Tham, 'The Brunei Revolt', Borneo 2000: Politics, History and Developments, Preceedings of the Sixth Biennial Borneo Research Conference, 10th-14th July 2000, p. 140.

⁵¹ Nicasio Osmena was a Chairman and the Treasurer of Kiram Corporation. His main task was to claim North Borneo, which had been leased to the North Borneo Chartered Company by the Sultan of Sulu. See Ahmady Hassan, Ke mana Azahari, (*Where's Azahari*), United Development Corporation, Kedah, p.27 and 32. According to Azahari, the Sultan of Sulu agreed to surrender Sabah to the Sultan of Brunei through the formation of USKU. In return, he asked the Sultan of Brunei to build a palace for him in Sabah and grant him certain concession rights. Interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor, Indonesia.

⁵² Therefore, during Azahari's stay in Manila, everything was financed by Osmena under the name of the Kiram Corporation. The support from Osmena lasted until his death in January 1963, which led Azahari to move to Jakarta. See Ahmady Hassan, pp. 34-45.

⁵³ Ahmady Hassan, p. 36.

⁵⁴ The Straits Times, 15th December, 1962.

According to Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, a meeting between the PRB and the Vice-President of the Philippines, Emanuel Palaez, took place in October 1962, regarding the Northern Borneo territories. The outcome of the meeting showed that the Vice-President supported the right of the people of the Northern Borneo territories to self-determination and independence through the formation of USKU but excluding North Borneo.⁵⁵ In other words, on behalf of the Sultan of Sulu, who had the proprietary rights to a certain portion of North Borneo, the Philippine Government refused to surrender the territory to the proposed 'government' of USKU under the leadership of Azahari.⁵⁶ As Palaez said, the Philippine government was willing to consider recognising the USKU government, on condition that it would comprise only Brunei territory.⁵⁷ Therefore, Osmena's plan, providing *inter alia* for surrender of the Philippines' sovereign rights in North Borneo to a new State comprised of three Borneo territories under the Sultan of Brunei,⁵⁸ contradicted the stand of the Philippine government.⁵⁹

As mentioned earlier, support for Azahari came from the Muslim elite in the Southern Philippines, who had been lobbied by PRB leaders, as well as from other pressure groups committed to democracy and self-determination in the Philippines. Some Philippine supporters offered to lead volunteer forces to fight alongside the rebels; others offered non-military support, including sponsoring the PRB's mission to the United Nations. Mr. Pendatun, the Muslim Speaker of the House of Parliament, supported "Borneo's claim to independence". Furthermore, he said that as a

⁵⁵ Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, The People's Party of Brunei: Selected Documents, INSAN, the institute of Social Analysis, Petaling Jaya, 1987, pp. 31-32.

⁵⁶ The Philippine Government took over the task of claiming North Borneo on behalf of the Sultan of Sulu (Kiram Corporation) after the death of Nicasco Osmena in early 1963. See Ahmady Hassan, p. 53.

⁵⁷ Zariani, p. 172.

⁵⁸ F.O. 371/ 166601, Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office from Kuala Lumpur, 29th October 1962. The surrender of North Borneo to the prospective Azahari government led the Tunku to make another move. According to Nicasio Osmena (in his interview with Alex Josey on 18th January 1963) the Tunku had offered the Kiram Family 26 million pounds to settle the Sabah claim. The Malayan Embassy denied it, but it was a fact. What the Tunku did not know was that it was no use talking to the heirs. They had transferred all their rights to Osmena's corporation. See RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Singapore to Secretary of State, Washington, 18th January 1963.

⁵⁹ Zariani, p.177.

“Filipino with Malayan blood flowing in my veins, although the Philippine claim of sovereignty over North Borneo apparently conflicts with the proclamation of independence by the people of USKU composed of Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo, I favour the people’s proclamation of independence. This is in line with the inherent right of every dependent state to self-determination”.⁶⁰

Although the Philippine government denied giving any material support to Azahari’s struggle, Azhari’s presence in the Philippines gave the impression to the British and the Americans that the Philippine government indirectly recognized the formation of the USKU government.⁶¹ The reason for this denial might have been because of British and American pressure,⁶² since the Philippines needed SEATO to continue providing an external security guarantee. Also, the Philippines did not want to jeopardize the second ASA summit in early 1963, in Manila.⁶³ President Macapagal, in his discussion with an American diplomat in Manila two days after the Brunei Revolt, said that both Azahari and Zaini had been in transit in Manila on their way to New York.⁶⁴ Therefore, it could be argued that Azahari was abusing Philippine hospitality by using the country as a base for his insurrection in Brunei against the British, who were staunch friends and allies of the Filipino

⁶⁰ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Department of State, Washington, 12th December 1962.

⁶¹ During the Brunei Revolt, two Filipino labour leaders publicly declared they had organised Filipino volunteers to reinforce Azahari’s helter-skelter troops. In spite of this apparent meddling and possible involvement in international armed hostilities, Malacanang and the Foreign Office did not say anything, much less do anything, to discourage and stop the plan. *Examiner*, 4th February 1963, p. 8.

⁶² Pelaez in his interview with Haji Zaini Ahmad at Batasang Pembasa Filipina (National Assembly) on 11th November 1981 acknowledged that Britain and the US were putting political pressure on the Philippine Government not to recognize USKU. Zariani, p. 177. See also F.O. 371/ 169678, Telegram from Colonial Office to Washington, 28th December 1962.

⁶³ ASA was an Association of South-East Asia including the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia. It was formed in 1961 with the aim of establishing an effective machinery for consultations, collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, cultural and administrative fields. The suspension of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Malaysia in 1963 over rival claims of Sabah, incapacitated ASA for a few years. To fill this vacuum the confederation of Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia -Maphilindo was formed in August 1963. Although Malaysia subsequently withdrew, the Philippines and Indonesia continued their association. With improvement in Philippines-Malaysia relations, ASA foreign ministers met in Bangkok in 1966 and decided to strengthen and enlarge the Association which later led to the formation of ASEAN. See Benjamin B. Domingo, *The Making of Filipino...*, p. 181.

⁶⁴ It had been argued that Philippine involvement was connected with Mr. Atienza’s relation with PRB leaders when he attended a press conference with the latter. However, the Philippine Government replied that Mr. Atienza did not

people. Nick Osmena, he said, deserved censure for his part in "*l'affaire Azahari*", which had continued to embarrass the Philippines greatly.⁶⁵

On the afternoon of 8th December 1962, Azahari sent a telegram to the United Nations Secretary General: "The United people of Brunei, Sarawak and British North Borneo under the leadership of Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien this morning proclaimed a Unitary State of Kalimantan Utara. Effective military control was established in key areas to ensure orderly organization of new government and protect life and property...."⁶⁶ Azahari's cable however, did not receive any answer from the UN.⁶⁷ At the same time, he also sent a telegram to President Kennedy, demanding the intervention of the US government for the settlement of the PRB's conflict with the United Kingdom and the recognition of the government of the Unitary State of Kalimantan Utara.⁶⁸

However, the Department of State in Washington advised the White House not to reply to the telegram, because Azahari did not represent a government recognized by the United States. Furthermore, the PRB revolt was considered to be against the Government of Brunei which was protected by the United Kingdom, and Azahari's arrest had been ordered by the Government of Brunei.⁶⁹ As President Kennedy said: "the Federation of Malaysia is the best hope of security for a very vital part of the world", by which he meant Southeast Asia.⁷⁰

represent the Government of the Philippines, because he was no longer a legal advisor at Malacanang. See RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 10th December 1962.

⁶⁵ *Examiner*, 4th February 1963.

⁶⁶ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 9th December 1962.

⁶⁷ *The Straits Times*, 14th December 1962

⁶⁸ Zariani, p. 172.

⁶⁹ RG59 1960-63, Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, the White House from William H. Brubeck, Department of State, Washington, 12th December 1962.

⁷⁰ *Examiner* 11th March 1963, p. 5.

On 11th December 1962, A.M.Azahari and Zaini Haji Ahmad applied to the American Embassy in Manila for visas to visit New York for three months.⁷¹ The purpose of the visit was to seek United Nations recognition for the government of USKU.⁷² However, their applications were rejected by the American Embassy. The only visa granted was for Miss Aida Frencillo, a Filipino stenographer who was hired by Azahari.⁷³ The failure of Azahari to obtain a U.S. visa was a result of the U.S. policy towards the rebellion. Azahari did not acknowledge the limiting factors of the absence of a UN invitation for him to come to plead his case and the withdrawal of Azahari's passport.⁷⁴ On the same day, the British Consul delivered a letter to Azahari, informing him that his "passport facilities" had been withdrawn.⁷⁵ The same action was also taken with regard to Zaini's passport on 12th December. However, their booking on a flight to New York via Honolulu and San Francisco was still available. According to the American Embassy they might attempt to use Malayan passports issued under aliases.⁷⁶ Ultimately, the attempt to continue their mission to the United Nations failed.

In January 1963, Azahari and Zaini misunderstood and distrusted each other⁷⁷ over their struggle for the establishment of USKU; they fell out.⁷⁸ In January 1963, Zaini met an official from the British Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia at Lord Selkirk's office at Phoenix Park in Singapore,⁷⁹ and agreed to surrender to the British authorities in Hong Kong, on condition that he

⁷¹ Zariani, p. 171.

⁷² RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 11th December 1962.

⁷³ The US Embassy rejected their applications on the ground that their passports were invalid. See Zariani, p. 171 and also RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 9th December 1962.

⁷⁴ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Jakarta to Department of State, 19th December 1962.

⁷⁵ According to Mr Warney (Officer from British Foreign Office) Azahari's passport was cancelled by the British authorities on December 11 1962, but he said that Azahari might hold several passports. See RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, London to Secretary of State, Washington, 11th December 1962.

⁷⁶ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 13th December 1962.

⁷⁷ Please refer to Ahmady Hassan for the reason for Zaini's surrender to the British authority. See Ahmady Hassan, pp. 54-56. See also Zariani, p. 184.

⁷⁸ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Daressalaam info: AmEmbassy London, Jakarta, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, 31st January 1963.

⁷⁹ Please refer to Zariani Abd. Rahman for further information regarding the meeting between Zaini with the British Official. At last Zaini held the British to their promise given to him in Hong Kong, instead of being thrown into Berakas Prison in Brunei. Zariani, pp. 183-184. See also Ahmady Hassan, p. 54.

was given political asylum.⁸⁰ According to some sources, there was agreement between Zaini and the British about his future.⁸¹ Azahari continued his struggle by departing for Jakarta on 28th January 1963,⁸² as reported in the Philippine press:

Local war propaganda smog has cleared since Azahari's Manila press bureau closed shop with the rebel chief's departure for Jakarta. While the Indonesian government has kept Azahari's whereabouts under wraps, it is probable that Azahari may have joined his rebel forces and Indonesian advisers somewhere in the border region of Sarawak and Indonesia-Borneo, to direct stepped-up anti British operations in the North Borneo territories under Indonesia impetus.⁸³

6. 3. Indonesian Support

The Tunku and Lee Kuan Yew alleged foreign interventions, in the Brunei Revolt, namely the involvement of the Indonesians and Communists.⁸⁴ In January 1963, the Tunku accused Indonesia of supporting the Brunei Revolt, claiming that the leader of the PRB, Azahari, wanted to become Prime Minister of the Federation of Kalimantan Utara (USKU) and "...has become the tool of a country (Indonesia) which envies these territories which will join Malaysia soon".⁸⁵ As the American Consul-General said:

Following the communist failure to block Malaysia by Barisan Sosialis moves in Singapore, a second communist attack through PKI in Indonesia was planned. Azahari with Indonesian background and connections and as leader of the radical

⁸⁰ BA/2862/1963, Detention Camp Brunei, SUK 199/62, 'Lawatan Kepada Orang Tahanan Yang Kenamaan', 17th September 1963. In Zaini's meeting with his wife at Berakas Prison, he asked her to ask Mr. Noel Rees in Limbang to see him to discuss the promise that was given by the British authorities in Hong Kong. In July, 1965, Zaini sent a petition to the Secretary of State for "legal protection". See F.C.O. 24/212, Internal Security Situation, 'Debate on the Motion for the Christmas Adjournment 1967, Detainee in Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore, Defensive Brief for the Leader of the House of Common.

⁸¹ See F.C.O 24/204, Brunei Political Affairs, Mrs. Rugayah Zaini to Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, Whitehall, 9th October 1967., 1st April 1967, or 'Detention of Zaini Haji Ahmad in Brunei', F.C.O 24/204 Brunei Political Affairs, Memorandum from Mr. Reed to the Private Secretary to the Commonwealth Secretary Relations, or F.C.O 24/204 Brunei Political Affairs, Letter from Mr. Roberts, The London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, Aldwych, London, 21st December 1967.

⁸² Zairani, p. 196.

⁸³ Examiner, 18th February 1963, p. 29.

⁸⁴ In April 1963, Peking announced its support for Azahari's struggle. A joint communique was then announced by the Chinese and Indonesian governments, which offered resolute support for the people of North Kalimantan in their righteous struggle of self-determination and independence. Mazingo, D.P., Sino-Indonesian Relations: An Overview, 1955-1965, p. 60. See also Sukarno-Liu Shao-ch' i joint communiqué, Peking Review, 26th April, 1963.

⁸⁵ Strait Times, 7th January, 1963.

and dominant Brunei political party seemed the logical tool and the weak Malay State, Brunei, seemed the logical target.⁸⁶

The above allegation might be logical because the PKI had influenced Sukarno to adopt the Confrontation policy towards Malaysia. In addition, the Tunku accused the Indonesian Communists of trying to expand their influence into Malaya.⁸⁷ In Singapore, the left-wing Barisan Sosialis announced their support for Azahari's struggle against colonialism and imperialism.⁸⁸ The PRB had initial contacts with the Barisan Sosialis before the Revolt took place; Azahari had met Lim Chin Siong, the leader of the Barisan Sosialis prior to the Revolt.⁸⁹ However, Lim disagreed with Azahari's plan for the Revolt because the PRB could not match the strength of the British military.⁹⁰ The relations between these two leaders and the PKI led the Tunku to allege that Azahari was a communist.⁹¹ However, no concrete evidence was found which conclusively laid the cause of the Revolt on the Communists' doorstep. The Tunku also claimed that Azahari and his followers revolted in the hope of bringing the three Borneo territories under foreign rule (that of Indonesia). Guy Arnold perceived a connection between the two events - the Brunei Revolt and Confrontation in that, the Indonesians might have been involved indirectly in the Revolt. As the Tunku said:

Azahari, in any case, had been an absentee politician and was thought to be in league with the President of Indonesia, Sukarno, who was shortly to launch his

⁸⁶ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Kuala Lumpur to Secretary of State, Washington 11th December 1962.

⁸⁷ The Indonesian Herald, 26th December, 1962.

⁸⁸ Strait Times, 13th December 1962.

⁸⁹ Interview with Lim Chin Siong, Singapore, 11th April, 1994.

⁹⁰ Ibid. See also Zariani, p. 171.

⁹¹ In Manila (11th December 1962) Mr. Pilcher, Ambassador of the United Kingdom was interviewed by the Manila Bulletin. He reportedly said Azahari did not believe he was a communist, although he "leans to the left" and was supported by the Left Wing Socialists in Singapore who opposed a Federation of Malaysia. Even in my interview with him at Bogor in April 1994, he denied the allegation that he was a communist. As he said, "in the political struggle, it was normal to cooperate with the left wing groups such as communists in order to get international support. But it does not mean that you are a follower of that group, i.e. become communist". I agreed with his idea because in politics there is no barrier in terms of working together or helping each other to achieve the goal. For example in Malaysia the PAS (Islamic Party) works with non-Islamic political parties such as DAP (Democratic Action Party). Globally, the Islamic Countries in the Middle East also established relations with Communist States such as Russia. Interview with A.M. Azahari, Bogor, 7th April 1994. See also Zariani, pp. 171 and 217 and RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 11th December 1962.

'confrontation' with Malaysia's Borneo territories. This rebellion could well be seen as a trial run.⁹²

The leader of the Sabah Alliance Party, Donald Stephens, told the Legislative Council that many Brunei rebel leaders were either members of or trained by the Indonesian Communist Party. As he said:

We know that a number of these rebels were trained in Tarakan (East Kalimantan) and inside Indonesian territory, although there is no proof that they were trained by Indonesian Army personnel.⁹³

After the Brunei Revolt, Lee Kuan Yew corresponded with Stephens, and mentioned that there were signs of foreign involvement in providing arms and training to the resistance movement in Borneo prior to the Brunei Revolt with the aim of taking over the Borneo states.⁹⁴ However, no military training was given by Indonesians before the Revolt, although the PRB had a link with the Indonesian Communist Party,⁹⁵ until after the establishment of the PRB's HQ in Jakarta in early 1963.⁹⁶

As regards Brunei's relations with Indonesia, Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien did not have any personal contacts with Indonesian leaders in the 1950s and 1960s. This was mainly because Brunei's external relations with other foreign countries were handled by the British under the agreement of 1959. However, from after the rebellion until the end of Confrontation in 1966,

⁹² Guy Arnold, *Wars in the Third World since 1945*, Cassel Villiers House, London, 1995, p. 94.

⁹³ The Central Intelligence Board (BPI or Bureau Pusat Inteligen) under Subandrio gave military training to Chinese youths from Sarawak including the Brunei Malays only after the outbreak of the Brunei Revolt. Before the outbreak of the Revolt the PRB had sent two groups of its member to East Kalimantan to get military training from the TNI but they were ordered to return to Brunei. This was admitted by Indonesian army commander East Kalimantan, General Soehario. Interview with General Soehario, Hyatt Hotel, Jakarta 1994. See also Poulgrain, pp. 254-255, and 271.

⁹⁴ According to Mozingo, several hundred rebels had received training in Indonesia Borneo prior to the uprising in 8th December 1962. See Mozingo, *Sino-Indonesian Relations: An Overview, 1955-1965*, p. 58. See also State of Singapore, *Annual Report 1962*, p. 28.

⁹⁵ Ibid. A.M. Azahari acknowledged his personal and PRB relations with the Communist elements. Furthermore he said that this issue was common in the struggle for independence against colonialism. Interview with Azahari, Bogor, Indonesia. See also Zariani, p. 171.

⁹⁶ On 20th December 1962, Azahari announced that Ahmad Fadillah would be appointed as 1st Ambassador of USKU who would be stationed in Jakarta. See Zariani, p. 179.

Indonesia's relations with Brunei and the United Kingdom deteriorated considerably.⁹⁷ In other words, Indonesia had indirectly intervened in the political conflict in Brunei by giving moral and material support to the TNKU after the outbreak of the Brunei Revolt.⁹⁸ The Indonesian government denied that it was involved, and described the allegations made by Tunku Abdul Rahman as 'very provocative'.⁹⁹ However, at the end of December 1962, there was a change in the Indonesian attitude towards Azahari's struggle. Indonesia began to show sympathy for the PRB's struggle for the independence of Northern Borneo, which it now considered as a struggle against 'colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism'.¹⁰⁰ As Sukarno said, 'We take sides with people who are struggling, but Indonesia has no desire to expand its territory, except for West Irian'.¹⁰¹

Under the Sukarno regime, Indonesia appeared to be an aggressive power which raised the slogan of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism in Southeast Asia. In supporting this principle, Indonesia swore that it would continue to support and to help any struggle for freedom from the Western Powers. Therefore, Sukarno automatically recognized the establishment of USKU which was proclaimed by Azahari as 'Prime Minister' on 8th December 1962 in Manila. The positive response from Indonesia led Azahari to continue his struggle by setting up the PRB headquarters in Jakarta in early 1963. Thus, the failure of Azahari's mission to the United Nations was not the end of the PRB struggle. According to Zariani, Azahari was taken to Jakarta from Manila by an Indonesian military

⁹⁷ After the formation of the Malaysian Federation in 16th September 1963, the British Embassy in Jakarta was destroyed by anti-Malaysia demonstrators.

⁹⁸ According to Ghani Metussin (TNKU) 29 members of TNKU were trained by TNI-Colonel Hassan Basri at Balikpapan for nearly three months starting from January 1963. After completing training for three months, they were sent back to the Sarawak and Sabah borders to fight the Commonwealth troops. According to Azahari, Subandario played an important role in helping PRB members to get military training after Azahari went to Jakarta from Manila in January 1963. Yasin Affendy admitted that TNI Colonel Hassan Basri was involved in the Kalimantan Utara issue. Poulgrain, pp. 266, 275-276. See also *The Straits Times*, 12th December 1962.

⁹⁹ *The Straits Times*, 15th December 1962.

¹⁰⁰ J.A.C Mackie, *Konfrontasi: The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, p. 203.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

aircraft, escorted by four other military planes.¹⁰² In Jakarta, Azahari met General Nasution, the leader of TNI, and Subandrio, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. One week after his arrival, Azahari had an hour-long meeting with President Sukarno at Istana Merdeka and during this meeting, Sukarno reiterated his support for Azahari's struggle, saying:

We must support you. It is our obligation. You supported us in our struggle, our revolution. You gave us your support, you gave your life. We consider you brothers in Kalimantan. We give you full support.¹⁰³

By supporting the PRB, Indonesia felt that it could indirectly maintain the stability and security of Southeast Asia. It was the view of the Indonesian Government that any change in the political status quo of the region like the incorporation of the Borneo territories into a Federation could undermine security and stability. Therefore, such a change should become a matter for mutual consultation among the countries concerned.

The feeling of suspicion towards the Malaysia scheme was growing among leading Indonesian politicians, especially the PKI, after the outbreak of the Brunei rebellion. The Indonesian government alleged that Article 6 of the Malaysia Agreement could endanger Indonesian security,¹⁰⁴ because it stipulated among other things that Malaysia would afford the United Kingdom the right to maintain her military bases and permit Britain to use those bases for the preservation of peace in Southeast Asia.¹⁰⁵ Indonesia claimed it had no alternative, for reasons of national security, but to oppose the British-Malayan plan for a Federation.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² According to Poulgrain, Subandrio's BPI (Biroeau Pusat Inteligent) arranged for Azahari's departure from Manila to Jakarta. Poulgrain, G., p. 271. See also Zariani Abdul Rahman, p. 197.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ From Radio Moscow, Radio Peking, and the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee Secretariat in Cairo came denunciations of the Malaysia Plan as a neo-colonialist plot aimed at preserving British economic and military domination while denying the local people their demand for self-determination. Therefore, Indonesia was not alone against the Malaysia Federation. See RG59 1960-63, Memorandum prepared for Senator Mansfield 'The Borneo Territories', pp. 2-3.

¹⁰⁵ Gullick, p. 107.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 108.

Clearly, Indonesia's involvement in the Brunei Revolt was connected with the imminent formation of Malaysia. Therefore, Brunei's external political relations after the revolt cannot be separated from the Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation. The Indonesian Ambassador in Kuala Lumpur, General Djatikusmo, in his meeting with Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien at the Chevron Hilton Hotel in Sydney, Australia in June 1964 said that Brunei could not escape from Indonesia's Confrontation policy, even though it had not joined Malaysia.¹⁰⁷ In response, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien stated that if Indonesia continued to threaten Brunei's security, he would not hesitate to secure military aid from his allies.¹⁰⁸

British diplomats in Jakarta believed that there was another reason for Indonesian involvement in the Brunei Revolt: lack of knowledge about Brunei politics. In December, several Indonesian officials had confessed that they were unaware that Brunei was not a British colony but an autonomous State, with its own Sultan and Government.¹⁰⁹ Yet again, it did not seem to have been understood in Indonesia that there were no British troops in Brunei before the Revolt began.¹¹⁰ Those which were subsequently sent there were asked for by the Sultan and his Government under the terms of their treaty with Her Majesty's Government.¹¹¹

Indonesia never made any territorial claim on the Borneo States.¹¹² However, because of its aggressive foreign policy, it looked as if Indonesia was ambitious to expand its territorial boundary into British Borneo.¹¹³ This might well have been the interpretation of some Philippine journalists who looked at Sukarno's well-known design for a greater Indonesia, which mainly resulted from the continuing internal pressures for outside diversions on an Indonesian government which was

¹⁰⁷ Sabihah Osman & Muhammad Hadi Abdullah, p. 226.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 6th-12th February 1963, p. 4.

¹⁰⁹ RG59 1960-63, Mr. Leslie Fry, British Embassy, Jakarta, 21st December 1962.

¹¹⁰ During the night of 8th December 1962, there was fighting between the rebels and the police (Brunei Police and Malayan Police). There were no British troops in Brunei until the arrival of a Gurkha battalion from Singapore on the evening of 8th December 1962.

¹¹¹ RG59 1960-63, Mr. Leslie Fry, British Embassy, Jakarta, 21st December 1962.

¹¹² Zariani, A.R., p. 182.

manifestly unable to meet the needs of its own people.¹¹⁴ Moreover, the Malaysian government was convinced that the reason for Indonesia's involvement with the Brunei Revolt was Sukarno's personal problem of "how to remain in power". Sukarno indulged in a game of checks and balances between the Army and the PKI.¹¹⁵ For example, in December 1961, the Central Committee of the PKI passed a Resolution condemning Malaysia as a form of neo-colonialism".¹¹⁶ And when the Brunei Revolt broke out, the PKI led mass rallies in the major cities of Indonesia, chanting anti-Malaysia slogans.¹¹⁷ As a result of these rallies, on 12th December 1962, Sukarno declared that the PRB's struggle had the sympathy of the Indonesians,¹¹⁸ a view reiterated by Dr. Subandrio, three days later. But Sukarno denied that his action had been influenced by the PKI.

On 12th December 1962, in Jakarta, the Minister of Information of Indonesia, Ruslan Abdul Ghani publicly asked for support for the rebels. In December 1962, Azahari announced that the chairman of Parti Nasional Indonesia (Partindo)¹¹⁹ had cabled him to the effect that volunteers from Partindo, Garwani (Women's Party), and the Youth Council of Indonesia were all ready to "help liberate Brunei". Azahari declined the offer for the time being, but asked the volunteers to stand by.¹²⁰

Then, on 15th December 1962, Foreign Minister Subandrio made a strong personal attack on the Tunku, saying that "if the Tunku is determined to use any occasion and any opportunity to be hostile towards Indonesia, there is no alternative other than to accept the challenge".¹²¹ Furthermore, Subandrio acknowledged that Indonesia supported the Brunei Revolt mainly because

¹¹³ Chris Chant, *SAS in Action*, Parragon, Great Britain, 1997, p. 28.

¹¹⁴ RG 59 1960-63, Memorandum prepared for Senator Mansfield 'Malaysia', p.7.

¹¹⁵ *Tripartite Summit Meeting Manila*, 30th July- 5th August 1963, Malaysia, p. 19.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Mackie, p. 189. See also Poulgrain, G., p. 297.

¹¹⁸ Poulgrain, p. 283.

¹¹⁹ The relations between Azahari (or the PRB) with Partindo had been established through Iskandar Kamel before the outbreak of the Brunei Revolt. See Poulgrain, G., p. 266.

¹²⁰ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Manila to Secretary of State, Washington, 14th December 1962.

