

## **ANALYSIS OF THE POLICE SPECIAL BRANCH STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES DURING THE MALAYAN EMERGENCY 1948-1960**

**Amer Fawwaz Mohamad Yasid\***  
**Noor Hishmuddian Rahim\*\***  
**Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM)**

### **Abstract**

The Royal Malaysia Police Special Branch (SB) has been successfully encountered the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) insurrection for over 40 years, since the beginning of the First Malayan Emergency 1948-1960 and Second Malaysia Emergency 1968-1989. It makes Malaysia one of the countries that successfully eliminated the communist insurgency threats in the world during the Cold War period. The SB has evolved since its formation in 1948, as they had developed significant tactics and strategies particularly the counter-intelligence operations in order of being able to penetrate the CPM communist underground movement and supply lines. Throughout the years back fighting the CPM, there are numerous tactics and strategies of counterinsurgency being developed and implemented during the period of 1948-1960. Nevertheless, the research that focusing on the strength and weaknesses of the SB was limited due to the barriers of classified information during the research process. Hence, this article will closely analysed the strength and weaknesses of the Police SB in implementing the tactics and strategies in defeating the CPM organization during the Malayan Emergency 1948-1960 respectively.

Keywords: Police, Special Branch, Communist, Malaya, Cold War

### **Introduction.**

The Malayan Emergency had demonstrated the development of the SB as they evolved from a weak, and unprepared intelligence organization, into a super intelligence, that was effective, within just a short period of time, after being developed by the British. Throughout the First Emergency, the SB had carried out numerous intelligence and counter-intelligence missions against the CPM armed insurrection. Nevertheless, there was limited access on the writings that focusing on the weaknesses of the SB during the Malayan Emergency as most of the key writings are discussing the glorious and strength of the SB. This articles will be discussing the early stages development of the SB and its weaknesses during their fighting against the CPM guerrillas during the Malayan Emergency 1948-1960.

### **The development of the SB during the early years.**

The First Malayan Emergency was the turning point for the British Military Forces (BMF) in acquiring intelligence proficiency in the war against the Communist insurgency. As we know, the British were facing with greater difficulties in obtaining a good quality of the intelligence information on the ground.<sup>1</sup> This happened during the early period of the Emergency when the British came to Malaya. There was no single body directing the British with supreme intelligence, until the early 1948, when the Police Division established the SB for the purpose of providing the intelligence to the BMF in Malaya at that time.<sup>2</sup>

A lot of historians and academicians acknowledged the SB's roles and functions, in helping the British's success on the Malayan Emergency, as it was a part of the crucial feature on the domination of the Malayan Security Forces (MSF) troops, in eliminating the CPM armed revolution permanently.<sup>3</sup> By all means, intelligence was a vital key to the successful conclusion for the British in Malaya, as highlighted by Clutterbuck, intelligence that provided by the SB was the most vital weapon in counterinsurgency.<sup>4</sup> In order to understand the SB's origin, we must look into the early perspective of the intelligence before the emergence of the Malayan Emergency. After the Japanese had surrendered, the British came back to Malaya and established the British Military Administration (BMA) to take over the Malayan administration by restoring the law, through military administration, before the legitimate government was set up.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time, the BMA took their consideration to focus on the establishment of intelligence organisation in Malaya. Hence, the BMA came out with the plan to create the Malayan Security Service (MSS), in September, 1945.<sup>6</sup> Before the SB's establishment, the MSS acted as the main body in providing the intelligence to the BMF. According to Comber, the main roles and functions of the MSS were to gather intelligence and security information, on the subversive organisations and underground movement, with their personalities, leaders and key player in Malaya and Singapore, to advise the Malayan Government on the Internal security matters possessed by the leftist organisation threat, as well as to maintain a close relation with the intelligence bodies of other Security Intelligence information, and, the Defence Security Officer, particularly, the famous, British MI5.<sup>7</sup>