¹²¹ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Kuala Lumpur to Department of State, Washington, 8th January 1963.

they had a common objective of pushing Confrontation towards Malaysia,¹²² and if an American military base were established in Northern Borneo under Malaysia, his Government would respond by inviting the Soviet Union to build one in Southern Borneo.¹²³ Finally, in February 1963, the Indonesian government adopted *in toto* an anti-Malaysia policy based on a PKI resolution passed by the Indonesian Parliament in 1961.¹²⁴ As Porritt wrote:

Indonesia officially declared its opposition to Malaysia on 13th February 1963 and set up a powerful radio station, the Voice of Freedom Fighters of Kalimantan Utara, to propagate anti-Malaysia propaganda to the Borneo states.¹²⁵

Thus the Indonesian government supported the PKI programme of sending irregular troops to Borneo and West Malaysia in order to “crush Malaysia”.¹²⁶ This demonstrated that the TNKU was used by the Indonesians, mainly the PKI, because they shared a common goal of opposing Malaysia. As General Yani said:

We will support any such efforts on the part of the people, as these volunteers had been asked by the North Kalimantan people to help them.¹²⁷

A few days after the outbreak of the Brunei Revolt, President Sukarno openly declared that Indonesia supported Azahari’s struggle for the unification of the Northern Borneo States (USKU).¹²⁸ Even General Nasution asserted his support for the PRB struggle, of which he said “their struggle is ours; their suffering is ours; their independence is ours...”.¹²⁹ Nasution emphasised the need to understand how strongly he and the Indonesian army felt about freedom and independence, in order to comprehend their attitude towards the North Kalimantan question. He

¹²² Utusan Sarawak, 5th December 1963.

¹²³ RG59 1960-63, Memorandum prepared for Senator Mansfield, ‘The Borneo Territories’, p. 3.

¹²⁴ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Kuala Lumpur to Department of State, Washington, 8th January 1963.

¹²⁵ Poulgrain, p. 283.

¹²⁶ Craig Philip and Alex Taylor, Inside the SAS, Bloomsbury Publishing Limited, Great Britain, 1992, p. 44.

¹²⁷ Indonesian Chronicle, 1963-1965, November 1964, p. 1.

¹²⁸ Poulgrain, p. 283.

¹²⁹ Utusan Sarawak, 24th September 1963.

said that Indonesia, unlike the Philippines, laid no claim whatever to any territory in this area.¹³⁰

The case was wholly different from that of West Irian, which had for centuries been part of Indonesia, but he wanted to see this area independent from the Western powers and looked forward to close and friendly cooperation with an independent state.

On 7th January 1963, Mr. Jones, an American diplomat in Jakarta, had a meeting with General Yani as chief of staff of the TNI, regarding the Brunei Revolt. General Yani said that at that moment, the Indonesian army was not giving any help or assistance to Azahari,¹³¹ but acknowledged that Partindo was giving support. He admitted frankly that Azahari had many friends in the Indonesian Army, that he had been a unit commander under General Sambas during the revolution, when he had learned guerrilla tactics, and claimed that the sympathies of the army were without question wholly with Azahari in this affair.¹³² From General Yani's statement, it could not be denied that, indirectly, the Indonesians were giving assistance to Azahari's struggle. Nasution confirmed this by saying frankly that if PRB groups from Brunei crossed the border into Indonesia and sought military training, the Indonesian army would supply such training.¹³³ As a result, in early 1963, a group of PRB members were trained in Balikpapan,¹³⁴ and eight others trained at Bandung Military Academy. It was estimated that in total Indonesia trained 6,000 rebels from the North Borneo territories during the 1963-1966.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ Zariani, p. 182.

¹³¹ RG59 1960-63, Amcongen, Jakarta to Secretary of State, Washington, 7th January 1963

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., 9th January 1963. According to Ampuan Yusof bin Ampuan Adul who came to Jakarta on 4th December 1962 for military training from the TNI, a week after the Brunei Revolt, the BPI under the order of General Magenda, sent him to Banjarmasin (West Kalimantan) with five other PRB members (Samad Jamaludin, Zahari Jais, Yusof Ibrahim, Nayan Serudin and Bakar Serudin) to undergo military training under the command of Colonel Hasan Basri. After one month of training, they departed to Long Nawang where Ampuan Yusof began to set up the TNKU under his own command as a Brigadier General. Interview with Ampuan Yusof bin Ampuan Adul, Brunei History Centre, Brunei Darussalam, 1994. See also Poulgrain p. 254.

¹³⁴ They were Yusof Ibrahim (Brunei), Kassim Abu Bakar (North Borneo), Mohamad Takir Laudin (North Borneo) and five others from Sarawak¹³⁴ underwent six months' military training at Bandung Military Academy.

¹³⁵ David Lee, Eastward: A History of the Royal Air Force in the Far East 1942-1972, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1984, p. 202.

6. 4. Confrontation

Immediately after the declaration of Malaysia on 16th September 1963, Sukarno embarked on a policy of "Confrontation" and later threatened to "crush" Malaysia. This led the Malaysian government formally to break diplomatic relations with Indonesia on 17th September.¹³⁶ The policy of Confrontation was intended as an attempt to destabilize the new Federation, with a view to breaking it up. This led to an undeclared war when Indonesia launched a series of cross-border raids into Malaysian territory in West Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.¹³⁷ In April 1963, Sukarno moved his troops and weapons from West Irian to Borneo in feverish preparation for the offensive on the former British territories. The troops that had been deployed in the West Irian campaign were no longer needed there after Sukarno had taken control of that territory from the Dutch. The troop movement and deployment in Borneo was kept as secret as possible.

In effect then, the Commonwealth Forces on the Borneo border were not fighting the TNKU but the regular Indonesian army.¹³⁸ Between 12th April 1963 to 16th September 1963, thirty-four incidents of border intrusions took place in Sarawak. Only four of those incidents were the result of TNKU action, while the others were caused by Indonesian volunteers.¹³⁹ Sukarno employed guerrilla tactics, and starting from early 1963, activity increased along the Indonesian side of the Borneo border, as small parties of armed men began infiltrating Malaysian territory on propaganda and sabotage missions. These cross-border raids, which at first were carried out by Indonesian "volunteers", continued throughout 1963; and by 1964, Indonesian regular army units had also become involved,¹⁴⁰ infiltrating Malaysian territories on propaganda and sabotage missions.¹⁴¹ As Harold James and Dennis Sheil-Small said;

¹³⁶ Mackie, p. 187.

¹³⁷ See Craig Philip and Alex Taylor, p. 44.

¹³⁸ Commonwealth Forces came from United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore.

¹³⁹ Porritt, V.L., pp. 106-109.

¹⁴⁰ Craig Philip and Alex Taylor, pp. 44-47.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

...with the failure of the Brunei revolt, Sukarno had to make a more direct move in his plan to 'crush Malaysia'. His main policy in the beginning was to divide the various states, break up the conception of unity, and bring Malaya and Singapore under a government subservient to Indonesia. His first object was to separate Sarawak and North Borneo from Malaysia using tactics based on Nasution's theories of guerrilla warfare.¹⁴²

The ambush by the Indonesian army at the Police Station, Tebedu on 12th April 1963¹⁴³ was a sign of Indonesian involvement in the TNKU's continuing struggle. Again, on 23rd April, 1963, fifteen Indonesian volunteers attacked a police post at Gumbang, in Sarawak's First Division. After attacking the Indonesians had left behind documents to indicate that the raid had been led by a lieutenant of the TNKU.¹⁴⁴ Consequently, in any ambushes carried out by the Indonesians, the TNKU was blamed. In Borneo, the name of the TNKU was used by the Indonesians to fight the Commonwealth troops.¹⁴⁵ At the site of every ambush, documents were left which implicated the TNKU.¹⁴⁶ As James and Sheil-Small wrote:

...the Indonesians left behind documents intended to give the impression that the operation had been carried out by TNKU volunteers and was an offshoot of the Brunei Revolt.¹⁴⁷

In practice, the TNKU had only attacked the Commonwealth troops at Tinting Lalang (3rd Division of Sarawak) on 9th August 1963, Long Lopeng (5th Division) on 19th August 1963 and Kiek (1st Division) on 7th September 1963.¹⁴⁸ According to General Ampuan Yusof¹⁴⁹ (who was in charge of

¹⁴² James, & Sheil-Small, *The Undeclared War...*, p. 56.

¹⁴³ 12th April, 1963, thirty Indonesian raiders penetrated three miles into Sarawak territory in the First Division, and attacked the police post of Tebedu. See Zariani, *Escape from Berakas, 1962 Brunei Revolt*, Al-Ahad Enterprise, Selangor, 1992, p. 196.

¹⁴⁴ James, & Sheil-Small, p. 60.

¹⁴⁵ Zariani, p. 196.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ James, & Sheil-Small, p. 60.

¹⁴⁸ Porritt, pp. 106-109.

¹⁴⁹ F.C.O. 24/212, Internal Security Situation, British High Commission, Kuala Lumpur to Mr. Bird, First Secretary, British High Commission, Brunei, 16th January 1968, Annex 'Brunei TNKU members detained in East Malaysia. General Amir with five other TNKU members surrendered to the Malaysian authority at Fifth Division on 31st December 1966. He was the leader of TNKU who was responsible for the formation of TNKU at the Borneo-Kalimantan border through co-operation with the Indonesian army led by General Basir. The entire TNKU operation in

the TNKU in East Kalimantan), in Tarakan 22,000 Indonesians were ready to receive his command to attack Borneo territories, including Brunei.¹⁵⁰ But he was reluctant to give it, because he did not want Borneo to be part of Indonesian territory and because he was worried that the Communists (PKI) would take power in Indonesia.

In September 1963, Ampuan Yusof, Ahmad Zaidi¹⁵¹ and Yusof Ibrahim were ordered by the Indonesian Military leaders to lead the TNKU fighters on the East Kalimantan border against the Commonwealth troops.¹⁵² In Long Bawan the trio were assisted by Indonesian volunteers and also supported by the TNI.¹⁵³ However, in East Kalimantan, most of the Indonesian regular army were communists. According to Poulgrain two Indonesian governors, A. Pranoto and Tjilik Riwut in East Kalimantan and Central Kalimantan, respectively were PKI sympathisers. Thus, in East Kalimantan the communist influence was very strong and the TNKU received substantial support from communist elements.¹⁵⁴ During December 1963, military action on the border increased. On 29th December 1963, the “freedom fighters” (TNKU) attacked a Sabah Police Station, 30 miles from Tawau. As the result of the attack, eight members of the Malaysian security forces were killed and nine others wounded.¹⁵⁵ In December 1963, Dr. Subandrio, in his capacity as “Panglima Komando Pembangunan Daerah-Daerah Perbatasan” (Chief Commando of the Countryside) visited

Borneo Kalimantan was under his command including the CCO members in Kuching. (Interview with Ampuan Yusof Ampuan Adul, Jabatan Pusat Sejarah, 1994).

¹⁵⁰ According to Lt. Col. Ambardy of Navy Information 12,000 naval personnel had volunteered to serve in the North Kalimantan forces. See *Indonesian Chronicle*, 1963-1965, December 1963, p. 1.

¹⁵¹ There was no clear explanation how and why Ahmad Zaidi was connected with the PRB's struggle. The account by Sanib Said did not give full details or the original story of Ahmad Zaidi's involvement with the PRB. Ahmad Zaidi himself admitted that the book did not reveal the whole truth concerning his involvement in PRB politics during the Confrontation era. However, unlike A.M.Azahari, after many years living in exile in Indonesia, Ahmad Zaidi was brought to Sarawak in the 1980s and appointed as the fifth Yang Di-Pertua Negeri of Sarawak on 2nd April, 1985 until his death in 5th December, 2000 at the age of 76 years old. Before joining the PRB in the 1963 struggle, he was a teacher in Sarawak after obtaining a Masters degree in Arts from the University of Edinburgh in 1954. However, after his return from study in the United Kingdom, he took an active part in the development of political movements in Sarawak. In other words, he was a Sarawak nationalist who fought for the independence of the state. *Sarawak Tribune*, 6th December 2000.

¹⁵² Zariani, p. 206.

¹⁵³ The TNKU co-operated with Army Para Commando Regiment (RPKAD), the 609 Company of Mulawarman Division, Military District (KODAM) and three battalions of Indonesian volunteers. See Zariani, p. 206.

¹⁵⁴ Poulgrain, p. 262, See also Chris Chant, *SAS in Action*, Parragon, Great Britain, 1977, p. 29.

¹⁵⁵ *Indonesian Chronicle*, 1963-1965, January 1964, p. 1.

Pontianak, West Kalimantan, where he met Azahari. He announced that Confrontation would be intensified when the 'North Kalimantan youth' finished their training in West Kalimantan in 1964.¹⁵⁶

Major General W.C. Walker was the General Officer Commanding the 17th Gurkha Division, and also the Director of Operations and Commander of British Forces, Borneo Territories. His headquarters were situated on the island of Labuan, a 50 kilometre helicopter ride across Brunei Bay.¹⁵⁷ He argued that, in the initial stages of Confrontation, the forces available to him consisted of only one brigade of three battalions, six naval minesweepers, and some 15 naval and air force helicopters. These numbers were not sufficient to protect the northern territories of Borneo (Sarawak, Sabah and Brunei) which covered an area of 76,000 square miles. Therefore, there was a need for the involvement of other allies to prevent Indonesian infiltration in Kalimantan. So during Confrontation, forces from New Zealand, and Australia,¹⁵⁸ as well as Malaysia¹⁵⁹ and the United Kingdom were involved.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., December 1963, p. 1.

¹⁵⁷ David Horner, SAS: Phantoms of the Jungle. A History of the Australian Special Air Service, Allen & Unwin, Australia, 1989, p. 82

¹⁵⁸ The first Australian battalion, 3 RAR, arrived in Borneo in March 1965 and served in Sarawak until the end of July. Its replacement, the 28th Brigade, 4 RAR, also served in Sarawak - from April until August 1966. Altogether, two squadrons of the Special Air Service, a troop of the Royal Australian Signals, several artillery batteries and parties of the Royal Australian Engineers were involved in Borneo, in addition to the two infantry battalions. Ships of the Royal Australian Navy served in the surrounding waters and several RAAF squadrons were also involved in Confrontation. See 'Australian Involvement in War and Conflict: Confrontation in Indonesia 1964-1966'. URL: http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/conflict_indonesia.htm, 2001.

¹⁵⁹ The Royal Malay Regiment (RAMD- Regimen Askar Melayu Diraja) was involved in Borneo operations after the declaration of Malaysia in September 1963. The 5th battalion of RAMD operated in the First Division of Sarawak under the command of Leftenan Colonel Shaari Daud. The 3rd battalion of RAMD operated in Sabah under the command of Leftenan Colonel Othman Rani. In December 1963, the 3rd battalion of RAMD suffered considerable casualties in an Indonesian raid in Sabah. See Mejar Syed Othaman Syed, Peranan Angkatan Tentera Malaysia Dalam Era Konfrontasi Malaysia-Indonesia, ATMA, National University of Malaysia, Bangi, 1995, p. 92. See also David Horner. The 1st and 2nd Singapore Infantry Regiments were also sent to East and West Malaysia to prevent the infiltration of Indonesian troops. See 'Confrontation,' Singapore International Media, Maediacity 1977. URL: <http://www.mediacity.com.sg/ndp96/ndp96/diary/confrontation.htm>, 2001.

¹⁶⁰ The exact number and forces involved in the Borneo Conflict are stated on pp. 40-41 Haji Zaini Haji Ahmad, The People's Party of Brunei :Selected Documents, INSAN, the institute of Social Analysis, Petaling Jaya, 1987.

‘A’ Squadron of the 22nd SAS Regiment was brought out from Britain to help in the mopping-up operations in January 1963 and was followed in April 1963 by ‘D’ Squadron under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Woodhouse.¹⁶¹ The main roles of these squadrons were: firstly reconnaissance by small SAS patrols; secondly, training and leading local units called Border Scouts; and thirdly, conducting “hearts and minds” operations in the distant border villages and encouraging the local people to report any Indonesian military activity.¹⁶² Locally in Sarawak, Tom Harrisson, Government Ethnologist and Curator of the Sarawak Museum, as well as a wartime guerrilla leader, used the Iban and Kenyah to assist the British military in rounding up the rebels. At the peak of the Confrontation in Borneo territories, it was estimated that Britain had deployed 17,000 servicemen.¹⁶³ These included seven battalions in Sarawak, not including the Malay Regiment which operated in Sabah. At the end of 1964, Lieutenant-Colonel Woodhouse asked for additional SAS soldiers to increase their strength as soon as possible. He suggested that the Australian SAS¹⁶⁴ would be involved in this operation.¹⁶⁵ In early 1965, the minimum estimate of troops concentrated on Borneo for the coming “active confrontation” was 30,000.¹⁶⁶ According to the *Indonesian Chronicle*, about 10,000 British troops were concentrated in Borneo in January 1964.¹⁶⁷ The Borneo conflict was not merely the fight of the TNKU to gain independence for USKU but a war between the Indonesians and the Commonwealth troops over the formation of Malaysia.

¹⁶¹ Horner, p. 65.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁶³ Guy Arnold, *Wars in the Third World since 1945*, Cassel Villiers House, London, 1995, p. 284.

¹⁶⁴ 1st SAS and 2nd SAS from Australia operated on the border between Kalimantan and Sarawak and Sabah. The 1st squadron arrived in Brunei on 26th February 1965 with 100 personnel.

¹⁶⁵ Horner, p. 66

¹⁶⁶ *Examiner*, 4th February 1963, pp. 7-8

¹⁶⁷ *Indonesian Chronicle*, 1963-1965, January 1965, p. 8

In January 1964, President Sukarno, the Tunku and President Macapagal entered into negotiations to address the conflict in Borneo territories through the application of the Maphilindo concept,¹⁶⁸ introduced by President Macapagal.¹⁶⁹ On 23rd January 1964, a meeting was held between the three leaders in Manila, where Sukarno and the Tunku agreed that a cease-fire would take effect on 25th January 1964. Under this agreement, both parties agreed that the problem of Malaysia would be settled by *musyarah* (consultation).¹⁷⁰ As a result of the announcement, Sukarno ordered a cease-fire by all Indonesian volunteers engaged in the independence struggle of “Kalimantan Utara”, as well as TNI troops.¹⁷¹ However, the consultation between the leaders¹⁷² did not bring any peaceful conclusion between Malaysia and Indonesia, because Sukarno argued that a cease-fire did not mean that Confrontation towards Malaysia would stop,¹⁷³ and there would be no withdrawal of Indonesian guerrillas from the fight.¹⁷⁴ Therefore, the fighting continued. At the end of February 1964, the Commonwealth troops undertook “mopping up operations”, in which a British Corporal was killed and four soldiers wounded by uniformed guerrillas at Lundu District in Sarawak. In a second incident, at Bau in Sarawak, three British and Malay soldiers were killed and six wounded.¹⁷⁵ It was reported that since the cease-fire, at least three Indonesian groups had infiltrated deep into Sarawak and Sabah in the month of February 1964.¹⁷⁶ However, the border conflict between the Indonesian “volunteers”, and the British and Malaysian armies did eventually come to an end by late 1965.

¹⁶⁸ President Macapagal who was responsible for the formation of Maphilindo tried to solve the conflicts between Malaysia and Indonesia. He invited the two leaders to meet in a Maphilindo Summit in Tokyo between 18th 20 June 1964 in seeking a solution to the Malaysia issue.

¹⁶⁹ In January, President Macapagal pursued a policy of reconciliation between Malaysia and Indonesia. He invited President Sukarno and Prime Minister to attend the second summit meeting of Maphilindo in Tokyo. The main agenda of the meeting were to study the problem and suggest solutions of their relations. See Mozingo, *Sino-Indonesian Relations: An Overview, 1955-1965*, p.178.

¹⁷⁰ *Indonesian Chronicle*, January 1964, p. 3.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² The second meeting of Maphilindo was held in Bangkok in 5th–10th February 1965 attended by Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr. Subandrio and Deputy Minister of the Federation of Malaysia, Tun Abdul Razak.

¹⁷³ *Indonesian Chronicle*, February 1964, p. 2.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Continuing negotiations between Indonesia and Malaysia eventually brought an end to the conflict, and the two sides signed a peace treaty in Bangkok in August 1966.¹⁷⁷ Generally speaking, there was much truth in a report by the American Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, to the effect that the Brunei affair had brought into the open the long-standing antipathy existing between the leaders of Indonesia and Malaya, and had seriously damaged already poor relations. It seemed highly unlikely that significant improvement would be possible without a change of personalities in the leadership of one or both countries.¹⁷⁸ The overall British and Commonwealth casualties came to 114 killed and 181 wounded (many of these were from the Gurkha battalions), while civilian casualties among the local people were 36 killed, 53 wounded and four taken prisoner. During the extensive operations on both sides of the border, the Australians¹⁷⁹ were involved in clashes with Indonesian regulars, and twice suffered casualties from land mines. Twenty-three Australians were killed during the Confrontation, seven of them on operations, and eight were wounded.¹⁸⁰ On the other side, Indonesian casualties were estimated at 590 killed, 222 wounded and 771 captured¹⁸¹ but no record is available of the TNKU's casualties. The Confrontation ended thanks to a Malaysian-Indonesian agreement in August 1966 when President Sukarno normalised relations with Malaysia.¹⁸²

However, the end of Confrontation did not mean that relations between Brunei and Indonesia were normalized, and the Indonesian government did not make any statement on their policy towards Brunei. Moreover, in the period after the GESTAPU incident, Indonesia had to face its own

¹⁷⁷ 'Australian Involvement in War and Conflict: Confrontation in Indonesia 1964-1966'. URL: http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/conflict_Indonesia.htm, 2001.

¹⁷⁸ RG59 1960-63, AmEmbassy, Kuala Lumpur to Department of State, Washington, 8th January 1963.

¹⁷⁹ Thus the Australian units which fought during the Confrontation did so as part of a larger British and Commonwealth force under overall British command. Australia's commitment in the Borneo operations fell within the context of its membership in the Far East Strategic Reserve. See 'Australian Involvement in War and Conflict: Confrontation in Indonesia 1964-1966'. URL: http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/conflict_Indonesia.htm, 2001.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Arnold, p. 284.

¹⁸² 'Indonesia 1965: Liquidating President Sukarno...and 500,000 others', excerpted from the book Killing Hope by William Blum. URL: http://www.thirdtraveler.com/Blum/Indonesia_65_KH.htm, 2001.

domestic problems and was trying to obtain substantial economic assistance from the Western powers. There was no intention of venturing into the field of extra-territorial aggrandizement. In other words, Indonesia was not expected to pose a direct threat to Brunei after 1965.¹⁸³ However, the Sultan's government was still very anti-Indonesia,¹⁸⁴ because of her previous policy towards the PRB, up until the early 1980s when Brunei became a member of ASEAN in 1984. As David Leake said:

...The ice on Indonesia relations was broken thanks mainly to President Suharto, who in contrast to his predecessor Sukarno does not favour expansionist diplomacy but stresses internal stability and economic development. President Suharto is credited with proposing in 1980 that Brunei become ASEAN's sixth member to Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, a long time friend of Sir Omar and Hassanal Bolkiah.¹⁸⁵

6. 5. Reasons for Indonesian Involvement

Let us return to the question of why Indonesia should have become involved in the Brunei Revolt. Was it because the formation of Malaysia was viewed by Sukarno as a neo-colonial plot which threatened Indonesian security by "encirclement of Indonesia"?¹⁸⁶ Or did it result from Indonesia's internal problems, which mainly related to Sukarno's political ambitions, and the question of how he could retain his position as Indonesian leader? Or thirdly, did Indonesia genuinely support the formation of USKU?

According to Sukarno, the Brunei Revolt and the establishment of Malaysia were not separate elements; they were interconnected. As Sukarno said, he could not support Azahari's struggle without declaring a Confrontation policy towards Malaysia.¹⁸⁷ Logically, however the Indonesians

¹⁸³ F.C.O. 15/289, Assessment of the likely Political and security Situation in Brunei up till the end of 1971, 'Outside Influence'.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ James, & Sheil-Small, *The Undeclared War...*, p. 60.

¹⁸⁶ Sukarno spoke at "Hari Raya Aidil Fitri" (Muslim big day) on 15th February 1964 that Malaysia was a British plan to encircle and undermine Indonesia. *Indonesian Chronicle*, February 1964, p. 3. See also RG59 1960-63, Memorandum prepared for Senator Mansfield, 'The Borneo Territories', p. 3

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Azahari, Bogor, Indonesia.

could have given support for the PRB based on their Pancasila philosophy of anti-neo-colonialism, anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism,¹⁸⁸ instead of embarking on a Confrontation policy towards Malaysia. In other words, the argument that the Malaysian Federation was a manifestation of neo-colonialism seemed to be an excuse for Sukarno to launch Confrontation. In practice, the main reason might well have been the existence of internal problems in Indonesia, such as the influence of the Communists in Sukarno's government. When Azahari arrived in Jakarta in January 1963, he told Sukarno, General Nasution and Dr. Subandrio not to launch Confrontation with Malaya.¹⁸⁹ However, the strong influence of the PKI within Sukarno's cabinet led the Indonesian government to adopt a "progressive" policy based on anti-colonialism and imperialism. Therefore, it seems that after Indonesian success in the Irian Jaya campaign, Indonesia took an active role in supporting the "struggle of the Northern Borneo people" by attempting to crush Malaysia, because Malaysia was seen to represent the re-emergence of a new colonialist scheme which was trying to prevent the formation of USKU. In 1963, Azahari once again tried to persuade Nasution to stop the Confrontation with Malaysia because Indonesia would not win the battle. Nasution replied that he could not do anything. As he said:

Bung Azahari (Brother Azahari) please understand my position. Although I am a General, my voice is very weak in KOTI (Indonesian High Command). I think KOTI will pursue the Confrontation policy towards Malaysia.¹⁹⁰

The Philippine newspapers had a different interpretation of Sukarno's involvement in Northern Borneo. According to the *Examiner*, Sukarno was itching to change the map of Indonesia by expanding it in the direction of Northern Borneo.¹⁹¹ In other words, the Philippine Press accused the Indonesian leaders of wanting the three North Borneo territories to join Indonesian Borneo instead

¹⁸⁸ *Malayan Times*, 17th January 1963.

¹⁸⁹ Zariani, A.R., p. 198.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

¹⁹¹ *Examiner*, 4th February 1963.

of Malaysia. They argued that it was logical geographically for British Borneo territories to be a part of Indonesia.¹⁹² However, Sukarno argued that the real reason for Indonesia supporting the Brunei rebels was that Indonesia supported any movement for freedom and independence from colonialism, as it had done in the cases of the people of Algeria, Angola and the Congo. Furthermore, he denied that his sympathy towards the Brunei Revolt was caused or pressured by the PKI in his government. As he said, his stand “had nothing to do with the communists; if you do not believe me, you can ask the PKI leader, Aidit”.¹⁹³ Sukarno also argued that the accusation that Indonesia wanted to expand her territories was false. Indonesia had no claim on and did not desire to have any control over North Kalimantan.¹⁹⁴ According to Sukarno, this was because Indonesia supported the ten Bandung Summit principles.¹⁹⁵ Sukarno, in his speech to the public on 25th December 1962, said:

Indonesia has sympathy with the struggle of the North Kalimantan people for independence. These sympathies derived solely from the ten principles of Bandung, from Indonesia’s solidarity with the Afro-Asian principles and from their attitudes towards colonialism, imperialism and oppression.¹⁹⁶

Howard Warskowsky argued that the adoption of the Confrontation policy was a means to resolve Indonesia’s internal problems and as the result of the success of the Irian campaign in 1962. Initially, when Indonesia gained independence in 1949, Irian (New Guinea) was not included in the formation of the new state, and was administered by the Dutch as an integral part of the Indies.¹⁹⁷ But eventually the Irian administration was transferred to Indonesia in 1962 when the latter won the

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ C.O.1030/1012 Greater Malaysia- Indonesia Attitudes, Telegram from Jakarta to Foreign Office, London, 28th December 1962.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 24th December 1962.

¹⁹⁵ *Berita Harian*, 28th December, 1962.

¹⁹⁶ C.O.1030/1012 Greater Malaysia-Indonesia Attitudes, Telegram from Djakarta to Foreign Office, London, 24th December 1962

¹⁹⁷ Indonesia had a strong juridical and historical argument for the inclusion of Irian as an integral part of Indonesia and brought the issue to the United Nations in 1954. However, the issue was unsettled, which led Indonesia to mobilize its troops to Irian in 1961 and an invasion of Irian was launched in March 1962. See Howard Warskowsky, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Influence of Domestic Forces on Indonesian Foreign Policy*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Virginia, 1974, p. 73.

fight with the Dutch to secure its independence. This victory strengthened Sukarno's confidence in manipulating the rhetoric of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism as the basis of foreign policy for domestic purposes. As mentioned by Warskowsky:

The campaign (Irian victory) had also helped stabilize the regime by diverting public attention from the continually deteriorating economy, but it did not dissipate the irreconcilable tensions between the army and PKI.¹⁹⁸

The success of the Indonesian campaign in Irian in 1962 seemed to bolster Sukarno's international prestige and provide an example for the ensuing Malaysia Confrontation.¹⁹⁹ Therefore, it could be argued that Indonesian foreign policy became more active and radical in the 1960s. It was a tool to maintain Sukarno in power, since he was afforded the opportunity to be the Indonesian hero. In other words, the success of the Irian campaign had helped to increase Sukarno's prestige and further his image as the supposed leader of the developing states.²⁰⁰ As a result, it does seem clear that this foreign policy was used to divert radical domestic forces so that their energies were focused upon external rather than internal issues. The reason he gave for becoming involved in the Brunei Revolt - that the formation of Malaysia was a threat to his security, and an attempt by Britain to maintain colonial rule behind the cloak of independence granted to its former colonial possessions in Southeast Asia - provided only a partial picture.²⁰¹ Sukarno had to adopt the policy in order to survive by compromising and securing support from the PKI. The continuation of the military conflict after the failure of the Brunei Revolt and the support for the PRB's struggle was a useful rationale for Indonesia to adopt a Confrontation policy towards Malaysia.

¹⁹⁸ Howard Warskowsky, *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 75

²⁰¹ 'Australian Involvement in War and Conflict: Confrontation in Indonesia 1964-1966'. URL: http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/conflict_indonesia.htm, 2001.

6. 6. Conclusion

The Borneo conflict demonstrated how important the British Forces were in defending the Brunei Sultanate from internal aggression and British Borneo from external aggression. The first battalion of Brunei's own army, the Brunei Malay Regiment, was only formed in 1965.²⁰² The survival of monarchical rule depended on British military support, and the continued presence of British Forces to guard the Sultan and his government was essential. Within the first two months of 1963, the Revolt had been crushed by the British Gurkhas from Singapore, but there were signs of a steady increase in raids across the border from Kalimantan. With the declaration of the Malaysian Federation and the continuation of Azahari's struggles in Jakarta, Brunei was still threatened by external forces.

Therefore, the Brunei Revolt was the first round in the Borneo conflict, in which the Brunei nationalists used assistance from the Philippines, the Indonesians and the Communists in an attempt to achieve their agenda. The Philippine government's support for Azahari's struggle at the initial stage was motivated by internal political reasons and also related to its claim to North Borneo, and its stand against the formation of Malaysia. The Philippines did not really support Azahari's attempt at establishing the USKU, which conflicted with its claim to Northern Borneo.

Indonesia's main reason for supporting the Brunei revolt was Sukarno's domestic political problem of how to stay in power. In other words, to continue to secure support from the PKI, Sukarno had to support its policy of supporting Azahari. The main reason for the PKI's support for the TNKU fighters was not because they wanted to see the establishment of the USKU under the leadership of Azahari, but rather because they sought to destroy the Malaysian Federation and then establish their own power base in the Borneo territories. Therefore, pressure from the PKI and domestic problems

²⁰² Tim Huxley, Brunei's Defence Policy and Military Expenditure, Working Paper No. 166, ANU SDSC, Canberra, September 1988, p. 4.

led Sukarno to adopt a policy of Confrontation towards Malaysia and use the rhetoric of anti-neo-colonialism and anti-imperialism as a rationale for supporting the TNKU. Overall, the main reason for the involvement of Indonesia and Philippines in the conflict was not because they supported the creation of USKU, but rather, to oppose the formation of the Malaysia Federation, in order to achieve their own political objectives. Generally, it can be said that the formation of Malaysia had brought Brunei into the conflict occasioned by Indonesia Confrontation. In the event, the impact of the PRB Revolt encouraged the Indonesians, especially the Communists, to use the TNKU to start an “undeclared war” against Malaysia.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Political Development 1963-1967

7. 1. Internal Political Development after the Revolt of 1962

This chapter presents a brief discussion of Brunei's political development after the Brunei rebellion of 1962 up to 1967. The main issues that will be discussed are Brunei's progress towards constitutional advance and her relations with the United Kingdom, and with the new state of Malaysia. The main intention of the chapter is to provide a general examination of the effects of Malaysia's formation on Brunei's internal political development until 1967 and, indirectly, the role of Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien¹ in designing Brunei's contemporary political system. Highlighting these issues may help to answer why Brunei did not secure her independence in the late 1960s, but waited until 1984.

Economically, after the 1962 rebellion, considerable progress was achieved by the government in improving the living standards of the people, especially in the countryside. The rise of state income from oil production enabled a variety of national programmes to be launched.² These actually started before the rebellion but received additional impetus afterwards. In general, the disparities between the rich urban population and the remote villagers, and between the government and the people, were both narrowed.³ There was free education and free medical treatment, including a flying doctor service. Electricity had been extended to the villages, communications had been greatly improved through the construction of new roads, and even the problem of water shortage

¹ He was also known as the '*man behind the scenes*' because of his important role as an adviser to the present Sultan regarding the affairs of the state of Brunei after his abdication from the throne in October 1967. See The Borneo Bulletin, 13th September 1986.

² In the 1960s the production of oil was about 123,000 barrels a day. Brunei was one of the most advanced welfare states in Asia with the highest per capita income in Southeast Asia.

³ F.C.O. 15/289, Assessment of the likely political and security situation in Brunei up till the end of 1971, "Economic Prospect".

had been solved. All these schemes benefited not only the urban but also the rural areas. In this sense, the aftermath of the Revolt had a favourable impact on economic and social development in Brunei.

The success of government policy in improving the welfare of the people made Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien feel confident that there would be no further rebellion in the state. By 1965 onwards, the people were well off and were generally satisfied with their steadily improving condition, except that the benevolent autocratic system of government faced pressure for political change from the political parties and the British government.⁴ The satisfaction of the people towards government policy in the improvement of economic and social services was such that Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien felt that he had no need to make any drastic reform in the political system⁵ and that, even though there was pressure for change, such change was not particularly desirable. The main reason for the Sultan's negative attitude towards political reform was his desire to retain guided autocratic rule and to prevent Brunei from joining Malaysia. The Sultan realised that a small number of Brunei political leaders such as Pengiran Ali Mohd. Daud, Haji Gahazali, Haji Manan Mohammad and others were attracted to the Malaysian political system. Some of the politicians had also been offered important positions in the Malaysian government if they could bring Brunei into Malaysia so that the closer Brunei came to a democratic system, the greater the possibility of its joining Malaysia. In any case after the rebellion the public did not support the political leaders, believing that further involvement in politics might again lead them into trouble later.⁶ Therefore,

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The Sultan argued with the British government that the economic development and wider educational opportunities for his subjects were more important than constitutional advance. See F.C.O. 24/205 Statement made by His High the Sultan of Brunei at the meeting with the Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, 7th July 1967.

⁶ The people thought that to take an active part in politics would lead them, sooner or later, to Berakas Detention Camp under the enforcement of Emergency Regulations, 1962. See F.C.O. 24/212 Internal Security Situation. Letter from R.M.Hunt, High Commissioner to R.A., Hibbert, Office of Political Advisor, Singapore, 2th November 1967.

most of the ordinary people (especially people in the countryside) left the political system in the hands of the Sultan, whom they thought could decide what was good for the people and the state. It cannot be denied that after the Brunei Revolt of 1962, Brunei improved economically and socially, but not politically. In June 1963, the Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia, Gordon Etherington Smith, argued strongly that Brunei needed political reform as the only way in which it could prevent a recurrence of the December Incident. In Smith's view, the main reason for the outbreak of the rebellion was the "archaic system of the Brunei government".⁷ He added that after the Revolt, the political situation in Brunei remained unchanged. The Sultan wielded absolute power, assisted by a small group of advisers drawn from the local aristocracy.⁸ The situation was made worse when the State Assembly was dissolved after the outbreak of the Revolt,⁹ until July 1963,¹⁰ leaving "no vehicle for the expression of the popular will"¹¹ within the state. Smith envisaged that the December Incident could be repeated,¹² unless political reform took place.¹³ Above all, Smith believed that the December rebellion had occurred because government had been "exercised in an autocratic manner without regard to the wishes or needs of the people".¹⁴ In other

⁷ D.O. 169/51, Internal Political Situation of Brunei, 'A report by Commissioner General for SEA on Brunei'.

⁸ D.O. 169/51 Internal Political Situation of Brunei, Ibid. According to D.J. Derx, in the Colonial Office, Britain was not to intervene in Brunei's internal affairs. As he said, "the Brunei Government can handle its own affairs without British intervention and we (the British government) do not wish to become deeply involved in future". See Derx's letter to Bill, United Nations Department, 30th August 1963 and also to J.A. Sankye, United Kingdom Mission, United Nations, 4th September 1963, F.O. 371/169716, Malaysia in United Nations.

⁹ On 19th December 1962, the Sultan promulgated the Emergency (Suspension of Constitution) Order, 1962. The Order dissolved the Legislative Council and reconstituted the Executive Council as an emergency Executive Council with the powers of both the previous Executive and Legislative Councils. See F.O. 371/169716 Malaysia and the United Nations, 'Brunei - Brief for discussion in the Committee of Twenty-Four'.

¹⁰ The Legislative Council was revived in mid-1963, but with 6 ex-officio, 10 official and 19 unofficial members. There were no elected members; no elections took place after the revolt until 1965.

¹¹ F.O. 371/169716 Malaysia and the United Nations.

¹² D.O. 169/52, Political Intelligence-Reports-Brunei, Report of the security situation in Brunei State for the period of 9th October to 4th November 1963.

¹³ According to a Brunei State Intelligence Committee meeting in 10th December 1963, there were signs of anti-government feeling among the government employees. It was also claimed that a group of ex-PRB members employed in the Public Works Department Workshop were frequenting meetings in Brunei Town. See D.O. 169/52 Political Intelligence Reports-Brunei, Report on the Security Situation in Brunei State for the period 5th November to 9th December 1963.

¹⁴ Ibid.

words, Brunei was one of the richest states of the world, but little had been done to satisfy the political aspirations of the political parties.¹⁵

By early 1963, political progress in Brunei was still very slow. The Sultan was blamed by the British for being the main obstacle to democratic development.¹⁶ Practically everything depended on the Sultan's approval. Although the *Menteri Besar* (Chief Minister) was responsible for the administration of the state, any new programmes for change should first be securely approved by the Sultan either in a discussion in the State Council or in a personal meeting with the Sultan.¹⁷ Therefore, administratively the main problem originated from the Brunei Government itself, since the Sultan had absolute power over the internal affairs of Brunei. On the other hand, HMG had adopted a new policy of pressurising the Sultan to introduce parliamentary government, in order to avoid further political instability by accelerating progress towards Independence.¹⁸ But the Sultan continued to reject all ideas of introducing political reform within the state.

The British Government was pointing its finger at the Sultan as responsible for the static nature of the Brunei Government. Mr. Mackintosh, the British High Commissioner for Brunei, in a letter to Mr. Wallace at the Colonial Office in October 1963, commented that the negative attitude of the Sultan towards giving a greater political voice to the people in the state could lead to social discontent. As Mackintosh said, after the December 1962 rebellion, the Sultan and his advisers showed no sign of enthusiasm for constitutional reform,¹⁹ although Duncan Sandys, the Secretary

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ For example in 1960, when one member of the Legislative Council put a motion regarding the date of Brunei's independence, the Menteri Besar, Dato Marsal bin Maun had to write a letter to the Sultan asking whether he agreed to the issue being discussed in the Executive Council. See letter from the Menteri Besar to the Sultan, 12th December, 1960, BA/13849/78 (Majlis Meshuarat Kerajaan yang ke 88), National Archive of Brunei. Furthermore, according to the Menteri Besar, he would see the Sultan at the palace at least once a week to discuss any problem relating to state matters. Interview with Dato Marsal bin Maun, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 28th July, 1994.

¹⁸ All this information can be obtained from the document C.O. 1030/1457 "Brunei Future Policy".

¹⁹ C.O. 1030/1457 Brunei Future Policy, Letter from A.M. Mackintosh to W.I.J. Wallace, Colonial Office, London 14th October 1963.

for the Colonies, advised the Sultan and his government to draw up plans for constitutional advance²⁰ in order to speed up the process of independence within a reasonable period of time. Furthermore, the British Government was of the opinion that if there was no change in the political atmosphere within the state, Brunei could not only face internal political instability but was also bound to become a target for foreign subversion, particularly from Communist elements. As Mackintosh, said, "If political stagnation within the State gave rise, as it would, to popular unrest, the situation would be very dangerous".²¹ However, the Sultan in response "sang one of his old songs",²² expressing the view that independence was not good for the Brunei people.

The Sultan realised that the British would not let him down. This was because economically and strategically, Brunei was important for British interests in South-East Asia.²³ Therefore, the Sultan was confident that the British would continue to protect his government from internal disturbance and external aggression. The Sultan felt that the only way he could ensure the survival of autocratic rule in Brunei was by continuing his dependence on the British military. He was not confident Brunei was able to stand on her own feet without the British presence, the assumption being that if Brunei became independent, the UK would withdraw its forces. This meant there could be no independence for Brunei until she could provide enough manpower to administer and defend the state. Instead, the Sultan argued to the British government that there were two kinds of independence. As he said:

One was good in that it brought benefits to the people, and one was bad in that it did not benefit the people.²⁴

²⁰ The meeting between the Sultan and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr Duncan Sandys took place at the Istana Darul Hana, Brunei, on 14th September 1963. See C.O 1030/1457, Letter from Mackintosh to Wallace, Colonial Office, 14th October 1963.

²¹ C.O. 1030/1457, Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ In 1965, the British government received net profits from the Shell Oil Industry in Brunei of about four million pounds. Furthermore, in 1966, the Brunei Government held reserves in London which amounted to 133 million pounds. See D.O. 169/553 Cabinet, Defence and Oversea Committee, 'Brunei-Future Policy', 1st November, 1966.

²⁴ C.O. 1030/1457, Letter from Mackintosh to Wallace, Colonial Office, 14th October 1963.

The Sultan was reluctant to implement any new form of political advance, on the grounds that he thought that his subjects were not prepared to accept this new system. Instead, they would be better off under guided monarchical rule. He realised that the introduction of full democracy would necessarily destroy his position as a monarchical ruler. Furthermore, after the rebellion, the British government, and internal political parties, indirectly supported by the Malaysian government, continued their pressure on the Sultan and his government to adopt a new plan for political change within the state.²⁵ This complication made the Sultan more cautious about introducing any drastic change in the political system.

7. 2. Malaysia's Policy towards Brunei

Although the Sultan had already decided not to join Malaysia in September 1963, the Malaysian Government did not give up its aim to bring Brunei into the Federation by 1965 at the latest. This policy was also supported by the British government which did not want to see Brunei stand alone. At the Tunku's last meeting with the British Government in London in August 1963, he asked the British Government to threaten the Sultan in order to make him join Malaysia, by telling him that Britain would not continue to give protection to Brunei, unless the Sultan introduced constitutional advance, and, if the Sultan asked for the British military presence to continue in the absence of political progress, he would have to pay for its services and protection. However, this tactic appeared to be unsuccessful, so as an alternative, the Malaysian government warned the Sultan that it would progressively withdraw its administrative officers and other government personnel from Brunei. This would make it clear to everyone, especially the political

²⁵ F.C.O. 24/212 Internal Security Situation, Letter from R.M.Hunt, High Commissioner to R.A., Hibbert, Office of Political Advisor, Singapore, 2nd November 1967.

parties in Brunei, that Brunei was still a British colony.²⁶ The Tunku thought in this way to provoke the political parties to raise their demands for political reform in order to speed up independence.

This policy, however, contradicted the Tunku's assurance, which he had given to the British government in August 1963, that he would not withdraw the Malayan Officers serving in Brunei immediately. Instead, in October 1963, the Tunku changed his stance by asking the Sultan for the return of Malaysian officers for security reasons.²⁷ The Malaysian Police Field Force unit was also withdrawn, not to be replaced. Furthermore, the assistance given to the Brunei Malay Regiment, which was under training at Port Dickson, Perak, would be curtailed with the withdrawal of the Malaysian officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) serving with the Regiment.

The Tunku wrote formally to the Sultan on the 5th October requesting the withdrawal of all Malaysian officers from Brunei within three months, except for certain Special Branch officers.²⁸ The Tunku's letter revealed gravely impaired relations between Malaysia and the ruling elite in Brunei. As the result of this action it was impossible for Malaysia to form any close association with Brunei as long as Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien was still in power.²⁹ Generally, the Tunku's action was meant to teach the Sultan a lesson. In order to conceal his original intention of revenge,³⁰ through the Tunku claimed his action was the result of security concerns, and he cited a report from Syed Hashim Abdullah, Deputy Secretary in the Prime Minister's Department, regarding the insecure conditions of Malayan officers in Brunei.³¹ He said;

²⁶ D.O. 169/261 Greater Malaysia - Brunei Problem, Note of conversation between Lord Lansdowne and the Tunku, London, 10th July 1963.

²⁷ D.O. 169/261, Greater Malaysia-Brunei Problem, Telegram from Mackintosh to Secretary of State, 8th July, 1963.

²⁸ D.O. 169/262, Telegram from British High Commissioner, Kuala Lumpur to Commonwealth Office, London, 12th December 1963.

²⁹ D.O. 169/547, Letter from Mr. Bottomley, British High Commission, K.L. to Mr. Reed, Commonwealth Office, 8th July, 1966.

³⁰ D.O. 169/261, Telegram from Mackintosh to Secretary of State, 8th July, 1963.

³¹ D.O. 169/261, Greater Malaysia-Brunei Problem, Telegram from Mackintosh to Secretary of State, 8th July, 1963.

I have to state with regret that there is no alternative open to the Federal Government but to request Your Highness to be gracious enough to agree that these men return to Malaya, and in order not to interrupt the machinery, to give a period of three months for them to hand over their respective duties so that Your Highness's Government can obtain officers to replace them.³² I think they will have to come back. They have been badly treated. I have had my own reports and it is impossible for Europeans to know how nasty the Brunei people can be to Malays.³³

The Tunku's security reason for withdrawing the Malaysian officials was unfounded, because in reality, these officers in Brunei were not threatened by the local people. This view was supported by the Head of the Special Branch in Brunei, who had difficulty finding any evidence of antagonism towards them. He added that there was no indication of any form of "apartheid" policy towards Malaysians in Brunei by either the Government or private individuals. The Attorney General, who was also seconded from Malaysia, shared the view that the position of Malaysians in Brunei was not one of danger, or even discomfort. The practical reason for the Tunku withdrawing all Malaysians serving in Brunei was that their places should be taken by British officials and Brunei would thereby be driven to seek membership of Malaysia in order to rid the country of colonialism. Secondly, the Tunku also wanted to teach a lesson to the Sultan to make him realise that his decision not to join Malaysia was wrong. This was mentioned by the Attorney General in Brunei:

Tunku's allegation was a pretext for withdrawal of Malaysians, the true reasons being need of their services in Malaysia and desire to teach Brunei a lesson.³⁴

However, the Tunku had miscalculated. The Sultan simply became more distrustful and hostile towards the Malaysian leaders. The assessment by the British High Commissioner in Brunei was that, quite apart from the Sultan, public opinion in Brunei remained opposed to any action bringing Brunei into Malaysia.³⁵ On the other hand, the Malaysian government could not accept the Sultan's

³² Ibid.

³³ D.O. 169/262, Telegram from British High Commissioner, Kuala Lumpur to Commonwealth Office, London, 12th December 1963.

³⁴ D.O. 169/261, Telegram from Mackintosh to Secretary of State, London, 8th July, 1963.

³⁵ D.O. 169/553 Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee, 'Brunei-Future Policy', 1st November 1966.

policy of retaining autocratic power within the Federation.³⁶ To resolve the problem, Mr. Mackintosh suggested that Brunei should send a mission to Kuala Lumpur for discussions with the Malaysian Government. The Tunku, however, refused to receive it. On the other side, the Sultan was also reluctant to send the delegation. Therefore, relations between the two continued to deteriorate even after the Sultan abdicated from the throne in October 1967.

Although the British government were fully aware of and sympathetic to the Tunku's objective of bringing Brunei into the Federation, they could do nothing. Both Mr. Golds at the Colonial Office and Mr. Bottomley, the British High Commissioner in Malaysia, believed that the main reason for the Tunku calling back his officers from Brunei was to make the British send a large number of expatriate officials to take the place of the Malaysians.³⁷ In this way, the Tunku believed the growth of a national consciousness would be stimulated in Brunei, together with a drive for independence, which he calculated would push Brunei towards Malaysia.³⁸ But this did not take place. Although more British officers were necessary in Brunei, the people were more anti-Malaysia than anti-British. Ghazali Shafie, the Malaysian Secretary for Foreign Affairs, believed that Brunei could be brought into the Federation as long as the Tunku agreed with his plan. As he said:

...if only I could get permission from the Tunku and the necessary financial help.... I believed that I could do much to persuade the developing political parties in Brunei that their best hope lay in Malaysia.³⁹

On the contrary, the Sultan's policy was to avoid direct dealings with the Malaysian government, and to rely heavily on Britain to rescue Brunei from the administrative difficulties which it was facing as a result of the refusal to join Malaysia. The British and Malaysian governments had

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ D.O. 169/261, Telegram from Mackintosh to Secretary of State, 8th July 1963.

³⁸ D.O. 169/547, Letter from Mr. Bottomley, British High Commission, K.L. to Mr Reed, Commonwealth Office, 25th October, 1966.

³⁹ Ibid.

different strategies to persuade Brunei to join Malaysia. Britain's policy seems to have been more liberal and co-operative, whereas Malaysia's was aggressive.

At the end of Confrontation, the Malaysian government was interested in taking over the British role in Brunei because it needed Brunei's resources.⁴⁰ As Bottomley said, "the Malaysians would in certain circumstances like to have Brunei in Malaysia, or at least in much closer association than at present. They could certainly find a good use for Brunei's oil revenues".⁴¹ Tunku Abdul Rahman was still smarting over the rebuff he had received from Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien in 1963. In 1965, the Tunku tried to mend the relations between the two states by inviting the Sultan to come to Kuala Lumpur and stay at his Istana.⁴² Although the Tunku was sincere in his invitation, the main purpose of inviting the Sultan was to use the occasion to make renewed overtures to him to join Malaysia. In other words, the Malaysians would try to ease off the Sultan's grudges against them,⁴³ and moreover, the Malaysians suggested that Limbang might be transferred to Brunei if the Sultan joined Malaysia. Clearly, Malaysia tried hard to make the Sultan and his government more favourable towards Malaysia. As Mr. Masefield (British High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur) said:

...they [the Malaysian government] would instruct the High Commissioner to attend the Sultan in London with more than usual courtesy and to play up his own position as the Tunku's brother (High Commissioner). They were also ready to invite the newly elected (appointed) members of the Legislature to Kuala Lumpur at any time that it might prove helpful.⁴⁴

However, the plan did not succeed in changing the Sultan's attitude towards Malaysia; the Sultan and the members of the Legislature did not visit Kuala Lumpur. Although, in Brunei, a small

⁴⁰ D.O. 169/547, Letter from Mr. Bottomley to Mr. Reed, Commonwealth Relation Office, 8th July, 1966.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² D.O. 169/558, Letter from British High Commissioner, Kuala Lumpur to Peter Jenkins, Commonwealth Relation Office, 14th May, 1965.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

number of politicians favoured Malaysia, generally most Bruneians were still anti-Malaysia, and the Sultan had already said in his meeting with Duncan Sandys in May 1964, that his decision not to join Malaysia was final and he considered that merger was “not so important”.⁴⁵ But the Malaysian Government was persistent. In November 1966, Malaysia’s Assistant Secretary for Foreign Affairs said that Malaysia would like to see Brunei within the Federation of Malaysia. It had also established a relationship with the ex-PRB leader, Azahari.⁴⁶ Malaysia even accepted Zaini Haji Ahmad’s offer to surrender his Brunei citizenship if he was allowed to go into exile to Malaysia. Therefore, after the end of Confrontation, relations between the countries continued to be strained. This was also a result of Malaysia’s uncooperative attitude in abolishing the Board of Commissioners of Currency in August 1966 which had issued a common currency for Malaya, Singapore and the Borneo territories (including Brunei). When Singapore withdrew from Malaysia in August 1965, both Singapore and Brunei started to work together in transportation and currency matters. They made an agreement to put their currencies at par in 1967. In the same year, Brunei refused landing rights to Malaysia Airline System (MAS), giving them to Singapore Airlines (SIA) instead.⁴⁷ Furthermore, during the coronation celebration of Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah (the present Sultan of Brunei) in October 1967, the Tunku himself felt embarrassed at the treatment he received from Brunei, as the report mentioned:

His (Tunku’s) disenchantment over what he apparently felt to be insufficiently red carpet treatment at the Coronation may have further increased his resentment.⁴⁸

In the absence of cooperation from Brunei’s government, Malaysia’s policy was to exploit any political instability or dissatisfaction from the political parties there. The Malaysian Government

⁴⁵ D.O. 169/547, Letter from Mr. Laird, High Commissioner for Brunei to Mr. Brown, Commonwealth Relations Office, 9th January 1965.

⁴⁶ D.O. 169/547, Note of meeting in Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Mr. Bottomley, 17th November 1966.

⁴⁷ Graham Saunders, *The History of Brunei*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1994, p. 158.

⁴⁸ F.C.O. 15/289, Outside Influence-Malaysia, Assessment of the likely political and security situation in Brunei up to the end of 1971.

always gave their support to any demand for political reform from the political parties such as BNO,⁴⁹ BUP⁵⁰ which later in January 1963 formed an Alliance known as the Brunei Alliance Party.⁵¹ The Malaysians were known to have contacts with some of the party leaders and to be of the view that a “democratic” Brunei might be more susceptible to the attractions of the Federation. Therefore, when the Tunku’s plan of withdrawal failed to achieve his aim, the Malaysians continued their policy, trying to exploit the internal political dissatisfaction in Brunei. They tried to encourage local political parties to oppose the Sultan’s policy of delaying the process of constitutional advance. However, this tactic was also unsuccessful. Basically, the general attitude of the Bruneians towards Malaysia remained hostile, except for a few leaders of political parties such as Manan Mohammad, Haji Ghazali and Haji Hasbollah.

According to Ghazali Shafie, Brunei declined to join Malaysia because the Sultan wanted to retain monarchical rule and disliked the introduction of elections in a democratic system as in Malaysian politics.⁵² As Saunders said:

Entry into Malaysia would have produced pressure for advance towards constitutional government. Malaysia was destined to be a constitutional monarchy and there would have had to be elections for seats in the Federal Parliament. It would have been difficult to prevent pressure for similar constitutional provisions in Brunei.⁵³

7. 3. British Policy towards Brunei

In 19th July 1963, a meeting took place in Brunei between the Brunei High Commissioner and the

⁴⁹ The of BNO, Awang Manan Mohamad, and the BUP, Haji Hasbollah, agreed to set up the Brunei Alliance Party in January 1963. Both of them criticized the Sultan’s decision not to join Malaysia. See The Borneo Bulletin, 18th April, 1964.