It was the most outstanding intelligence body, governed by the British, after the World War Two in Malaya. Short described the MSS as "a super intelligence organisation".<sup>8</sup> Short opinion was also supported by Mohamad Yasid as the SB was the main intelligence agencies for the BMF in counterinsurgency operations in the early of Malayan Emergency 1948<sup>9</sup>. From 1945-1948, the MSS mainly operated as the intelligence agency for the BMA in Malaya and Singapore. Most of the details were focused on helping the BMA to restore the orders in Malaya, acquire information on the trade unions, secret societies, workers movement, political rallies and organization, as well as to maintain the registry of aliens and foreigners that arrive on the Malayan soil period.<sup>10</sup> As the Communist movement was still under control by the British, the MSS did not obtain any important details concerning the movement. The CPM was still a legalize movement and there were no signs that it will trigger armed revolt against the British Malayan Government, as most of the political negotiations, was carried out through diplomacy and table negotiations.<sup>11</sup> However, the situation in Malaya became serious, in early 1948, as the CPM was trying to overpower the British Malayan Government.<sup>12</sup> Immediately, the MSS responsibility was turned into a vital organization for the MSF in Malaya as Fernando mentioned that with the outbreak of the Emergency, the monitoring and surveillance agencies and instruments were considerably expanded particularly on the intelligence gathering of the CPM activities<sup>13</sup>. The assassination of the British High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney by the CPM guerrillas, resulted in the appointment of Lieutenant General Sir Gerald Templer, as the commander of the BMF in Malaya.<sup>14</sup>

Once in command, Templer believed that “he should continue the legacy that was left by General Sir Harold Briggs. It was a smart move for Templer, since, the critical level of the situation in Malaya had called for an immediate act”.<sup>15</sup> Templer must refined the existing plan and executing it better than it was previously done. Among the steps were to centralize the coordination of intelligence under one official, as well as, revitalizing the police and the intelligence systems.<sup>16</sup>

### **Reinstating the role of the Police Forces**

General Templer felt the need to take immediate actions as the urgency of the Malayan situation required instantaneous solution. Thus, the British Government had vested Templer with extensive power, as bestowed upon any chief executive and commander-in-chief of British dependency or protected states.<sup>17</sup> One of his first acts was to issue statements, as well as, setting forth the intentions of the British Government clearly, of which he was the instrument of power. After assessing the situation in Malaya, Templer set three priority tasks. The first was to reorganize the police, and change its role, from that of para-military force, to a more protective organization, shaped on the line of the British Police.<sup>18</sup>