⁵⁰ Haji Hasbollah bin Daud, the leader of the Brunei United Party, said “there has been no change in my party’s belief that Brunei’s future is in Malaysia”. See The Borneo Bulletin, 14th August 1965 and Ranjit Singh, Brunei 1839-1983..., p. 207.

⁵¹ Ranjit Singh, *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁵² Mejar Syed Othman Syed Omar, p. 41.

⁵³ Saunders, p. 157.

Sultan. The Sultan had revealed the intention of the Brunei government to strengthen its links with the United Kingdom, particularly in terms of securing more officers from the United Kingdom to fill government posts in Brunei. In the meeting between the Sultan and the Secretary of State for the Colonies on 24th July 1963, the Sultan also asked for help in seeking the agreement of the Malaysians not to withdraw the staff and facilities which they had provided for Brunei. But HMG did not want to be involved in detailed negotiations with the Malaysians about obtaining individual officers, or even classes of officer (for example teachers), and asked the Brunei Government to deal with Malaysia directly. HMG hoped that, in this way, relations between Brunei and Malaysia would become closer, possibly leading the Sultan to change his mind about joining the Federation. Although, given the Overseas Officer Agreement with Brunei, HMG was obliged to help Brunei to recruit overseas officers, the British emphasized that the Sultan should understand that in discharging this undertaking the following reservations needed to be observed:

1. Brunei must take the worse Malaysians with the better and HMG could not promise to seek replacements for Malaysian officers simply because Brunei wanted to get rid of any particular Malayan.
2. If Malaysian officers left Brunei in normal circumstances, or if additional officers were required from outside Brunei, the Brunei Government should seek replacements or additions from the Malaysian Government before turning to HMG.
3. HMG could not in any case undertake to provide British officers on a scale which might suggest to the world that they were re-colonising Brunei.
4. Subject to (1) and (2) above, the 'shopping-list' for personnel should be referred for examination by the Department of Technical Co-operation and the Brunei delegation at official level.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ D.O. 169/261 Greater Malaysia-Brunei Problem, Telegram from Mackintosh to Secretary of State, 8th July 1963.

However, still the Sultan preferred to recruit officers from Britain than from Malaysia. On 29th July 1963, the meeting continued in London between the Sultan and the Commonwealth Secretary. The aim of the Sultan's mission to London was to secure some help from the British Government in the form of new officers to fill key posts and other posts in the Brunei administration. But the Secretary of State once again advised the Sultan to try to obtain officials from Malaysia. The Sultan said that he would have to review the position of the Malaysian Officers already in Brunei and intended to retain those who were sufficiently experienced. Furthermore, the Sultan said that he had come for help in accordance with the 1959 Agreement, although the Secretary of State emphasised that the first duty of Brunei was to obtain help from Malaysia. Mr. Lawson, his Constitutional adviser, nevertheless supported the Sultan's view and said that it was unrealistic for Brunei to look to Malaysia for persons of the calibre needed. The Sultan was taking his stand on the 1959 Agreement. The Secretary of State reminded the Sultan that he, too, had obligations under the Agreement. One such obligation was to accept HMG's advice on the good government of his country,⁵⁵ an implied reference to the advice that Brunei should join Malaysia. The Sultan added that he had come to London to get help from HMG to enable Brunei to implement its development plans and to remove the sources of discontent. In contrast, the Secretary of State said that in order to remove discontent, progress must take place, not only in the economic but also in the political field. His Highness should not think that material benefits alone would long be accepted in Brunei as a substitute for a popular share in the political management of the country.⁵⁶

The British approach in trying to get Brunei to join Malaysia was to co-operate with the Malaysian government. In order to achieve this objective, HMG had to exert stronger pressure on the Sultan to join Malaysia,⁵⁷ warning him that if Brunei stayed out of Malaysia, the UK would have to

⁵⁵ D.O. 169/261 Greater Malaysia-Brunei Problem, Record of Meeting between the Secretary of State and the Sultan of Brunei, 29th July, 1963.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ D.O. 169/51 Internal Political Situation 1960-63, 'A report by Commissioner General for SEA on Brunei'.

reconsider its relationship with Brunei.⁵⁸ Because of this policy, it could be argued that the British were not responsible for Brunei failing to join Malaysia. The allegation made by B.A. Hamzah that Brunei stayed out of Malaysia because the British wanted to maintain or retain their economic and political interests in Brunei is difficult to accept,⁵⁹ particularly in view of the well-known inclination of the Labour Party, in power from 1964-1970, to decolonise. In fact, HMG under the Labour Government unsuccessfully tried to pressure the Sultan in many ways to make him sign the Malaysia Agreement in London in September 1963. Consequently, HMG set a target to get Brunei to join Malaysia by 1965. The policy also tried to avoid any allegation that the British were trying to adopt a re-colonising policy in Brunei. In other words, the aim of the new policy was to pressure the Sultan to make political changes within the state which would bring Brunei closer to the Malaysian political system.

Neither the British nor Malaysian governments wanted to see Brunei stand alone, as this would pose political and military risks to British and Malaysian interests. Therefore, the British argued with the Sultan that his dynasty's and his country's future lay with Malaysia.⁶⁰ It had been suggested by the members of the British Parliament that HMG should tell the Sultan that "he could not depend on British aid in the event of further internal trouble: Parliament would not again stand for the use of British troops to protect an autocratic and inefficient regime against a popular movement".⁶¹ It would still provide external protection but even this might become a problem if Brunei remained outside Malaysia.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ This idea was even supported by Ranjit Singh and Awang Muhammad Damit. See Muhammad Awang Haji Damit, Pengukuhan Sistem Monarki di Brunei 1945-1984, unpublished M.A thesis, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1997.

⁶⁰ D.O. 1169/54, Note by the Colonial Office for discussion with the Secretary of State and the High Commissioner for Brunei at 3.00 p.m. 24th July 1963, in preparation for the talks with His Highness the Sultan.

⁶¹ D.O. 169/54, Note by Colonial Office....., 24th July, 1963.

Internally, HMG tried to encourage positive political activity. This was done through the release of two political detainees from Berakas Prison. The British hoped that by the release of two prominent ex-leaders of the PRB, Awang Hapiz Laksamana and Awang Tengah, the vacuum of political activity within the state could be filled and constitutional advance accelerated.⁶² Externally, the British tried to push Brunei closer to Malaysia through co-operation in various fields. However, this policy was undermined by the negative attitudes of the Malaysian government towards giving any assistance to Brunei. Instead of becoming closer, relations between the two states became more strained after October 1963, when the Tunku demanded the return of Malaysian officers serving in Brunei, which also caused the Sultan to assert Brunei's claim to Limbang. Amid this confusion of conflicting policies between Britain and Malaysia, both governments still seemed to agree at least on a common objective: getting Brunei into Malaysia.

Therefore, the British government felt that there was a need for a discussion between the British and Malaysian Governments in order to achieve a common policy on Brunei. As an initial step, Mr. Mackintosh suggested that he would go to Kuala Lumpur for talks with the British High Commission.⁶³ Since the general objective was to bring Brunei into Malaysia, the British policy on Brunei staff was to encourage Brunei to look first to Malaysia for external requirement; and to emphasise that HMG could not contemplate sending large numbers of British officers to Brunei with the implication that it was reverting to a colonial-type administration of the territory.⁶⁴ It was hoped that the Malaysian staff already in Brunei would be allowed to stay and that if any withdrawals were contemplated, the longest possible notice would be given.

⁶² D.O. 169/51 Internal Political Situation 1960-63, A report by Commissioner General in SEA on 'Brunei'.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ D.O.169/547, Letter from Mr. Bottomley, British High Commission, K.L. to Mr Reed, Commonwealth Office, 25th October, 1966.

The real reason for the continuity of British political and military presence in Brunei, politically and militarily was that the Sultan believed that Brunei could not provide enough capable officers of its own to run the state administration.⁶⁵ Furthermore, in the era of Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation, the Sultan felt that the presence of the British army was needed to ensure the survival of his rule in the face of foreign aggression. In reality, Brunei's staying out of Malaysia had caused something of a problem for Britain. In terms of defence and security, Brunei became an embarrassment to Britain and Malaysia. Its external defence ought to have been undertaken as part of the defence of Malaysia. Secondly, Brunei might have become the target of Indonesian intrigue and internal subversion, whereas Malaysia was not vulnerable. Brunei's quasi-dependent status would be increasingly difficult to justify. HMG could not go on indefinitely protecting the Sultan's autocratic regime. Therefore, HMG continued her policy of trying to push Brunei into Malaysia, even after the end of Confrontation, because it was the best solution for Britain.⁶⁶

7. 4. Pressure for Political Change

Despite the Sultan's 'final' decision in September 1963 not to join Malaysia, the British government continued to put pressure on him to implement political change within the state. Mr. Mackintosh, in his letter to Mr. Wallace, the officer in the Colonial Office, on 14th October 1963 mentioned that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had advised the Sultan to draw up a plan for constitutional advance, aiming at independence.⁶⁷ With regard to this, Mr. Wallace's view was that it was a good time for Mackintosh to ask the Sultan to make a plan, as proposed by Mackintosh in his letter to Wallace on 14th October 1963, which might be acceptable to the Secretary of State. On the other hand, the Secretary of State hoped that before Mackintosh left Brunei for good at the end

⁶⁵ The Sultan felt that the threats from his own people was not over. The PRB insurgents still continued their struggle outside Brunei, especially Azahari who was still freed in Indonesia. This was the main reason why the Sultan decided to recruit Gurkhas from Nepal to become a special unit to protect his own security known as the Brunei Gurkha Field Force. See F.C.O 21/402, F.C.O 24/205.

⁶⁶ D.O. 169/553, Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee, 'Brunei-Future Policy', 1st November 1966.

⁶⁷ C.O. 1030/1457 Letter from Mr. Mackintosh to Mr. Wallace, 14th October 1963,.

of 1963, at least he would bring the Sultan's programme for constitutional advance to London. The British government wanted to see Brunei progressing rapidly towards a full democratic system based on Constitutional Monarchy. As Mackintosh said:

HMG are pressing the Sultan to move rapidly towards a fully democratic political system, constitutional monarchy and independence.⁶⁸

However, the fear of losing his political power made the Sultan reluctant to introduce political advance in the state; he asserted that constitutional changes should be brought about step by step in order to avoid trouble.⁶⁹ But the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations and the Colonies argued that under the 1959 Anglo-Brunei Agreement, the Sultan was obliged to accept any advice from HMG through the appointment of a High Commissioner.⁷⁰ According to Mackintosh, the aim of HMG in suggesting political progress was to get Brunei to join the Malaysian Federation. In Mackintosh's view, "the closer Brunei comes to the brink, the more inclined she will be to seek independence inside Malaysia rather than in dangerous isolation",⁷¹ the danger in question being subversion⁷² from communist elements⁷³ or the Indonesian threat.

According to Mackintosh, after the rebellion the Sultan in practice enjoyed autocratic rule, with his

⁶⁸ Ibid., 2nd November 1963.

⁶⁹ Ranjit Singh, *Brunei 1839-1983...*, p. 209.

⁷⁰ The Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr Duncan Sandys, also reminded the Sultan that he had an obligation to accept advice from the British Government under the 1959 Agreement. As he said, "The Sultan too had obligations under the Agreement. One such obligation was to accept HMG's advice on the good government of his country". See C.O. 1030/1671, Record of meeting between the Secretary of State with the Sultan, 29th July 1963.

⁷¹ C.O. 1030/1671 Record of meeting between the Secretary of State with the Sultan, 29th July, 1963.

⁷² According to the Brunei State Intelligence Report in November 1963 there was subversive activity amongst the Chinese in Seria, Brunei. The evidence showed that the Hsueh Hsih material used in Brunei was distributed by the Communist Clandestine Organisation (CCO) from Sarawak. A small number of Chinese in Brunei also were in sympathy with Communism and appeared anxious to return to Mainland China. See D.O. 169/52 Political Intelligence Reports-Brunei, Report of the security situation in Brunei State from 9th October to 4th November 1963.

⁷³ On 11th November 1963 five Chinese were arrested in Brunei Town. They had tried to establish a pro-communist (Hsueh Hsih) organisation in Brunei under the direction of the CCO from Kuching. See D.O. 169/52, Political Intelligence Report-Brunei, Report on the security situation in Brunei State for the period 5th November to the 9th December 1963,

finger in every pie in the State. The idea of constitutional monarchy held no attraction for him.⁷⁴ He might have wanted to see constitutional change take place, but as little as possible and as slowly as possible.⁷⁵ Internally, there was no sign that a dominant political party would emerge in Brunei.⁷⁶ Political activity remained so fluid and uncertain that ups and downs of this kind were only to be expected.⁷⁷ Generally, most ordinary people were not really interested in being involved in politics. However, at last, continued British pressure led the Sultan to take the significant measure of instructing his officers to provide a programme for constitutional development. On 5th December 1963, the Sultan sent a letter to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, together with his plan for Constitutional Development in Brunei.

As an initial stage of change, in early 1964, the 'member' system of administration was introduced. The members were drawn from the ex-officio Members of the Executive Council and four unofficial Members who were appointed as 'Assistant Members'.⁷⁸ The plan was divided into four phases. In the first step, elections would take place for the District and Municipal Boards in early 1964. In phase two, the Legislative Council would be reconstituted at the end of 1964, consisting of six ex-officio, five nominated and ten elected members. In stage three, it was expected that in mid-1966, the Legislative Council would be reconstituted to consist of three ex-officio members and twenty elected members. At the same time, the Executive Council would be replaced by a cabinet and the Sultan would assume the role of constitutional ruler. Thereafter, the 'general advice clause' of the Anglo-Brunei Agreement of 1959 would be amended, and a committee would be set up to advise the High Commissioner on defence, external affairs and internal security. Lastly, the Sultan and his government would negotiate with HMG a date for full independence.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ D.O. 169/262 Letter from Mackintosh to A.A. Golds, Colonial Office, 19th November 1963.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ There were four political parties registered in Brunei in 1963. Their memberships totalled only about 7,000.

⁷⁷ D.O. 169/262, Letter from Mackintosh to A. A. Golds, 19th November 1963.

⁷⁸ D.O. 169/162, Sultan to Secretary of State of Commonwealth Relations, 5th December 1963.

⁷⁹ D.O. 169/162, Ibid.

In August 1964, the Sultan gave a positive response to the British advice on constitutional development of the state. In his speech at the opening of the Legislative Council meeting, the Sultan promised his subjects that he would make some reform in the Constitution by giving freedom to the political parties to take part in public affairs. However, he was still hesitant regarding the system for handling government administration, because of the lack of education among his subjects.

In November 1964, the Sultan and a delegation went to London. He met the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations, Mr Arthur Bottomley,⁸⁰ to discuss constitutional development in Brunei, such as setting up a ministerial system of government after the election took place for the Legislative Council. Therefore, in December 1964, the two governments agreed that Brunei would proceed progressively towards full parliamentary democracy and when elections for the District and Legislative Councils were held in March 1965,⁸¹ a ministerial system of government would be set up.⁸²

In early January 1965, the Sultan once again met Bottomley to discuss the date for the election, which was then fixed for March 1965.⁸³ However, on his return to Brunei, the Sultan was criticised by the leader of the Alliance Party, who argued that the election was meaningless if the proportional composition of the Legislative Council was unchanged, with the number of ex-officio members remaining much larger than that of the elected members.⁸⁴ In contrast, the leader of the Brunei People's Alliance, Haji Ghazalie, supported the Sultan's plan for an election which he felt could advance progress towards independence. According to the plan, elections for the District and Legislative Councils would be held on 18th and 20th March 1965. There were 55 constituencies to be contested, 24 in Brunei, 12 in Tutong, 12 in Belait and seven in Temburong. It was estimated

⁸⁰ Pelita Brunei, 6th July 1965.

⁸¹ Ibid., 2nd September 1964,

⁸² Strait Times, 24th December 1964.

⁸³ Pelita Brunei, 6th January 1965.

⁸⁴ Borneo Bulletin, 18th April 1964.

that about 19,142 eligible citizens would be permitted to vote; about 11,902 from Brunei district, 4,404 from Tutong, 2,355 from Belait and 841 from Temburong.⁸⁵ 36 candidates would contest the 10 seats on the Legislative Council: four for Brunei district, two for Tutong, three for Belait and one for Temburong.

In the elections, the political parties suffered a disastrous defeat. The Brunei People's Alliance Party under the leadership of Pengiran Majid bin Pengiran Mohd. Daud, won only one seat,⁸⁶ while the remaining nine seats were won by independents, including three ex-PRB members, namely, Pengiran Damit Pengiran Sungguh, Pengiran Haji Yusof bin Pengiran Limbang, Pengiran Mohd Yusof bin Pengiran Abu Bakar, Zainal Abidin bin Putih, Abd. Wahab bin OKS Safar, Mohd Zain Haji Serudin, Othman bin Sungguh, Arif Mujun and Haji Halus bin Abdul Samad.⁸⁷ The BUP, BNO and BPFS failed to secure any seats.

The implementation of a democratic system seems to have been very difficult to achieve. After the December Revolt, the general public, especially the common people in the countryside, were not really interested in becoming involved in politics. Most of the political parties received substantial support only from urban residents. However, there was an absence of both general activity and excitement during the period before the 1965 elections.⁸⁸ Thus, it is not surprising that the political parties in Brunei in the period after 1962 were generally weak and inactive. Nevertheless, in May 1965 the British Government urged the Sultan to proceed with the introduction of cabinet government as soon as possible. As David Leake said:

The British renewed pressure on Sir Omar when he went to London after the election (1965) where they began pressuring Sir Omar to introduce democratic

⁸⁵ Ibid., 27th March 1965

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ The Straits Times, 19th March 1965.

reforms, delegate more powers to his underlings and start preparing for full independence as early as possible.⁸⁹

When the Labour Party came to power in 1964, the Sultan received further pressure from the British Government to encourage him to speed up the process of independence. The Sultan wanted the British to continue their protection, but under the Labour Government, the British continued their pressure on the Sultan to set up a government based on parliamentary democracy in order to grant independence as soon as possible. The Labour government also pressured the Sultan to increase the number of elected members in the Legislative Council from 10 to 20.⁹⁰ At first, the Sultan was reluctant to accept the suggestion. He felt that Brunei was not ready to undertake a fully democratic system of government. As he said:

It was not practical to talk in terms of independence and full election in Brunei unless there were knowledgeable, honest and dedicated Bruneians to manage the affairs of the state.⁹¹

At last, the Sultan had to accept political reform by introducing a Parliament and a Ministerial system of government. He also agreed to appoint four Ministers and increase the number of elected members from 10 to 20.⁹² For the initial stage, four Assistant Ministers were appointed. They were Pengiran Damit Pengiran Sungguh, Assistant Minister for Agriculture; Pengiran Haji Muhd. Yusof Pengiran Muhd. Limbang, Assistant Minister of Welfare and Posts; Lukan bin Uking, Assistant Minister of Education, and Hong Kok, Assistant Minister of Medical and Health. However, in January 1966, the leader of the Brunei Freedom Struggle Party, Awang Arsad, called for the resignation of the four Assistant Ministers appointed by the government as their appointments “had not benefited the people”,⁹³ because they were persuaded to side with the government on all issues

⁸⁹ David Leake, Brunei: The Modern Southeast Asian Islamic Sultanate, Kuala Lumpur Forum, K.L. 1989, p. 55.

⁹⁰ Ranjit Singh, Brunei 1839-1984...., p. 209.

⁹¹ Malay Mail, 8th November 1967.

⁹² Pelita Brunei, 2nd June 1965.

⁹³ The Straits Times, 14th January 1966 and Borneo Bulletin, 8th January 1966.

concerning the public. The Party complained that the Assistant Ministers were not given enough responsibility.

Although the Sultan agreed to introduce a Ministerial system, he still did not invite the political parties to play significant roles in making government policy. There was no genuine democracy. The Sultan was reluctant to secure independence, on the grounds that Brunei and its people were not ready to take the responsibility, and he insisted that the process of change should be gradual. As the Sultan said:

I have said all along that constitutional changes must be brought about step by step. This is a sure way of avoiding trouble.⁹⁴

On 31st July 1966, the political parties within the state (PAKAR, BARA, BPA and BPFS) combined together to form an alliance known as Barisan Kemerdekaan Rakyat or BAKER. The aim of the party was to secure Brunei's independence from the British. The party sent a memorandum to the government on 21st November 1966⁹⁵ demanding the revision of White paper no. 4/65.⁹⁶ The party delegation, headed by Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Mohd. Ali as the chairman, demanded and argued for independence and that Brunei was still colonised by the British through the appointment of the British High Commissioner, as the members of the Executive Council had to accept his advice.⁹⁷

The party also criticised the establishment of ministerial posts. They considered these posts useless because there were no specific duties and responsibilities attached to them. The government had not even kept its promise of appointing the post of permanent secretary. Nor did the parties

⁹⁴ Ranjit Singh, p. 209

⁹⁵ Bintang Harian, 13th May 1967

⁹⁶ BAKER criticized the government for not implementing the contents of the White Paper no. 4/65 which was agreed between the British and Brunei governments.

⁹⁷ Daily Star, 3rd October 1967.

play an important role in politics or the policy formulation of the government. In the party's view, the changes introduced by the government did not have any meaning in terms of implementing Parliamentary democracy in the state. The party believed that the government should permit the introduction of a full ministerial system which could meet the needs and the aspirations of the people.⁹⁸ As Awang Zainal Abidin Putih, the Assistant Secretary of BAKER said:

We do not wish to see the continuation of the present system now being employed by the Government of Brunei where ministers are being guided in the discharge of their functions.⁹⁹

In December 1966, the government rejected the party's criticism that the current constitution did not give any freedom to the people to have their say in public matters. The Menteri Besar said that the constitution gave benefits and freedom for people to voice their problems, and that they could take part in politics by joining the political parties. The process of establishing constitutional democracy could be seen in the introduction of the ministerial system.¹⁰⁰ However, the party was still not satisfied with the government's answer. In April 1967 BAKER, again sent a letter to the Brunei Government which demanded a meeting to discuss the implementation of White paper No. 4/65,¹⁰¹ but no answer was received until 19th April 1967, when answers came from the Brunei Government and British High Commissioner in Brunei. The answer from the Brunei Government stated that the government could not entertain the delegation from the party to discuss the White Paper. However, the party should understand that the White Paper was just a plan that would be implemented step by step, considering the benefits that would be received by the people of Brunei.¹⁰² This answer showed clearly that the government did not intend fully to introduce a democratic system as stated in the White Paper in order to secure independence.

⁹⁸ The Borneo Bulletin, 17th September, 1966.

⁹⁹ Daily Star, 24th June 1967.

¹⁰⁰ Pelita Brunei 21st December 1966.

¹⁰¹ Bintang Harian, 13th May 1967

¹⁰² Ibid., 15th May 1967

BAKER disagreed with the government's policy of implementing constitutional change "step by step",¹⁰³ which they considered would delay independence. On the other hand, the British High Commissioner on behalf of the British Government gave a positive response to BAKER's demand, mentioning that HMG would like to see constitutional reform take place before Brunei achieved independence, as agreed by both governments in London in 1965.¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, Mr. Webber, the British High Commissioner, had met the BAKER leader and explained to the party that a draft of a working paper for cabinet government for Brunei would be forwarded to the Sultan for approval.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, Mr. Webber convinced the party leaders that there would be no change in HMG's policy towards constitutional development in Brunei. The British government would like to see constitutional advance take place progressively but immediately.¹⁰⁶ The positive answer given by the British government had reinforced the Sultan's reluctance to seek independence. Consequently, the Sultan went to London on 26th April 1967 to persuade the British government to continue giving its military protection to Brunei.

In July 1967, the talks continued. The Sultan met the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations, Mr. Bowden. The former was asked to speed the implementation of a Ministerial System of government according to the stages and programme produced in 1964/65. The Sultan was reminded that the introduction of this system should not be delayed beyond 1968.¹⁰⁷ According to a statement issued by the Commonwealth Office, however, the Sultan refused to make specific commitments about either the Ministerial System or holding a constitutional conference.¹⁰⁸ The Sultan argued that Brunei could not implement the Ministerial System because the British military presence was still

¹⁰³ Ibid., 5th June 1967

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 15th May 1967

¹⁰⁵ The Straits Times, 19th May 1967.

¹⁰⁶ Bintang Harian, 26h May 1967

¹⁰⁷ Pelita Brunei, 19th July 1967.

¹⁰⁸ The Straits Times, 16th July 1967.

needed to protect Brunei from internal disturbance or external aggression, and he asked the British to cancel their plan to withdraw their 1,000-strong Gurkha force in the Autumn of 1968.¹⁰⁹

In other words, the Sultan was not ambitious to have independence for Brunei and continued to argue that his country was still unable to stand on her own feet.¹¹⁰ He pointed out that there was a lack of knowledgeable officers in government administration and insufficient manpower for defence and security.¹¹¹ He thought that, based on its present condition, Brunei could not defend herself from any foreign aggression, or even internal unrest. It did not have enough of its own people in the fields of education, administration, engineering, the treasury or in the defence department. He preferred to pay a million dollars annually to the British for the survival of Brunei's monarchical state instead of securing independence too early, which could endanger the state and his position.¹¹² In this regard the Sultan's vision was broadly correct. This can be seen from the fact that, even when Brunei obtained independence in 1984, she still needed seconded British officers and others to help her run government administration in defence and foreign affairs. For example in 1979, the Department of Diplomatic Services was created with the help of foreign officers from the United Kingdom and Singapore to prepare Brunei to handle her own foreign relations after independence. Therefore, the only way Brunei could survive as a sovereign state was by relying on UK protection as an alternative to the integration with Malaysia.

¹⁰⁹ F.C.O 24/205, Meeting with Sultan of Brunei, 'The Gurkha Police Field Force and Internal Security', 26th June 1967.

¹¹⁰ In the meeting of the Executive Council of 22nd December 1960, the Council resolved that the government of Brunei should fix a date for Independence for the State of Brunei as 29th September 1965. However at the request of the Menteri Besar, it advised that the decision thereon be deferred by the order of the Sultan in a Council meeting of 10th February 1962. See, Item 7 'Independence for the State of Brunei', BA/13849/78 (Majlis Mesuarat Kerajaan yang bersidang 10th February 1962), National Archive of Brunei.

¹¹¹ For example in 1967, all senior commissioned and warrant officers in the unit of the Royal Brunei Malay Regiment were seconded British military personnel, numbering about 35. The Brunei Police and Special Branch were also led by a few British expatriate officers. See FCO 24/25 Meeting with Sultan of Brunei, 'The Gurkha Police Field Force and Internal Security', 26th June 1967.

¹¹² After the Brunei Revolt 1962 up to the end of Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation 1966, Brunei contributed nearly one million dollars a year in payment for the Gurkhas' presence in Brunei and Borneo. See D.O. 169/553, Notes on Brunei from Mr. Moreton to Sir Neil Pritchard, 12th August 1966.

Generally speaking, in the 1960s, the Sultan was more pro-British compared to his attitude in the 1950s when he repeatedly quarrelled with British officers such as Sir Anthony Abell. In the 1960s, the Sultan became more diplomatic in his approach towards the British government, although he did not accept British advice on political reform. The British wanted to withdraw from Brunei because of pressure from the United Nations based on Resolution 1514 on Self-determination and Independence for Colonised States. But the Sultan was successful in persuading the British to continue their protection, given priorities to protect its oil assets and revenue and maintain political stability in the region.

In order to avoid pressure from the British and internal political parties which demanded the implementation of full democracy in the state on 4th October 1967, the Sultan suddenly abdicated at the relatively young age of fifty-one, in favour of his twenty-two year old son, Hassanal Bolkiah. In the context of the inconclusive talks in July, some observers believed that the Sultan's sudden abdication was a political manoeuvre to reduce British pressure on the question of complete democratisation and the termination of protection,¹¹³ as the new Sultan would need some time to adjust to his new role. David Leake, however, claimed that the real reason for the Sultan's abdication had to do with his friction with the British.¹¹⁴ This view was supported by the report of the Economist Intelligence Unit, headquartered in London, which stated the Sultan's action was a result of British pressure on constitutional reform and was also a sign of protest against the transfer from Brunei of the British High Commissioner, Mr. Webber,¹¹⁵ who was highly sympathetic

¹¹³ G. Braighlinn, Ideological Innovation under Monarchy: Aspects of Legitimation Activity in Contemporary Brunei, VU University Press, Amsterdam, 1992, p. 15.

¹¹⁴ Leake, p. 56.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. The Sultan refused to make any official contact with the new High Commissioner, R. M., Hunt. By doing this he felt that he could delay the constitutional progress and the departure of the Gurkhas. See F.C.O 24/212 Internal Security Situation, Letter from R.M., Hunt, High Commissioner, Brunei to R.A., Hibbert, Office of the Political Adviser to the C-in-C, Far East, Singapore, 2nd November 1967.

towards the Sultan.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, the Sultan opposed the British decision to withdraw the Gurkhas,¹¹⁷ which could threaten the survival of monarchical rule,¹¹⁸ as Brunei would assume full responsibility for its own internal security.¹¹⁹ The Sultan felt unsafe without the presence of the Gurkhas. He was very uncertain of the loyalty of his own subjects or the Royal Brunei Malay Regiment.¹²⁰ Therefore, the Sultan planned to set up his own force, known as the Brunei Gurkha Field Force,¹²¹ composed of about 700 retired Gurkha personnel discharged from the British Army. This unit would be independent from the Brunei Police Force and the Royal Brunei Malay Regiment. Its duties would be to patrol the Brunei borders and deal with hostile insurgents within the state. In other words, this force would be both a Field Force and a riot squad. However, the Sultan's plan was not supported by the British government, which led to the Sultan failing to recruit the Gurkhas from Nepal.¹²²

¹¹⁶ For example, Mr Webber (the British High Commissioner) agreed with the Sultan's decision to set up a special unit known as the Brunei Gurkha Field Force composed of Gurkhas from Nepal. See also F.C.O. 21/402 Letter from Mr. Webber to Mr. Reed, Commonwealth Office, London, 28th February 1967.

¹¹⁷ It was planned that the British Gurkha Battalion would withdraw from Brunei in the autumn of 1968. In July 1967 Lord Beswick told the Sultan that after the Gurkhas' withdrawal, if there was internal trouble resulting from frustration inside Brunei over the lack of constitutional advance, the British government would not send any troops to Brunei in case this was seen as external intervention. See F.C.O. 24/205 Meeting between the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State with Sultan of Brunei, at Commonwealth Office, 7th July 1967.

¹¹⁸ According to Special Branch, once the Gurkhas had gone, the people might rally to support the political parties such as BAKER. This party was supported by Malaysians. The Tunku had told R.M., Hunt, that if the Gurkhas withdrew from Brunei, it would be better for him (Tunku) or Razak to deal with Hapiz Laksamana as he could offer him a better position if Hapiz Lakasama could bring Brunei into Malaysia. Therefore, BAKER could be considered a potential element in the political instability which endangered the Sultan's position. See F.C.O. 24/212 Internal Security Situation, Letter from R.M., Hunt, High Commissioner, Brunei to R.A., Hibbert, Office of the Political Adviser to the C-in-C, Far East, Singapore, 2nd November 1967.

¹¹⁹ F.C.O. 24/205 Meeting between the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State with the Sultan of Brunei, at the Commonwealth Office, 7th July 1967.

¹²⁰ F.C.O. 24/205 Brief No. 3, Meeting with the Sultan of Brunei on 26th June 1967: The Gurkha Police Field and Internal Security.

¹²¹ F.C.O. 24/205 From F.D., Webber, High Commissioner, Brunei to A.H., Reed, Commonwealth Office, 28th February, 1967.

¹²² The Sultan paid a private visit to Nepal on 14th to 17th June 1967 to seek permission to recruit a police field force from discharged soldiers. However, the Nepalese government was reluctant to accept the Sultan's request on economic, external and internal political grounds. Practically, the main reason for the Nepal government rejecting the Sultan's request was the advice from the Commonwealth Office. See F.C.O. 21/402 Summary Visit to Nepal of the Sultan of Brunei, British Embassy, Katmandu, 19th June 1967.

The reluctance of the Sultan to seek independence was related to the issue of internal¹²³ and external security.¹²⁴ The Sultan tried to keep quiet on the issue of Brunei's independence and continued talks with the British government in order to secure military aid and protection. However, in 1966, the Labour government in Britain had set an objective to secure the end of the 1959 Agreement and the termination of British obligations and to make an orderly withdrawal, leaving Brunei in a stable condition.¹²⁵ The British hoped the termination of the agreement would be on the basis of mutual consent rather than by unilateral abrogation. The British feared that if the Sultan did not want to agree to the termination, he might instigate anti-British troubles with the object of compelling the British to continue their responsibilities, even after 1971.¹²⁶

7.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Sultan's policy could be considered politically astute. He was capable of handling the pressure from the British government to speed progress towards independence through the introduction of a democratic system. Generally, the Sultan did wish for independence. However, he needed the continued protection of the British from external aggression (for example from Malaysia and Indonesia and even from Communist elements). Furthermore, Brunei also lacked local trained people with the expertise to run the state administration. The main underlying reason for the Sultan's desire to be protected by the British, however, was his desire to retain monarchical rule. It seems that the Sultan himself was virtually the government of Brunei, and from 1962 up to 1967 he was reluctant to make a commitment to change. His democratic intentions went only so far

¹²³ The Sultan mistrusted his own subjects. See F.C.O. 24/205 Brief No. 3, Meeting with Sultan of Brunei on 26th June 1967: The Gurkha Police Field and Internal Security.

¹²⁴ The Sultan still felt insecure because of Malaysia's foreign policy which intended to bring Brunei into the Federation after the British military withdrawal. He also distrusted Indonesia because of the interference of Sukarno in Brunei's politics from 1963. See F.C.O. 24/209 Report by the Secretary of State for Wales, 28th July to 4th August 1968.

¹²⁵ F.C.O. 15/289, Memorandum by the Secretary for Commonwealth Affairs, 'Defence and Oversea Policy Committee-Brunei,' 11th September 1968.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

as to introduce a partially elected Legislative Council and the appointment of four ministers. But this did not mean that the Sultan was necessarily greedy for power. There is good reason to suppose that his view that Brunei society was not yet ready for a democratic system was genuine, as was his argument that he needed trained and educated personnel to run an effective administration and defend the country. The Sultan justified his overall position in terms of his general concern for the people and the state. He realised that he would not permanently stay in power, but would be replaced by another Sultan (his son in October in 1967). He argued for the continuation of an autocratic system which in his view had brought peace and harmony to Brunei. This was mentioned in an edition of the London *Times*:

More important... is that sudden immersion in a relatively democratic entity would mean the precipitous collapse of the feudal structure of this welfare state... the grip of the country's autocracy, if not of the Sultan himself will slowly be prised loose with the introduction of apparently democratic reform...¹²⁷

Therefore, in this situation it was impossible for Brunei to be part of Malaysia, because its autocracy could not easily be adjusted to Malaysian democracy. The Sultan knew that the more the state proceeded towards democracy, the more likely the prospect of Brunei becoming a state under the Malaysian Federation.¹²⁸ Furthermore, the Sultan argued that the continuity of the British presence, in both military and administrative terms, would enable his government to concentrate its efforts on improving the socio-economic development of the state in order to avoid social discontent and political instability. The Sultan's argument was supported by Mackintosh, who thought that if Brunei wanted independence, it would take her many years to prepare before "she was adequately equipped except with funds: educationally, administratively and in other areas, because Brunei was not only oriental but mediaeval".¹²⁹ Therefore, ultimately the Sultan won the

¹²⁷ *Times*, London, 27th August 1965.

¹²⁸ In order to avoid Brunei joining Malaysia, the Sultan deliberately delayed implementing constitutional advance by arguing it would not bring any benefits to his subjects but instead create political instability. See F.C.O. 24/205 Sultan's letter to the Secretary of State, Commonwealth Affairs, London, 14th July 1967.

¹²⁹ C.O.1030/1457, Letter from Mackintosh to Wallace, 14th October 1963.

game played with the Malaysian and British governments and successfully kept the Federation of Malaysia at a distance. There is no doubt that the formation of Malaysia greatly influenced political development within the state on its way to securing independence, but this was on the Sultan's terms and its pace was largely determined by him rather than the British.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been to trace the political development of Brunei in the years between 1961-1967. The study began with a brief examination of the formation of the modern state of Brunei and specifically of the development of post-war political consciousness that demanded the independence of the state from British rule, as well as Brunei's political organisation with reference to the creation of its Constitution in 1959. I concluded the thesis with a description and discussion of internal political developments from 1963 up to the Sultan's abdication in October 1967. The main part of the study has described and analysed the impacts of the Malaysia proposal in 1961 on the political development of Brunei. The issues related to the formation of Malaysia were the Brunei Revolt of 1962, Brunei's refusal to join the Federation in 1963, the Limbang Claim, foreign involvement in relation to Indonesian Confrontation and Brunei's internal political-administrative changes from 1963 to 1967.

Although British rule through the maintenance of a British Residential System before 1959, and a British High Commissioner after the proclamation of the Brunei Constitution, inevitably played an important role in shaping Brunei's political development, outside factors increasingly influenced the political environment in Brunei, especially in relation to the formation of the PRB, which had contacts with other political parties in Malaya (Malaysia after 1963), Singapore and Indonesia. It was also in the context of increasing politicisation in Brunei that the Malaysia proposal polarised positions. Initially, it contributed to political conflicts between the government and the PRB leaders, in that the PRB opposed the Sultan's inclination to accept the Malaysian proposal in principle in 1961. The Party adopted an anti-Malaysia stand to secure support from the people in creating the USKU, whereas the Sultan adopted a positive response, though a carefully qualified

one, in order to ensure protection from the British and the Malayan governments for the survival of the Sultanate. As a result, differences between the Sultan and the PRB about the future shape of the Brunei polity and its relations with its immediate neighbours eventually led to the outbreak of the Revolt in December 1962, directed to toppling the Brunei government and replacing it with an USKU government and a constitutional monarchy. However, the Sultan, with the support of the British military, was able to maintain his position by crushing the rebellion led by Azahari. The Sultan then became much more wary of a considerable segment of his subjects, especially the ex-members of PRB and their sympathisers. Not only that, he also became increasingly cautious about implementing any political reform within the state based on democratic principles. Instead, he became more inclined to monarchical rule based on the philosophy of the Malay Islamic Sultanate.

Generally speaking, Brunei politics in the 1950s and 1960s involved the interaction of several groups: the PRB, the British, the Malayans (and later the Malaysians), the Indonesians, the PKI, the CCO and the Sultan and his monarchist-aristocratic supporters, all of whom tried to use or at least respond to the Malaysia issue to secure their objectives. The PRB voiced its anti-Malaysia stance in order to get the support of the Brunei people specifically and the population of the neighbouring Borneo territories in general. The PRB also tried to win external support, even creating a coalition with the PKI and CCO in order to achieve their objective of setting up an USKU government. The PRB's struggle did not end with the failure of the Brunei Revolt in 1962. The conflict spread to the entire northern region of Borneo, nearly igniting a wider conflict within the context of Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation in 1963-1966. Brunei became involved in the Confrontation, because of the Indonesian support of the PRB's struggle on the Sultanate's Borneo border with Sarawak and Sabah. The failure of the Brunei Revolt led to the Indonesian Government and the PKI giving moral and material support to the PRB, based on anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist principles.

The Indonesians used the TNKU, the military wing of PRB, to oppose the implementation of the Malaysia Federation. Therefore, on the question of foreign involvement, it cannot be denied that the Malaysia issue provided the rationale for the Indonesian Government to become involved in the Brunei political conflict. The Indonesians, mainly the PKI, did not support the PRB's aim of setting up a legitimate USKU Government with the Sultan as its Constitutional Monarch. Rather, PKI support for the PRB was aimed at preventing the formation of Malaysia, and simultaneously helping to create a Communist-supported or at least leftist USKU government aligned to Jakarta. For Sukarno, his support for the PRB was also not based on genuine recognition of the aspirations of USKU, but primarily because of internal pressure from the PKI and his own country's socio-economic problems. In this regard, I agree with Howard Warskowsky (1974) that problems within the Indonesian state encouraged Sukarno to support the struggle of the PRB to establish USKU by adopting a policy of Confrontation. Ultimately, none of the parties active in Confrontation achieved their political objectives. The PRB dream of establishing an USKU government failed, along with its objective of replacing a monarchical with a democratic system, and by 1966 Sukarno had been ousted and the PKI emasculated. The Sultan remained in power, British influence continued to be exercised in northern Borneo, and the Malaysian Federation was established and survived the opposition of the 1960s.

On the issue of Brunei's rejection of entry to the Federation, the two major considerations were firstly, the Sultan's wish to retain a monarchical system and his own and his family's position at the centre of the state apparatus, and secondly, his refusal to share the income from oil with other member states in the Federation. However, the Malaysian and British governments continued their policy of urging Brunei to join Malaysia, particularly for security reasons including concern over the expansion of communist influence in northern Borneo. Both governments hoped that that by the end of 1965, Brunei would finally join the Federation of Malaysia. Tunku Abdul Rahman suggested that

the British should put pressure on the Sultan in order to make him change his mind whilst after 1963 the Malaysian government worked closely with the political parties in Brunei, such as BAKER, which included ex-leaders of PRB, in the hope that the latter would bring Brunei into Malaysia. In this connection, the political parties were strongly influenced by the Malaysian leaders to press the British for independence, which would in turn have made it easier for Brunei to enter Malaysia. However, all efforts failed. The political parties did not achieve their objectives of securing power and introducing parliamentary democracy in Brunei. The Malaysian Government did not secure either Brunei's democratisation or its entry into the Federation along with its oil wealth. The British similarly ended up supporting the Sultan and the monarchy, his independent State, and the gradual move towards independence on the Sultan's terms.

The Sultan, preferring to retain his monarchical power, played one party off against another with considerable skill; using delaying tactics, diplomacy, political manoeuvre, and relying on his judgement that British interests would not permit them to abandon him he eventually triumphed. He made a final announcement of his rejection of the Federation in September 1963, though with this announcement, relations between Brunei and Malaysia deteriorated further. The Malaysian government withdrew its officers from Brunei in 1963 and in turn, the Sultan began to voice his claim to the Limbang territory, though he had already introduced the Limbang issue into the pre-Malaysian scene. This marked the beginning of considerable political tension between the two countries, with neither side willing to make concessions. The Sultan continued his effort to secure Limbang based on historical fact and Islamic principle whereas the Malaysians continued to put pressure on the Sultan to accept the Federation. In the event, the formation of Malaysia was the main obstacle which prevented Brunei from regaining Limbang, though whether the Sultan saw this as an acceptable loss, given his retention of monarchical rule and Brunei's autonomy, is an interesting and debatable point.

On the issue of the timing of Brunei's independence, the formation of Malaysia, again, was one of the factors which influenced the Sultan's policy. It had been agreed by the Legislative Council in 1962 that Brunei would achieve independence in 1965. However, by the order of the Sultan, the motion was subsequently suspended. It is probable that the Sultan calculated that by gaining independence early, he was both likely to lose his hold on power and be absorbed more easily by Malaysia. His rationale was expressed in terms of the benefits to the state and the people, and in terms of Brunei's inability to administer and defend itself. Again he had his way, playing on British strategic and economic interests, and on the weakness of a small, oil-rich state whose autonomy he himself had secured and sustained.

Indeed, the Sultan had the resources to pay for protection; he preferred to pay a million dollars per year to the British for the protection of the Brunei monarchy instead of securing early independence. He also negotiated other assistance and support from the British. Britain provided trained manpower to meet Brunei's needs in defence and foreign affairs, and even later in 1979, the Brunei Department of Diplomatic Services was created with the help of foreign officers from the United Kingdom and Singapore to prepare Brunei for handling her own foreign relations after independence.

On political reforms, the Sultan adopted a more diplomatic and cautious approach towards the British, particularly because he needed the British presence in Brunei for security reasons in the context of Labour government policy from 1964-1970 to withdraw from various overseas commitments. Again he succeeded. Despite the British withdrawal from 'East of Suez', the Sultan negotiated a continuing British presence in Brunei. When British pressures became unduly intense on the Sultan, he took quite drastic action.

In October 1967, the Sultan suddenly abdicated at the relatively young age of fifty-one, in favour of his twenty-two year old son, Hassanal Bolkiah. In the context of inconclusive talks with the British Government in July 1967, it seems clear that the Sultan's sudden abdication was a political manoeuvre to reduce British pressure on the question of complete democratisation and the termination of protection. The new Sultan, after all, needed some time to adjust to his new role, which provided a breathing space for Brunei. In addition, and according to the reporter of the Economist Intelligence Unit which stationed in London, the Sultan's action resulted not only from pressure for constitutional reform but also as a sign of protest against the transfer from Brunei of British High Commissioner, Mr. F.D. Webber, who was very sympathetic towards the Sultan.

The abdication did not mean that relations between Brunei and Malaysia were restored. The Sultan believed that the Malaysian government had not given up its policy of securing Brunei's membership of the Federation, especially during the era of Tun Abdul Razak as Prime Minister of the Federation (1970-1976). Therefore, the creation of Malaysia continued to affect the Brunei polity even up to 1976. In response to Tun Razak's unfriendly policy towards Brunei, the Seri Begawan used the Limbang issue. In February 1969, once again, the Seri Begawan Sultan (ex-Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien), on behalf of the Brunei Government, wrote to the UK's High Commissioner for Brunei regarding Limbang. In March 1971, he wrote again to the High Commissioner and stated that Brunei would continue her claim towards Limbang, including the Lawas and Trusan territories. On its side the Malaysian Government, having used Limbang as a bargaining counter, then adopted other tactics, which indirectly threatened Brunei's internal security.

In 1974, the Malaysian government encouraged the PRB to establish its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. The PRB started to recruit new members and use Limbang as the base for its political manoeuvres. The PRB leaders knew that the Malaysian Government was using them, not only to stop the Sultan from pursuing his claim to the Limbang, but also as another way of getting Brunei into the Federation if the PRB took power in Brunei. However, the Malaysian government convinced the PRB leaders that its objective was to help the PRB to secure independence for Brunei. Ultimately, the revival of PRB activities in Kuala Lumpur and Limbang did make the Brunei Government relax its claim on Limbang. Relations between the two countries improved dramatically in 1979 when Tun Hussein Onn became Prime Minister of Federation from 1976. The Limbang issue was not resolved between the two countries until after Brunei gained independence in 1984, when the issue was negotiated in peace and in the spirit of ASEAN co-operation.

Starting from the 1980s, Brunei's relations with her neighbours, especially Malaysia and Indonesia improved, particularly after independence in 1984. It was Brunei's good fortune that Indonesian President Suharto, unlike his predecessor, President Sukarno, was not out for aggrandizement. Diplomatic ties between the two countries were established when Brunei joined ASEAN in 1984. Although conditions in South-East Asia had stabilized by the time Britain transferred sovereignty to Brunei, the country had to face a new era of international challenges after taking over her foreign affairs from the United Kingdom. All these political, economic, financial and social challenges have been successfully handled by the Brunei government in the period from 1980s through to the 1990s and they have been addressed by an independent country whose autonomy was primarily secured by the political adroitness and skill of Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien.

Appendix 1

The Supplementary Treaty of 1905/1906

Whereas His Highness Sultan Hashim Jalil-ul-alam Akam-al-din son of his late Highness Sultan Omar Ali Saifu-al-din, Ruler of the State of Brunei and all its dependencies is desirous of being fully protected by the British Government and wishes for the assistance of that Government in the better administration of the internal affairs of his country, and whereas His Highness trusts that the British Government will ensure the due succession of the Sultanate of Brunei, now therefore His Highness has represented to Her Majesty's Government that the treaty made on the 17th September 1888 does not give him sufficient protection, and the Sultan and His Majesty's Government have accordingly entered into the following supplementary agreement:-

1. His Highness will receive a British Officer, to be styled Resident, and will provide a suitable residence for him. The Resident will be the Agent and Representative of His Britannic Majesty's Government under the High Commissioner for the British Protectorates in Borneo, and his advice must be taken and acted upon on all questions in Brunei, other than those affecting the Mohammedan religion, in order that a similar system may be established to that existing in other Malay States now under British protection.

II. All existing agreements made between the British Government and the Government of Brunei are hereby confirmed and maintained except in so far as any of them may conflict with the present agreement.

2 January 1906

Signature of JOHN ANDERSON

Seal of HIS HIGHNESS SULTAN HASHIM

Seal of the PENGIRAN BENDAHARA

Seal of the PENGIRAN PAMANCHA

Appendix 2

Agreement between the United Kingdom and Brunei on Defence and External Affairs, 29 September 1959

Whereas Agreements subsist between Her Majesty and His Highness:

And whereas His Highness has with the advice and consent of His traditional advisers and the State Council provided by Proclamation for the constitutional development of the State of Brunei, the succession to the Sultanate and for various matters connected therewith:

And whereas the aforesaid Proclamation providing for the constitutional development of the state of Brunei will commence to operate on a day to be appointed by His Highness, hereafter referred to as ‘the first appointed day’:

And whereas Her Majesty has therefore had jurisdiction to make for the State of Brunei laws relating to defence and external affairs:

And whereas Her Majesty, in token of the friendship which She bears towards His Highness, the subjects of His Highness and the inhabitants of the State of Brunei, has at the request of His Highness agreed that as from the first appointed day fresh arrangements shall have effect for the protection and defence of the State of Brunei:

Now, therefore, it is agreed and declared as follows:

1. This Agreement may be cited as the Brunei Agreement, 1959, and shall come into operation on the first appointed day.

2. In this Agreement- 'High Commissioner' means Her Majesty's High Commissioner in the State of Brunei, and references to the High Commissioner include any person for the time being discharging the functions of High Commissioner;

'His Highness' includes His Highness's successors;

'Secretary of State' means one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State; and

'the state' means the state of Brunei, Darul-Salam.

3. (1) Her Majesty shall have complete control of the external affairs of the State; and His Highness agrees that without the knowledge and consent of Her Majesty's Government of the United Kingdom he will not make any Treaty; enter into any engagement, deal in or correspond on political matters with, or send envoys to, any other State. His Highness further agrees that He will ensure that such legislative and executive action as in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government shall be necessary for the purpose of Her Majesty's exercise of Her control of the external affairs of the State shall be taken within the State.

(2) Her Majesty shall have complete control of the defence of the State, and agrees at all times to protect the State and the Government thereof and to the utmost

of Her power to take whatever measures may be necessary for the defence of the State; and His Highness agrees that for these purposes He will ensure that such legislative and executive action as in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government shall be necessary for the purpose of the defence of the State and the Government thereof (which expression in this Article includes defence against any grave menace to the peace or tranquility of the State) shall be taken within the State; and His Highness further agrees that for the aforesaid purposes Her Majesty's Forces and persons authorised on behalf of Her Majesty shall be at all times allowed to have free access to the State.

(3) Subject as aforesaid, His Highness agrees that Her Majesty shall continue to enjoy jurisdiction to make for the state laws relating to defence and external affairs.

(4) Her Majesty agrees that She will keep His Highness informed of any action taken or proposed to be taken by Her in pursuance of this Article.

(5) (a) For the purpose of implementing the provisions of this Article relating to defence against any grave internal menace to the peace or tranquility of the State, Her Majesty and His Highness agree to constitute a Standing Advisory Council, consisting of representatives of Her Majesty and of the Government of the State, which shall consult as necessary on matters regarding such defence. Her Majesty agrees that no measures in exercise of the right of access to the State given by paragraph (2) of this Article shall be taken for the purposes of such defence without

prior consultation with the Standing Advisory Council except when there exists a state of emergency of such a nature as to make such prior consultation clearly impracticable, in which case, the Standing Advisory Council shall be consulted as soon as possible after the measures have been taken.

(b) For the purposes of this paragraph, the expression 'state of emergency' means a situation in which there is compelling evidence of a grave internal menace to the peace or tranquillity of the State.

4. (1) His Highness agrees to receive, and provide a suitable residence for, a High Commissioner to advise on all matters connected with the government of the State other than matters relating to the Muslim religion and the Custom of the Malays as practised in the State, and agrees to accept the advice of the High Commissioner.

(2) Nothing in this Article shall in any way prejudice the right of His Highness to address Her Majesty through a Secretary of State if His Highness so desires.

(3) The High Commissioner shall have such other functions (if any) as may be conferred on him by any law in force in the State.

5. The cost of the High Commissioner and his establishment as from time to time agreed between His Highness and the Secretary of State shall be borne by the State and shall be a charge on the revenues of the State.

6. His Highness shall be consulted before any person whom it is proposed to send as High Commissioner is appointed.

7. All persons of whatever race in the same grade in the service of the State shall, subject to the terms and conditions of their employment, be treated impartially.

8. His Highness desires and Her Majesty agrees that it shall be a particular charge upon the Government of the State to provide for and to encourage the education and training of the local inhabitants of the State so as to fit them to take a full share in the economic progress, social welfare and government of the State.

9. (1) The Agreement signed in Brunei on the 3rd day of December, 1905, and the 2nd day of January, 1906, between His Majesty's Government within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and His Highness Sultan Hashim Jalilul Alam Akmuddin ibni Almarhum Sultan Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin, the Sultan of the State of Brunei for Himself, His Heirs and Successors, is hereby revoked.

(2) All other Treaties and Agreements subsisting immediately before the commencement of this Agreement shall continue in force save in so far as they are consistent with this Agreement or in so far as they contain provisions relating to the succession to the Sultanate of Brunei.

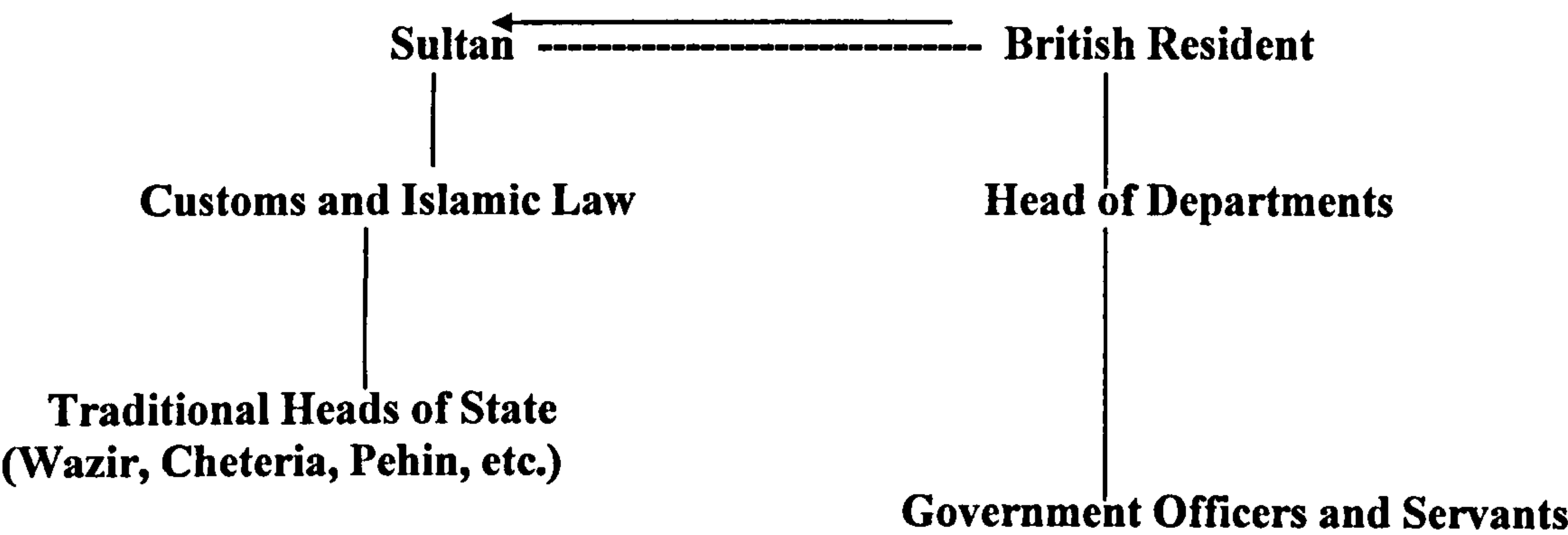
10. This agreement is made and expressed in both the English and the Malay languages; but, for the purposes of interpretation, regard shall be had only to the English version.

In view of His Excellency Sir Robert Heatlie Scott, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Commissioner General for the United Kingdom in South East Asia, has hereunder set his hand and seal for and on behalf of Her Majesty and His Highness Sir Omar Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddin, Sovereign and Head of the Most Esteemed Family Order, the Most Honourable Order of the Crown of Brunei, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, ibni Almarhum Sultan Mohamed Jamalul Alam, Sultan of the State of Brunei, has hereunto set His hand and seal.

(Here follow the signatures and seals)

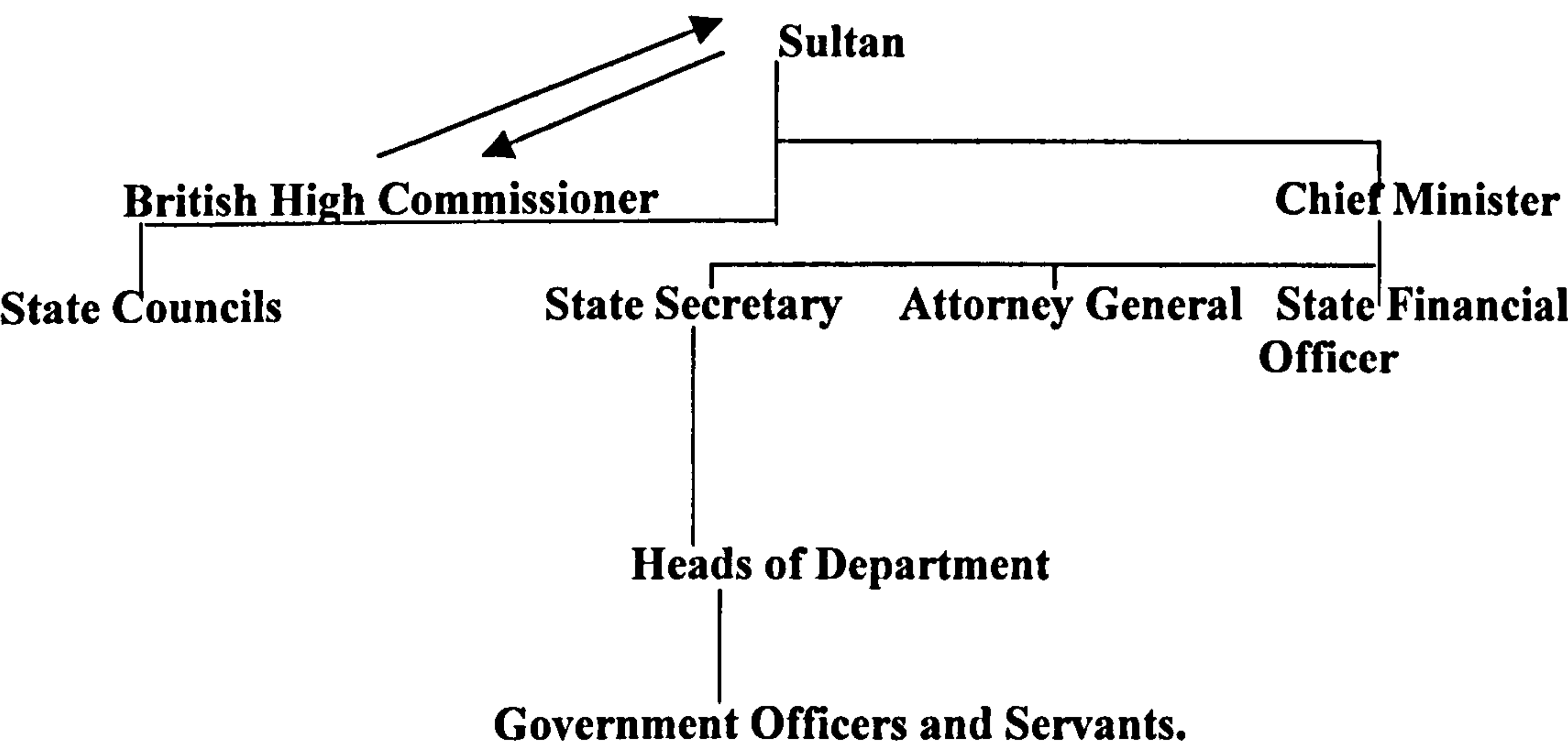
Appendix 3

The Structure of Brunei Administration before 1959



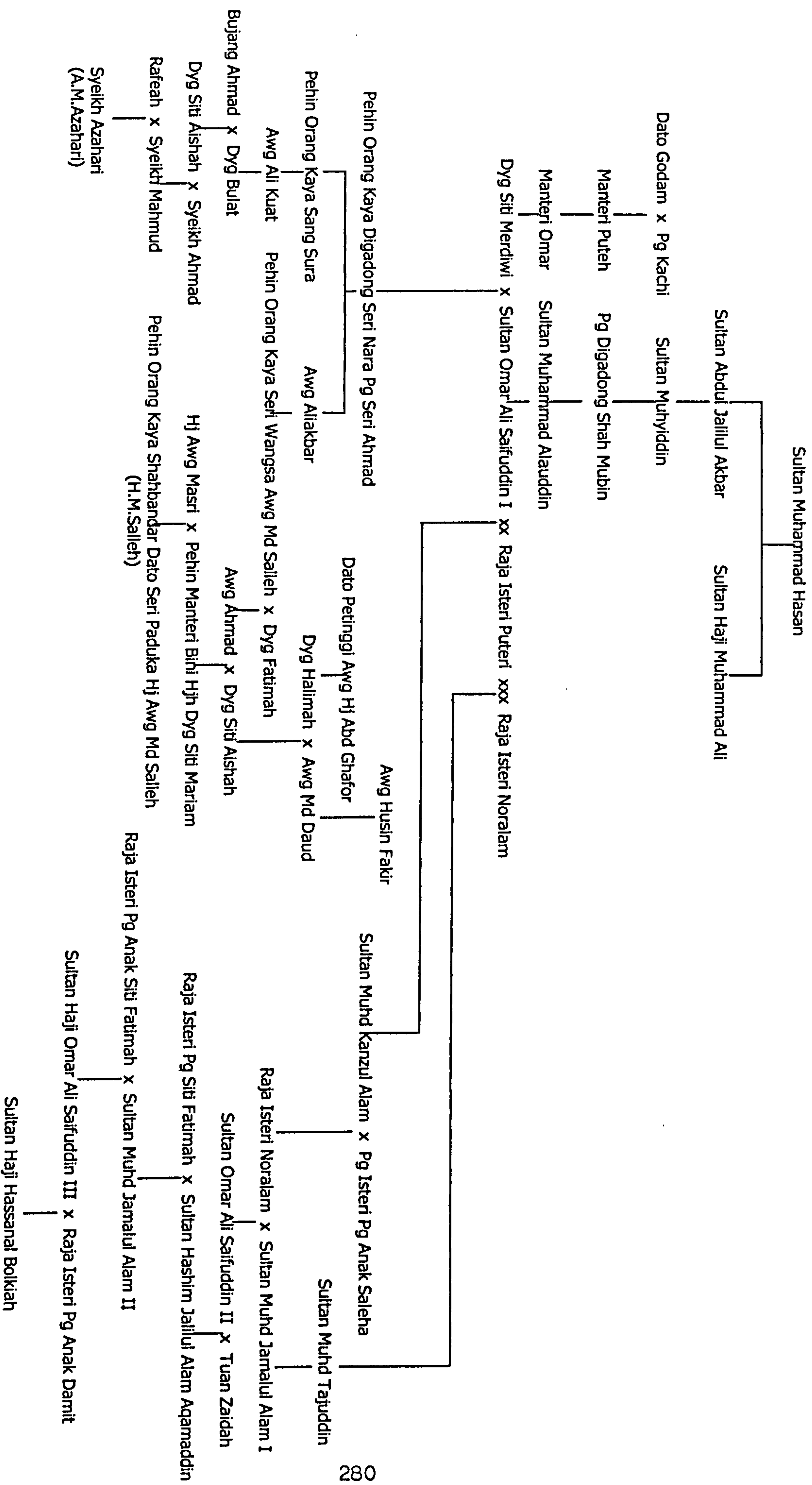
Appendix 4

The Structure of Brunei Administration after the Proclamation of the Brunei Constitution 1959.



Source: Sabihah Osman and Muhammad Hadi Abdullah, Sejarah Brunei Menjelang Kemerdekaan, DBP, Kuala Lumpur, 1995, p. 134-135

AZHARI'S FAMILY TREE



Appendix 6

Ethnic Composition in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore

	Malays and others Indigenous people	Chinese	Indian	Others
Federation of Malaya	3,125,474 (49.8%)	2,333,756 (37.1%)	696,186 (11.1%)	123,342 (2.0%)
Singapore	197,060 (13.6%)	1,090,595 (75.1%)	124,048 (8.6%)	34,190 (2.7%)
Total	3,332,534 (43.0%)	3,424,351 (44.3%)	820,270 (10.6%)	157,532 (2.1%)

Reference: Ongkili, J.P., The Borneo Response to Malaysia 1961-63, Donald Moore Press, Singapore, 1967, p. 153.

Ethnic Composition in the Federation of Malaya, Singapore and British Borneo

	Malays & Others Indigenous people	Chinese	Indian	Total
Federation of Malaya & Singapore	3,332,534	3,424,351	977,802	7,724,687
British Borneo	872,853	355,491	54,383	1,282,827
Total	4,195,387 (46.6%)	3,779,842 (41.9%)	1,032,185 (11.5%)	9,007,514 (100 %)

Reference: Reference: Ongkili, J.P., The Borneo Response to Malaysia 1961-63, Donald Moore Press, Singapore, 1967, p. 154.

Appendix 7

SARAWAK-BRUNEI AGREEMENTS OF 4 FEBRUARY, 1920 AND 1933

SARAWAK-BRUNEI AGREEMENT of 4 February, 1920

Agreement on boundary between Limbang and Temburong⁴

The agreement relating to the Pandaruan River and District made on the 21st day of May, 1912, by the representatives of the Government of Brunei and the Government of Sarawak is hereby cancelled and the following substituted therefor.

IT IS AGREED between the Government of Brunei and the Government of Sarawak as follows:

- (1) All land and all rights of every kind and description on the Western (Limbang) bank of the Pandaruan shall belong to and be vested in the Government of Sarawak.
- (2) All land and all rights of every kind and description on the Eastern (Temburong) bank of the Pandaruan shall belong to and be vested in the Government of Brunei.
- (3) Nothing in this agreement shall affect the exclusive rights granted to Sir Charles Brooke, G.C.M.G., to search for and win coal in the State of Brunei.
- (4) The general principle established in sections 1 and 2 above shall not be altered without the sanction of His Excellency the High Commissioner for the Malay States and Brunei on the one side and His Highness the Raja of Sarawak on the other side.

But such modifications of detail as affect the comfort, security and trade of inhabitants of the Pandaruan River and District may be effected by the British Resident Brunei and His Highness' Resident for the Fifth Division of Sarawak in conference.

Signed by the British Resident Brunei in the presence of:-

Signature of W.F. DEL SKRINE

Signature of G.E. CATOR

British Resident Brunei

Signed by His Highness' Resident for the Fifth Division
of Sarawak in the presence of:-

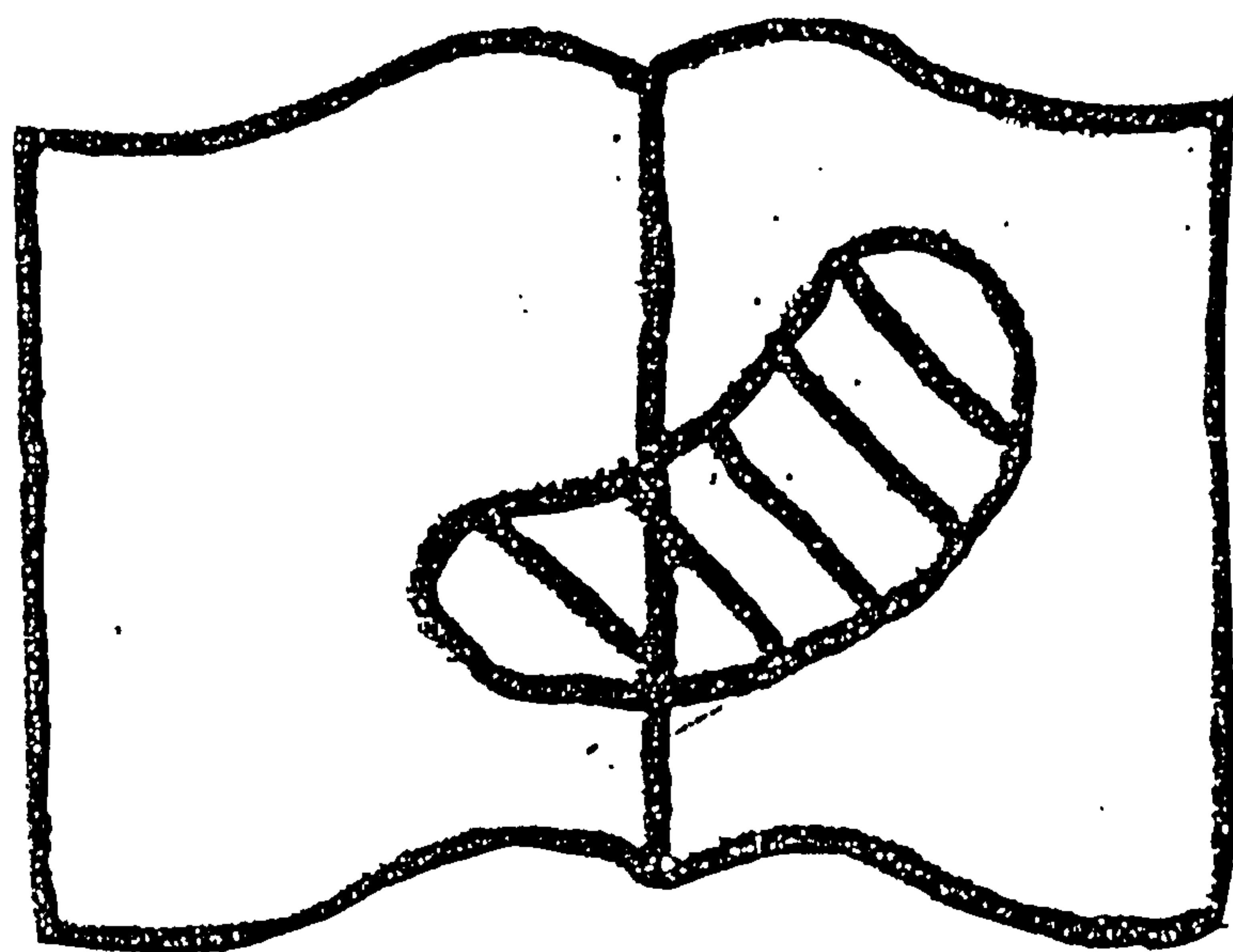
Signature of W.F. DEL SKRINE

Signature of H.S.B. JOHNSON

Resident Fifth Division

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BRN. 804/28 refers

AGREEMENT between the Government of Brunei and the Government of Sarawak regarding the boundary between the States of Brunei and Sarawak between Limbang and Brunei from the Coast to a point west of Bukit Gadong.

IT IS AGREED between the Government of Brunei and the Government of Sarawak as follows:-

The boundary between the States of Brunei and Sarawak between Limbang and Brunei from the Coast to a point west of Bukit Gadong shall be fixed as follows and as shown in the plan attached to this Agreement.

Commencing in Brunei Bay the boundary curves to the south and west of Pulau Salamat, Pulau Berbunot and Pulau Daru Daru to the mouth of Sungai Menunggol, thence follows along Sungai Menunggol, Sungai Riong and Sungai Melais to the mouth of Sungai Mendaun; thence along Sungai Mendaun to its source. (The boundary along these rivers shall be the valley line. If however the valley line cannot be found the median line of the watercourse shall be the boundary.) From the source of Sungai Mendaun the boundary runs by unsurveyed line to the watershed along Bukit Melintang, thence follows the watershed to Bukit Stapok; thence to a point at the foot of Bukit Stapok marked by iron pipe No. 2; thence by surveyed line bearing $272^{\circ} 09' 30''$ for a distance of 2249.4 links to a point on the Limbang Brunei Road marked by iron pipe No. 1; thence by surveyed line bearing $328^{\circ} 37' 30''$ for a distance of 469.7 links to a point marked by iron pipe No. 3; thence by unsurveyed lines to a point on the Trusan Pendam approximately midway between Sungai Brunei and Batang Limbang; thence by unsurveyed lines approximately midway between Sungai Brunei and Limau Manis and Batang Limbang to a point to the west of Bukit Gadong.

Done/

- 2 -

Done at Limbang in Sarawak this 24th day of
February 1933.

Signed by the British Resident,
Brunei, in the presence of

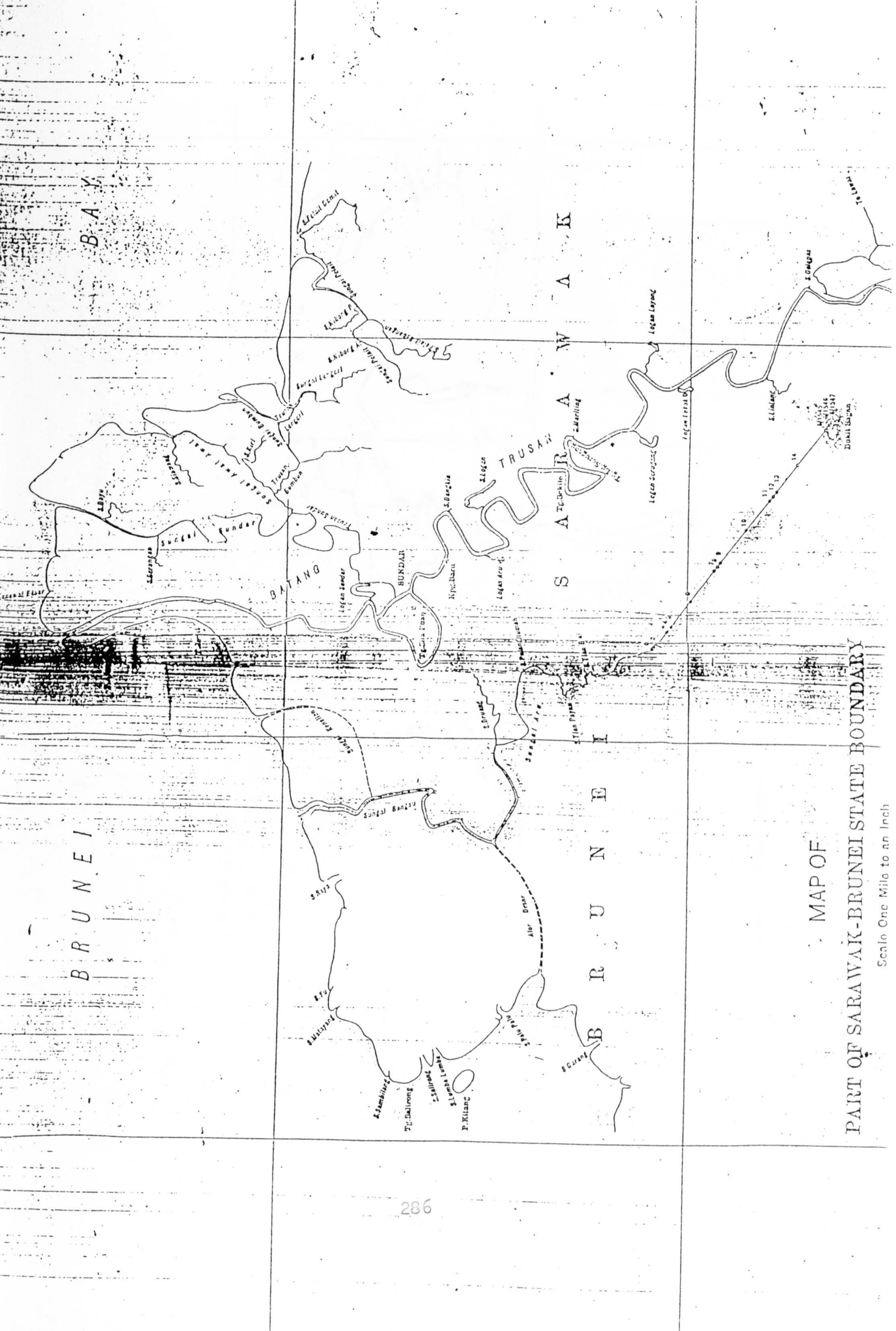
2.7. [Signature]
British Resident,
Brunei.

Ibrahim bin Mohd. Jafar,
24.2.33. District Officer,
Borneo and Suara.

Signed by His Highness' Resident
of the Fifth Division of
Sarawak, in the presence of



Ibrahim bin Mohd. Jafar,
24.2.33. District Officer,
Borneo and Suara.



PART OF SARAWAK-BRUNEI STATE BOUNDARY

Scale One Mile to an Inch

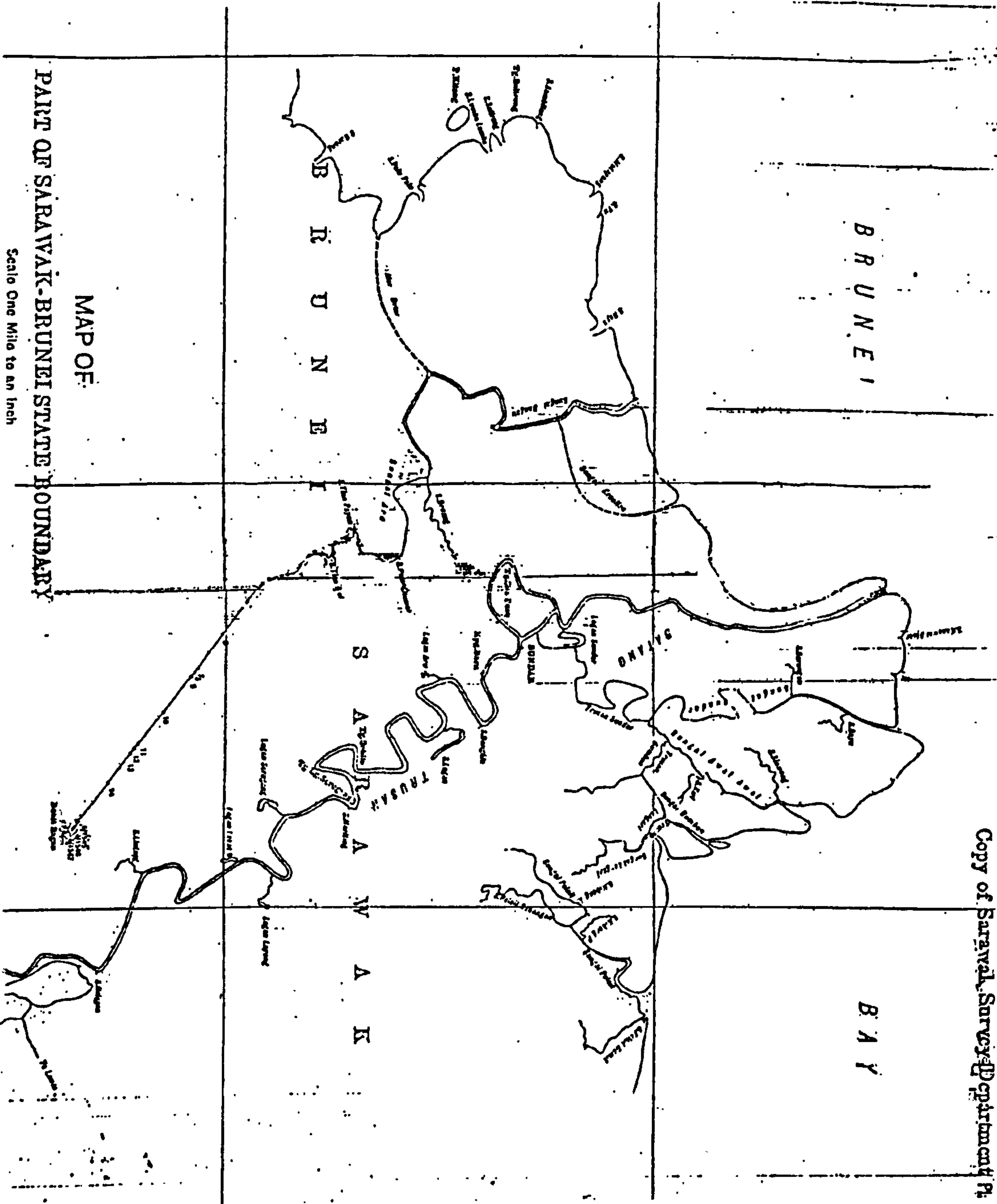


Illustration 1

Duncan Sandys, the Commonwealth and Colonial Secretary at Malaysia Day in Kuching, September 1963.



Illustration 2

The Governor of Sarawak and High Commissioner for Brunei, Sir Anthony Abell and Chief Secretary, Derek Jakeway confer in the Chief Secretary's Office (below a bust of James Brooke) at Kuching in the 1950s.

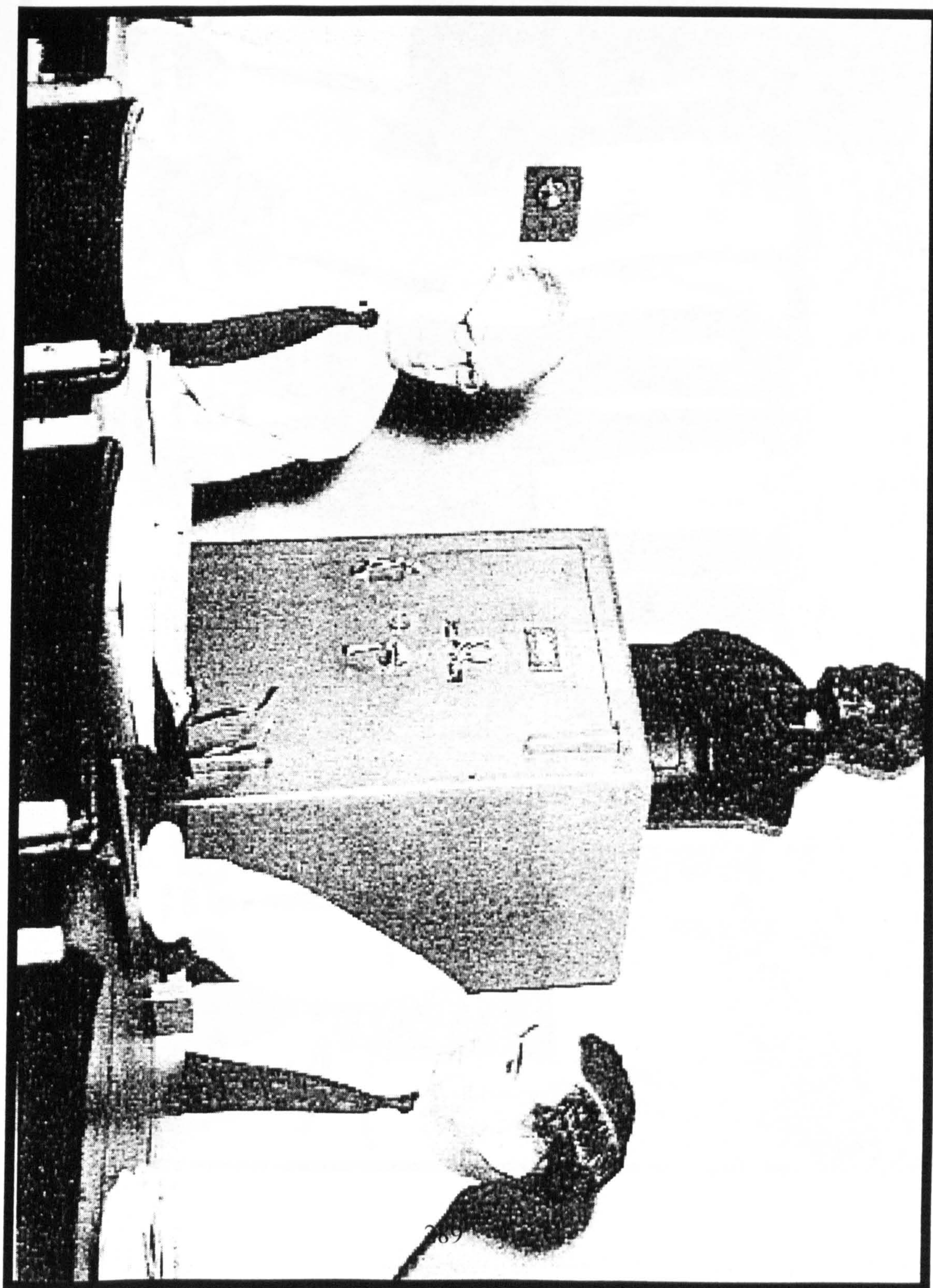


Illustration 3

The Cobbold Commission visited Sabah and Sarawak between February and April 1962. From left to right: Sir Anthony Abell, Sir David Watherson, Lord Cobbold, Dato Wong Pow Wee, Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie and three Sarawak officers; Michael Sadin, Yao Peng Hua and Siaw Jun Chin.

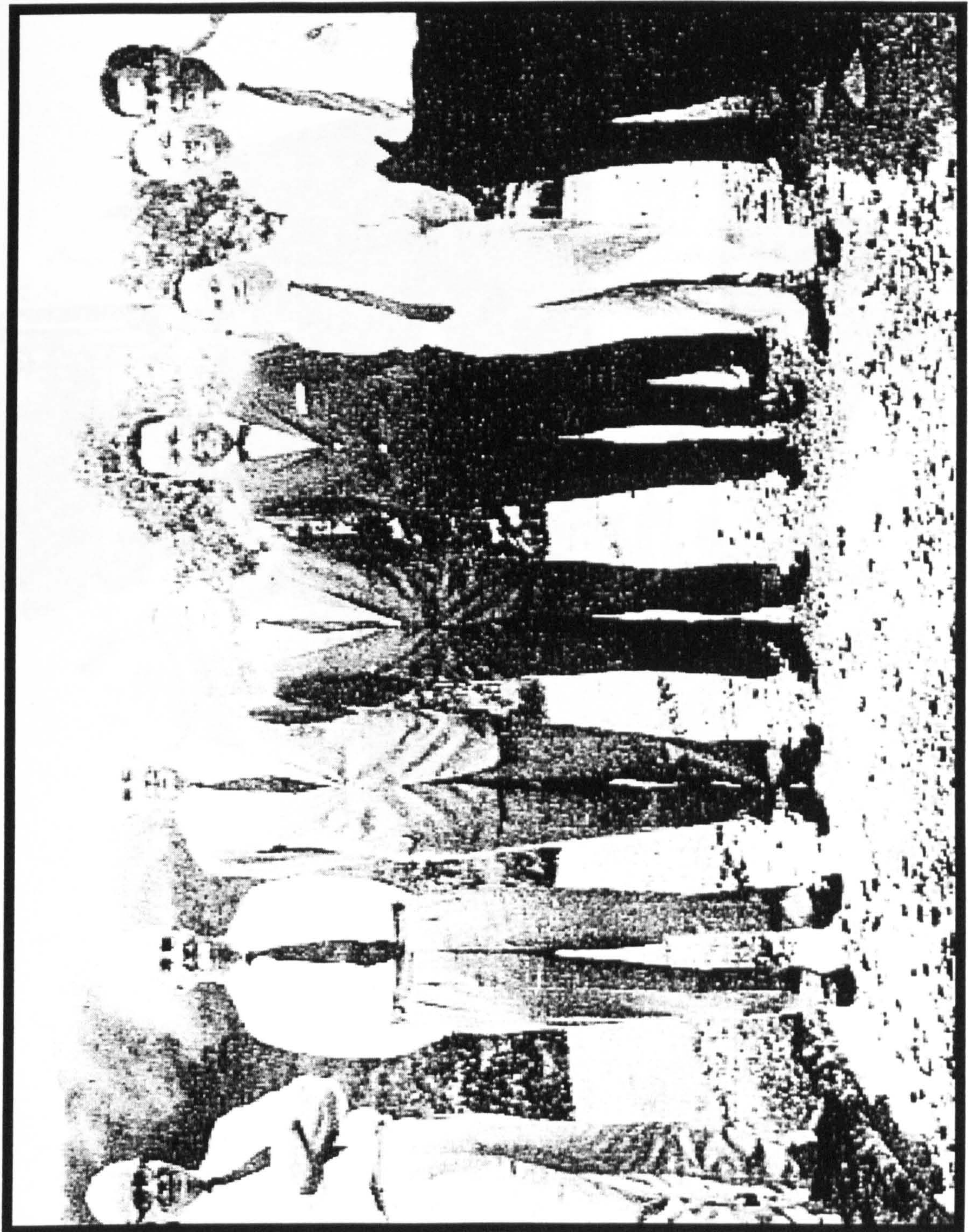


Illustration 4

'Tea at the Rajah's Palace', Kuching, Sarawak in the 1940s after the Second World War. From left to right: Gerard MacBryan, the Tuan Muda, the Ranee, the Rajah of Sarawak, Charles Vyner Brooke.



Illustration 5

James Brooke, son of Judge Thomas Brooke, was born in India on 29th April 1803. He arrived at Kuching on 15th August 1839 to deliver a letter to Raja Muda Hashim. On 1st August 1842, he was proclaimed at Brunei as Rajah of Sarawak. He died at Burrator House in Devon on 11th June 1868, aged 65.

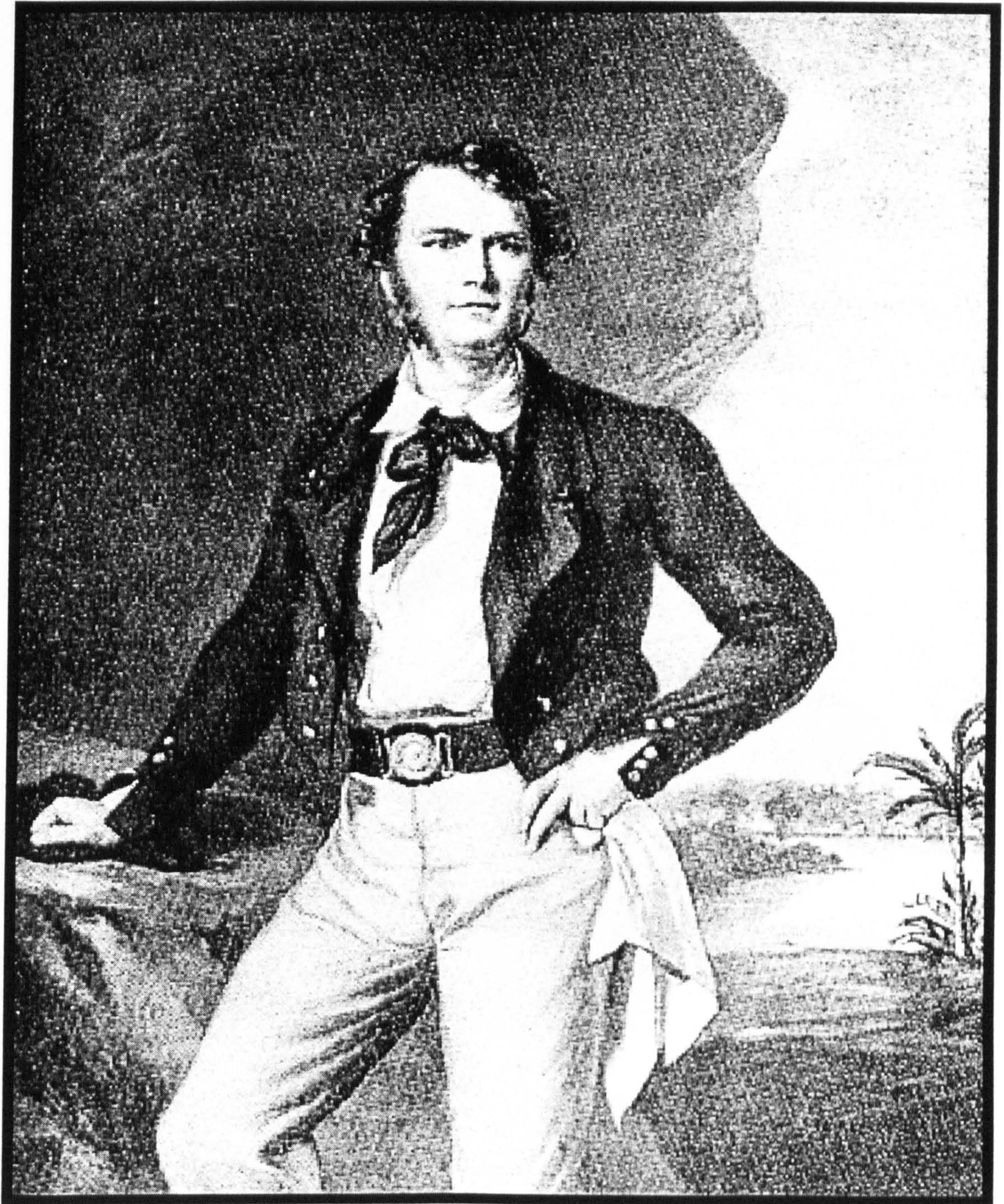


Illustration 6

Charles Anthoni Johnson, born 3rd June 1829, was the second son of the Reverend Francis Charles Johnson who had married James Brooke's sister Emma. Joined the Sarawak Service 21st July 1852. Became Rajah of Sarawak and took the name of Brooke on the death of his uncle on 11th June 1868. Died at Cirencester, 17th May 1917. Buried at Burrator.

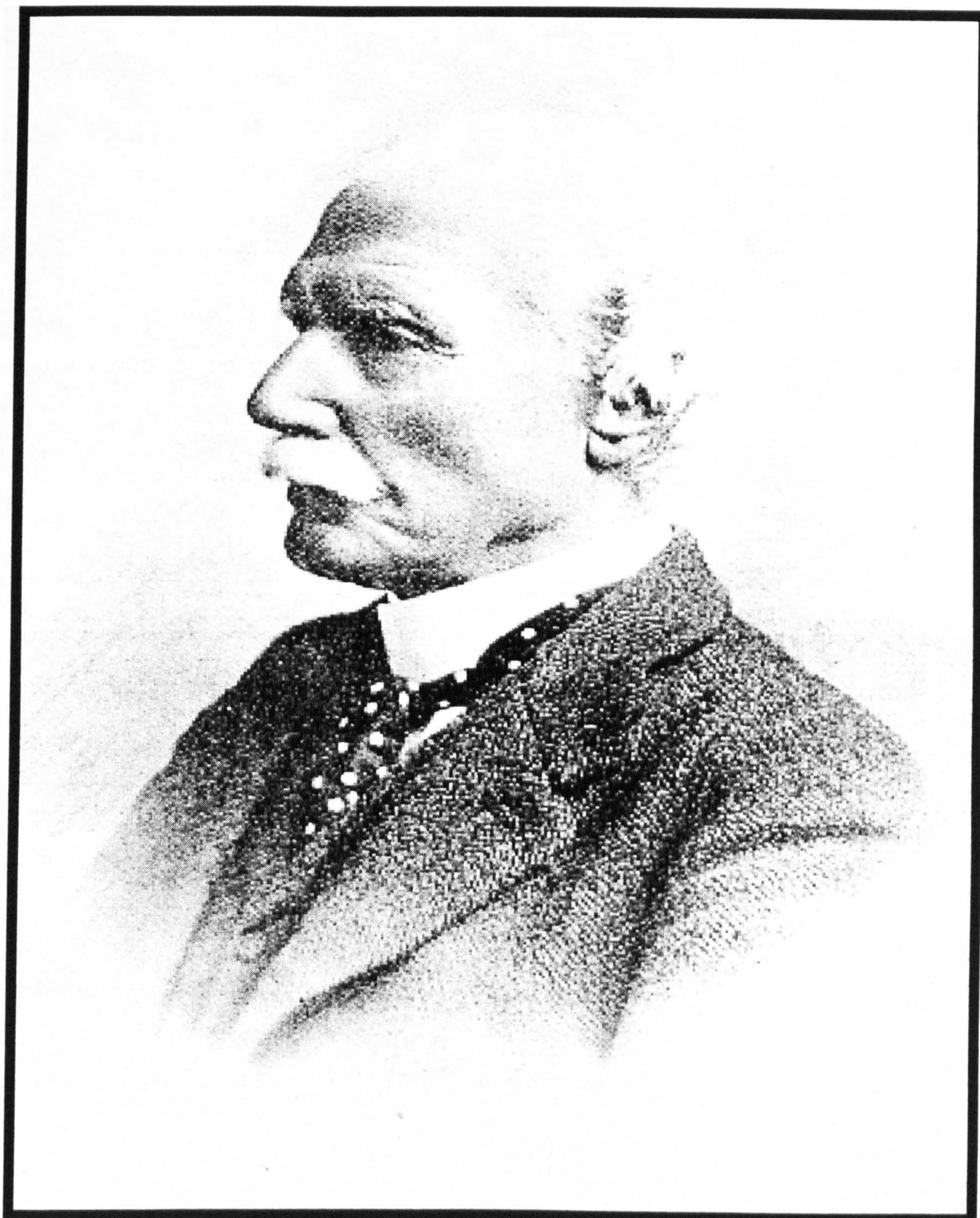


Illustration 7

Sir Charles Vyner Brooke was the second son of Rajah Charles Brooke, born 26th September 1874. Joined Sarawak Service 26th August 1897. Became Rajah on the death of Rajah Charles Brooke 17th May 1917. Proclaimed 24th May 1917. He abdicated from the throne on 31st March 1941 and in 1946 Sarawak was transferred to the British as a Crown Colony.



Illustration 8

Map of Negara Brunei Darussalam



Illustration 9

Map of Brunei Darussalam and the location of the Fifth Division (Limbang and Trusan/Lawas).

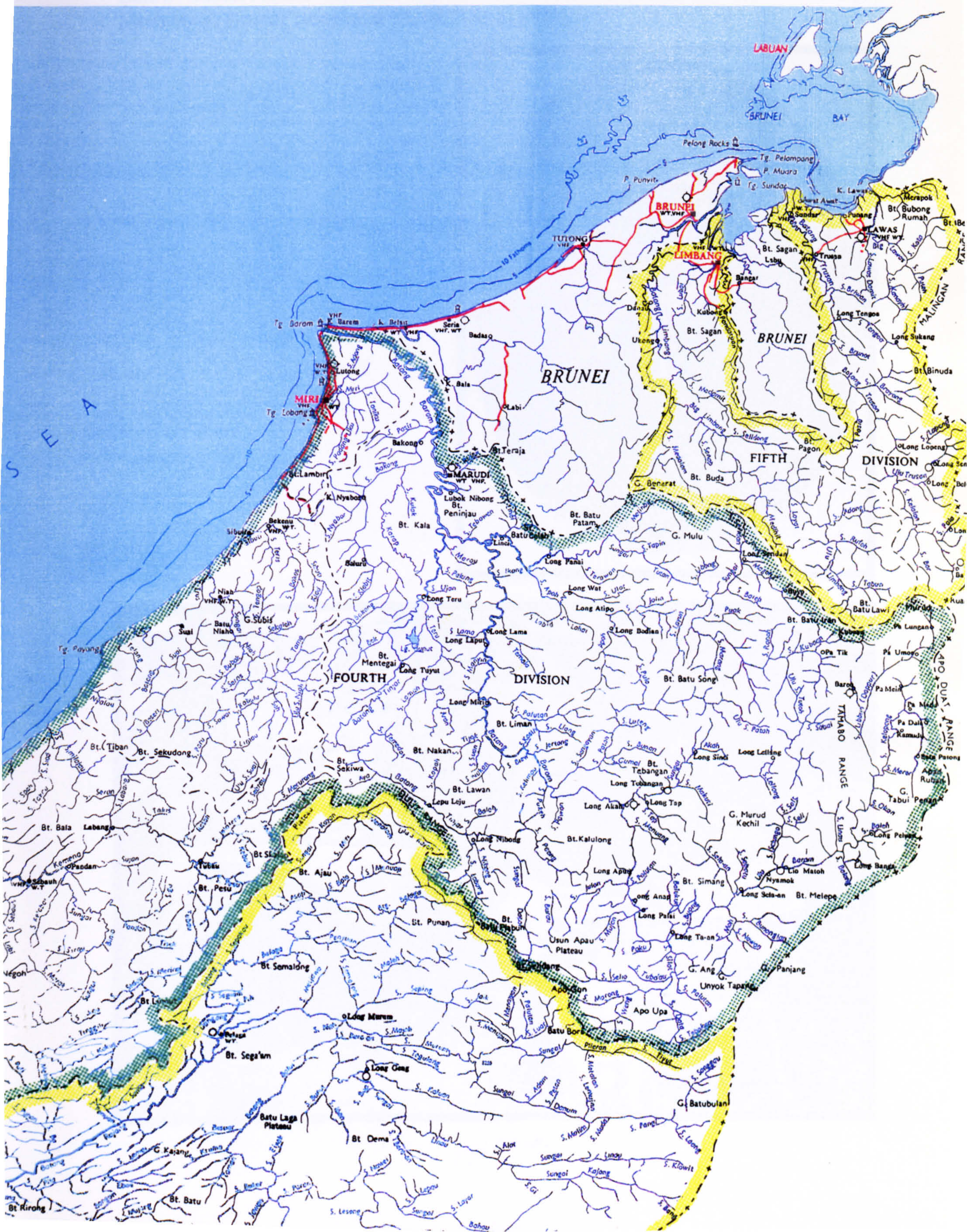


Illustration 10

Above: Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin, the 27th Sultan of Brunei. The photograph was taken in London in 1919.

Below: Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin with his wife Tunku Raihani, on arrival from Tentaya, Limbang at Brunei Town after World War 11, 1945.



Illustration 11

Above and below: Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien at Istana Darul Hana, Brunei Town in the 1950s.



Illustration 12

Above: From left to right: Mr. Turnbull, Chief Police Officer, Pengiran Bendahara Haji Muhammad Salleh and Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien during the Coronation Ceremony 1951.

Below: Left to right: Mr Malcolm MacDonald, Mrs MacDonald, Duli Pengiran Bendahara, Private Secretary to the Sultan.

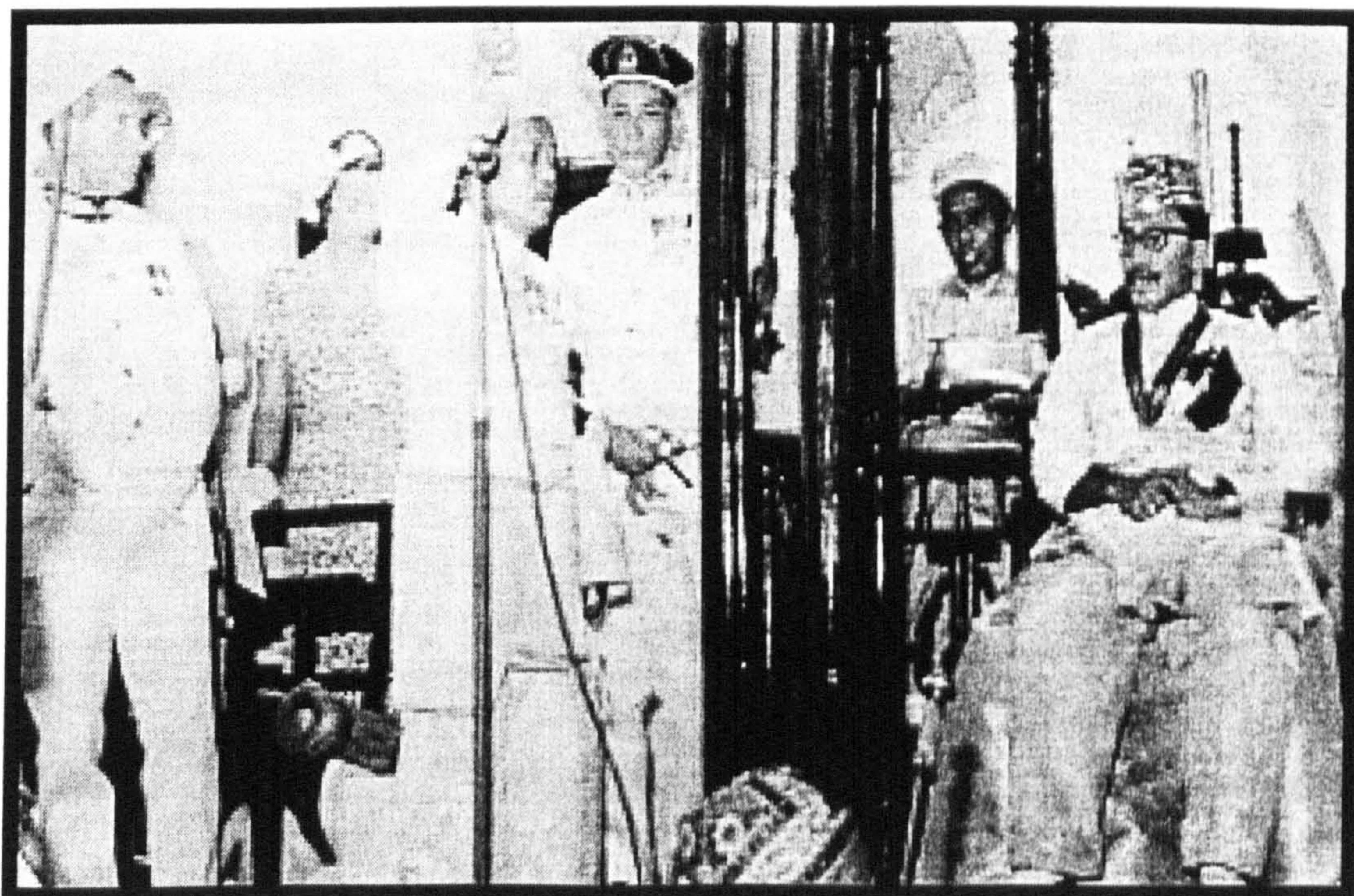


Illustration 13

Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien and his consort at Lapau Diraja, Brunei Town in 1951.



Illustration 14

Above: The arrival of the Commissioner-General, Malcolm MacDonald flanked by High Commissioner, Sir Anthony Abell at Brunei Town in 1951.

Below: Leaving the dock, left to right: Mrs. MacDonald, Sir Anthony Abell, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Pretty in 1951.

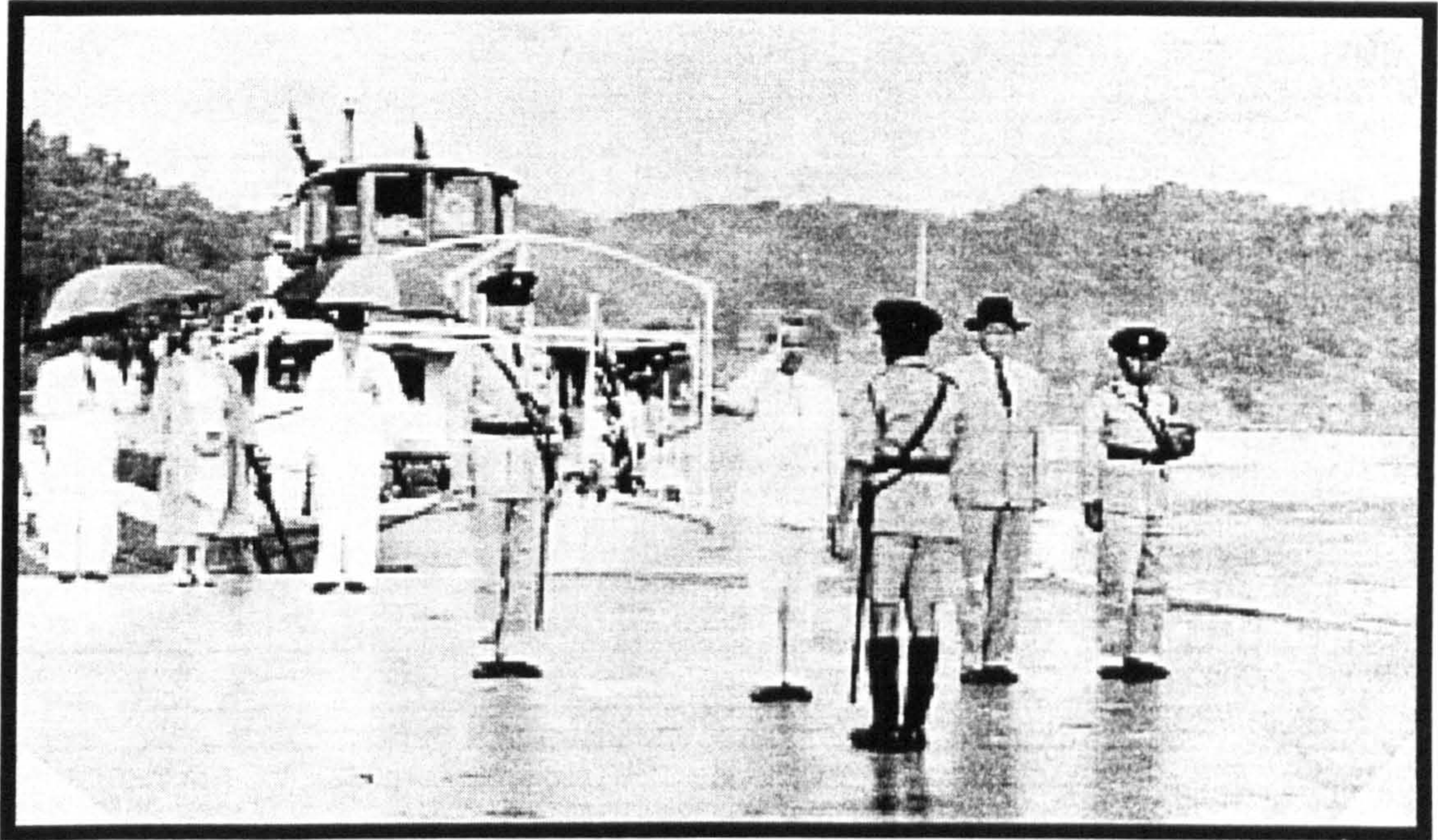


Illustration 15

Sir Anthony Abell and Mr. Pretty during the Coronation Ceremony of Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien at Lapau Diraja, Brunei Town in 1951.

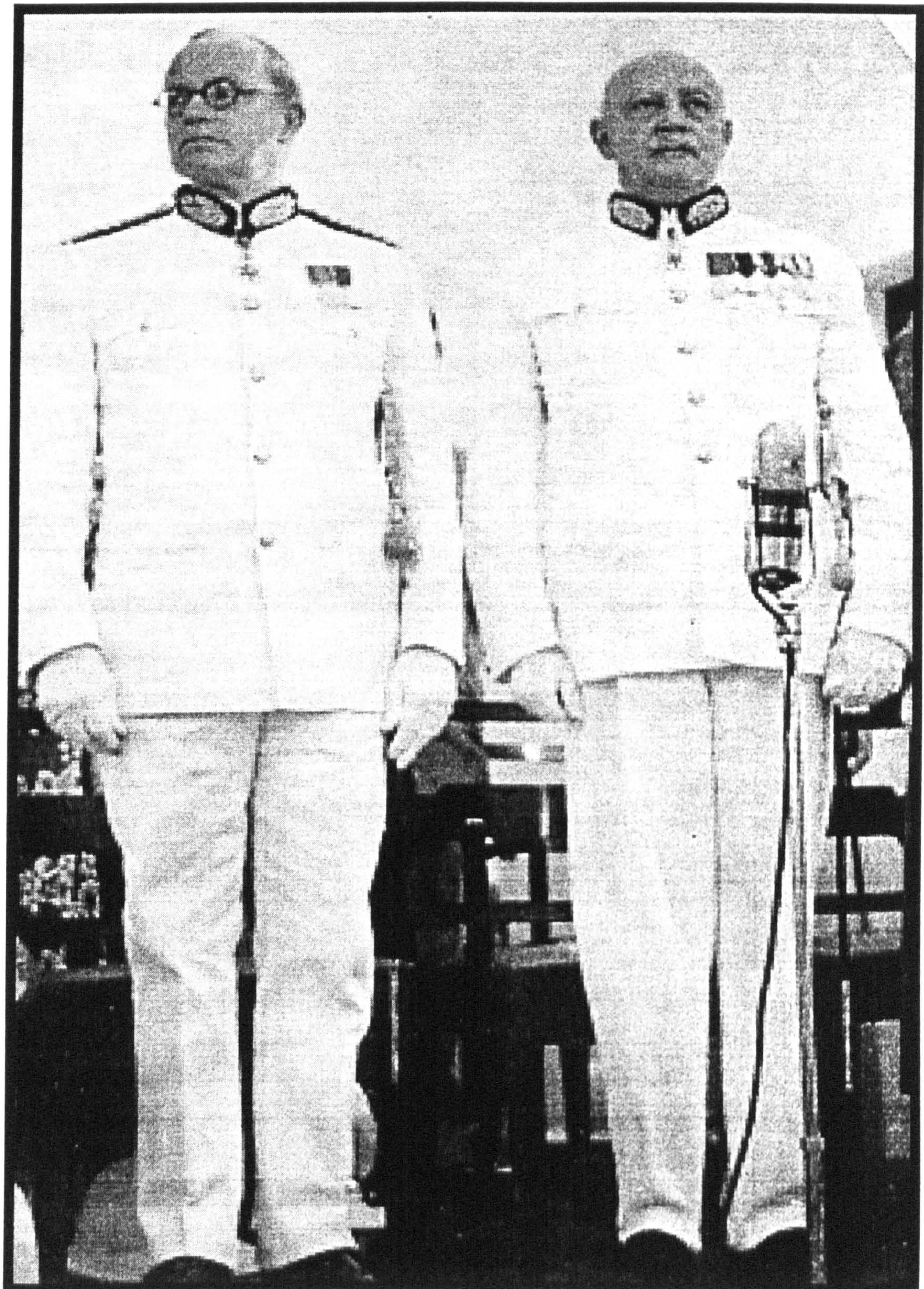


Illustration 16

Kebawah DYMM Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanah Bolkiah Muzzaddien in 1967 (the 29th Sultan of Brunei).



Illustration 17

Above: The Seri Begawan Sultan and Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah joining in a “Tug of War” which took place at Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.

Below: A photograph of Brunei Town. The PRB’s supporters gathered at this field in front of the Police Station and Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque to proclaim the independence of NKKU on 8th December 1962.

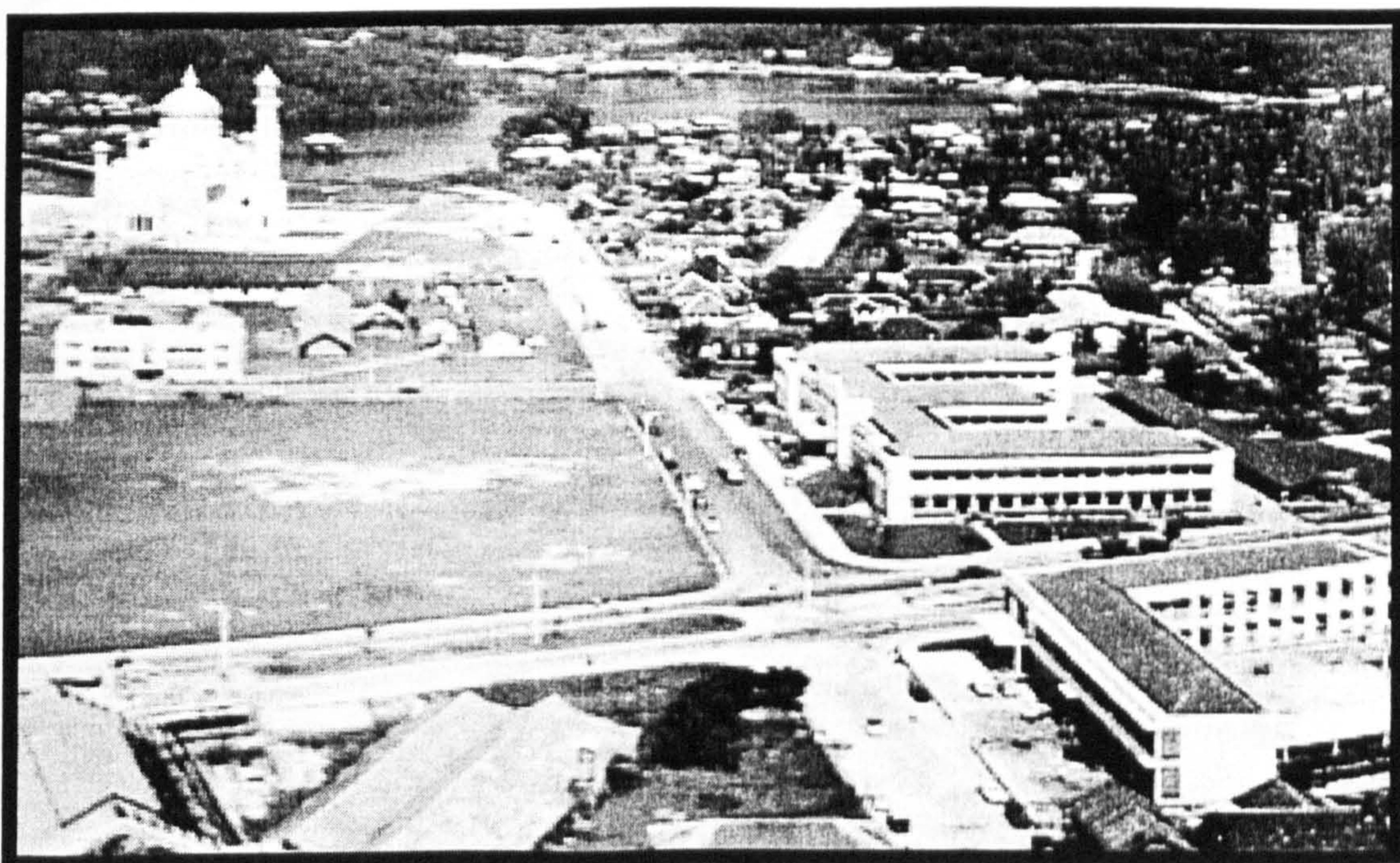


Illustration 18

Below: The British Army inspecting a TNKU's uniform.

Above: The British Army arrival at Brunei Airport, Brunei in December 1962.



Illustration 19

Above: The Seri Begawan Sultan voiced his claim to the Limbang territories on 29th September 1970 at Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, BSB. Brunei.

Below: My photograph with Dato James Wong, (Resident of Limbang) at Hilton Hotel, Kuching, 1994.

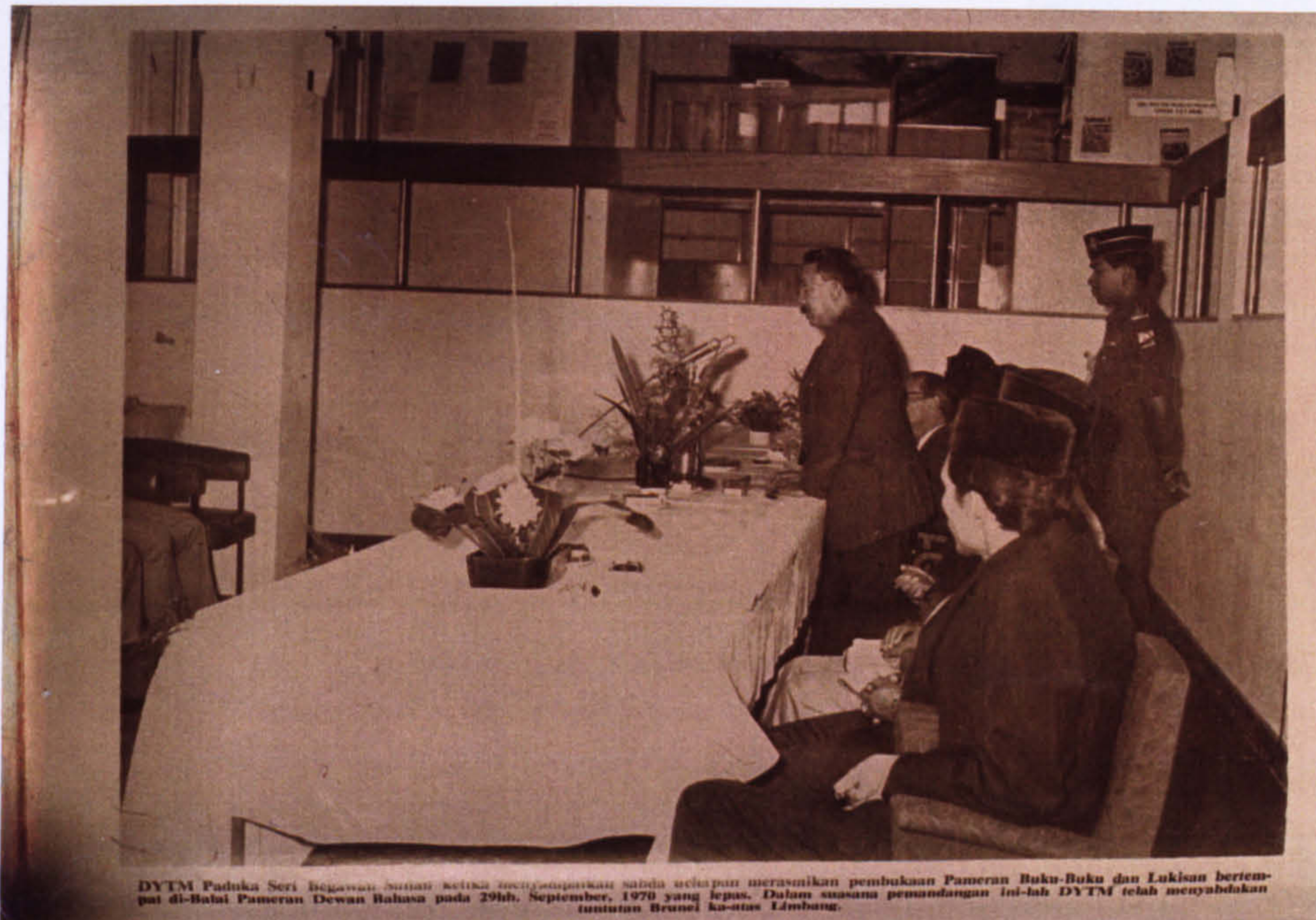


Illustration 20

Above: Mr. Hickling at Brunei High Commission, London 10th August 1995.

Below: My photograph with R.H. Hickling during my interview with him on 10th August 1995 at Brunei High Commission, London.



Illustration 21

Above: A delegation from Brunei History Centre visiting Dr. A.H. Nasution at his residence in Central Jakarta, Indonesia. Right to left: Mrs. Husseinmiya, Dr. Husseinmiya, Dr. Nasution, and Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil and wife, Muhammad Hadi Abdullah and Haji Zaini.

Below: Left to right Haji Zaini, Roeslan Abdulgani (ex-Minister of Information of Indonesia in 1960s), Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil and myself at Ruslan Ghani's Office, Jakarta, Indonesia in 1996.

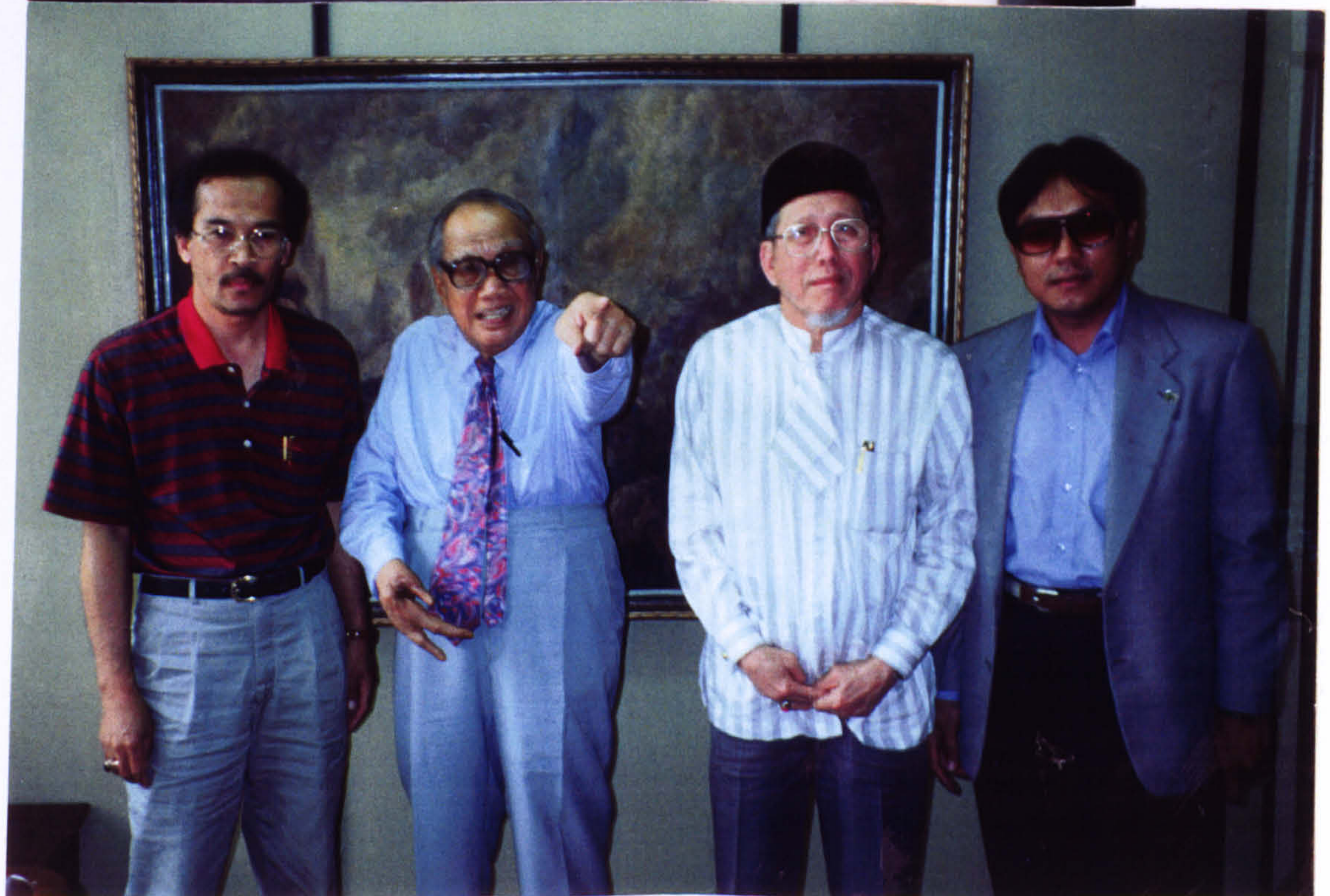


Illustration 22

Above: A photograph of Ampuan Yusof bin Ampuan Adul with Pehin Haji Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri during my interview with him at Brunei History Centre, Brunei in 1997.

Below: A delegation from Brunei History Centre on a courtesy call to Sarawak Chief Minister, Dato Taib Mahmud at his residence in Kuching in 1994.



Illustration 23

Above: Muhammad Haji Manggol, the member of PRB, who went to Jakarta before the outbreak of the Brunei revolt 1962.

Below: My photograph with Muhammad Haji Manggol at Brunei History Centre, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 1996.



Illustration 24

Above: My photograph with A.M. Azahari during my interview with him at his residence in Bogor, Indonesia 1996.

Below: My photograph with Yassin Affandy (TNKU's Commander) at Hilton Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, 1994. Left to right: myself, Haji Zaini and Yassin Affandy.



Illustration 25

Above: Pengiran Pekerma Setia Diraja Sahibul Bandar Pengiran Haji Ali bin Pengiran Haji Mohd. Daud.

Below: Dato Marsal bin Maun. Both of them known by the British Officers as the “three musketeers” which included Pengiran Mohd Yusof. In the 1960s, Pengiran Ali Pengiran Mohd. Daud became Deputy *Menteri Besar* and Dato Marsal Maun was appointed as *Menteri Besar*.



Illustration 26

Above: Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Orang Kaya Dato Seri Utama Haji Awang Jamil Al-Sufri, the Director of Brunei History Centre, Ministry of Culture Youth and Sport, Negara Brunei Darussalam.

Below: Zaini bin Pehin Orang Kaya Shahbandar Dato Setia Haji Ahmad, the founder member of the People's Party of Brunei (PRB).



Illustration 27

Above: Villagers cross the border into Sarawak, North Borneo from Kalimantan and encounter a 4 RAR patrol.

Below: Sarawak, British North Borneo, 1965: soldiers of 3 RAR board a Belvedere helicopter to search for Indonesian infiltrators.



Illustration 28

Above: Azahari's meeting with the Indonesian military leaders in early year of 1964 at Pontianak, Borneo.

Below: Dr. Subandrio, the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs.



Illustration 29

Above: President Sukarno of Indonesia. and President Diosdado Macapagal of the Philippines in 1964.

Below: A.M. Azahari with Dr. Subandrio, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. During their meeting at Pontianak, West Kalimantan, in 1964.

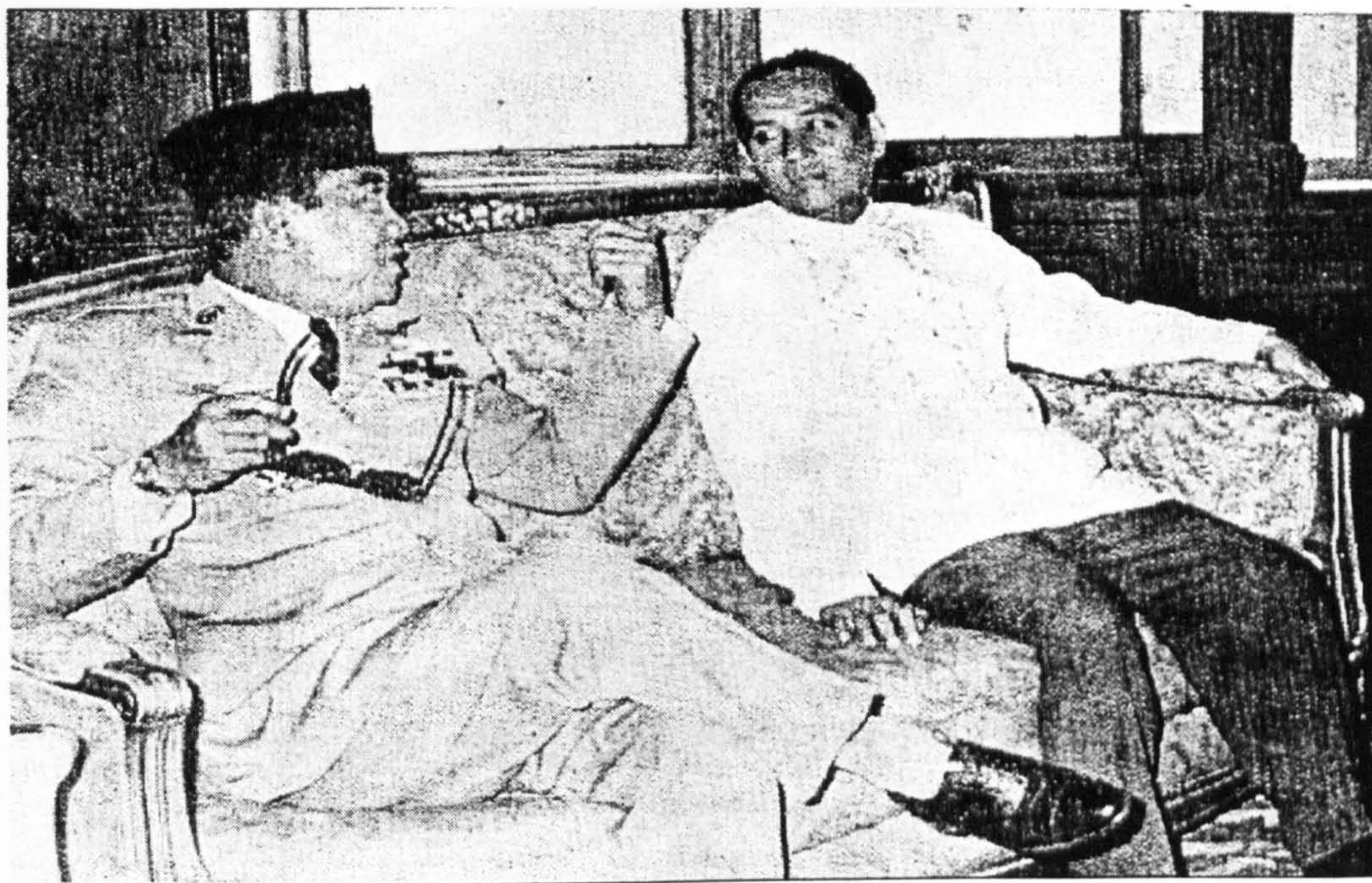


Illustration 30

Above: President Sukarno of Indonesia in the 1960s.

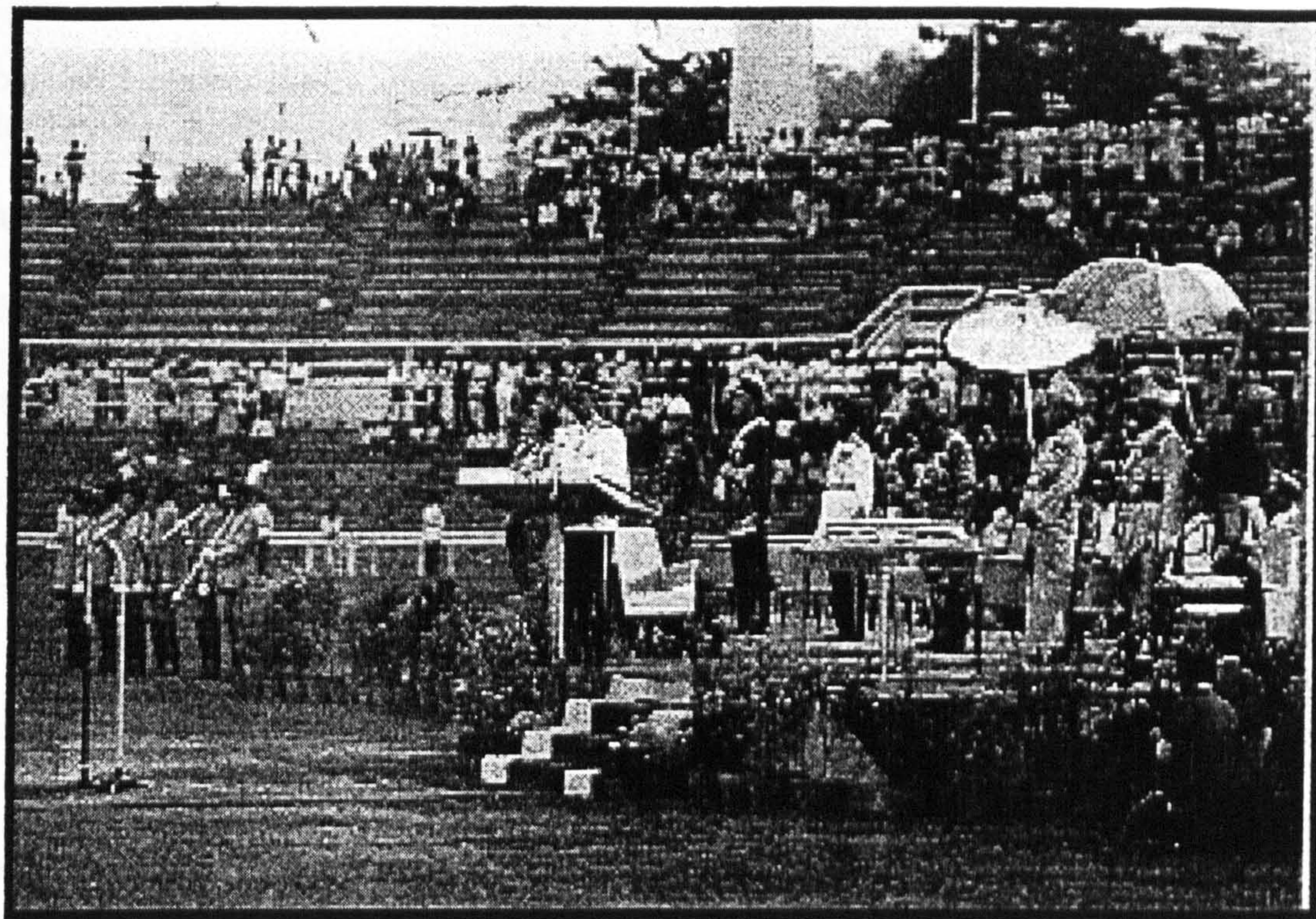
Below: General A.H. Nasution, Minister of Defence of Indonesia, in the 1960s. Nasution barely escaped the coup attempt of September 30, 1965 with his life, jumping over the wall to the Iraqi ambassador's residence next door.



Illustration 31

Above: Prime Minister of the Malaysia Federation, Tunku Abdul Rahman reading the Proclamation of Malaysia, September, 1963

Below: The Tunku's visit to Brunei in the 1960s.



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