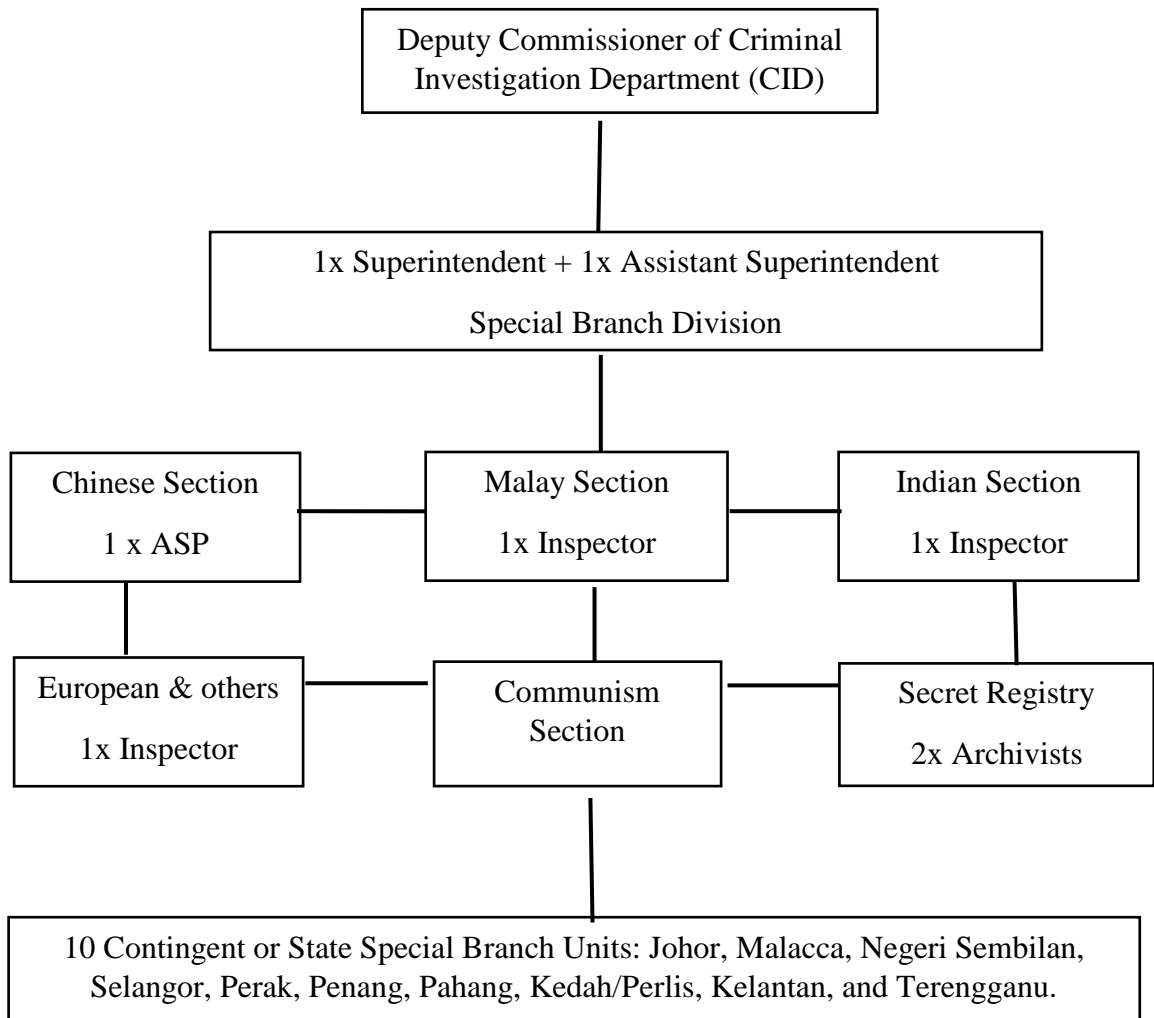
Templer believed that if he wanted to develop the Police Forces, he would need someone who can be trusted and had good experience with this huge task. He felt that the Police Forces must be upgraded to effective operational capability by redoubling the strength of the Forces. Eventually, he had one name in mind. An old fellow he knew back in London. He was a policeman, an Englishman, and a gentleman. That figure was Colonel Arthur Young.<sup>19</sup> He was entrusted with the responsibility of upgrading the Police Field Force System. Upgrading the organization was a huge challenge for Young, as the Police Forces organization was incomplete and unorganized, after long disbandment, due to the Japanese Occupation. The first problem was the manpower of the Forces was largely untrained and ineffective with jungle warfare to fight with the Communist insurgency. Training was vital to the success of the counterinsurgency operations. However, in the early 1950's, no official training body had been established to provide sufficient training to the Police Forces.

Therefore, Young set up training establishments throughout the country and founded a Police College for more senior regular police officers.<sup>20</sup> All police personnel were required to undergo an intensive training schedule. They were equipped with armoured cars, in order to reduce casualties. This improved confidence and morale, as a result. Liaison between the police and the armed forces improved greatly. Recruitment figures rose steadily. By the end of Arthur Young's year in Malaya, the results of his efforts could be seen in a noticeable improvement in relations between the police and the populace, especially in rural areas.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, General Templer's second task was to create an efficient and centralize intelligence system. Much of the groundwork in this aspect had already been laid by General Briggs, who realized that intelligence in Malaya was the SF Achilles heel, and thus, had taken steps to resolve the situations.<sup>22</sup> In 1948, the SB of the Federal Police, replaced the earlier organization, and carried out most of the intelligence works in Malaya.<sup>23</sup>

Even though the SB branch division had been set up as early 1948, the SB needed to be efficient and update their skills and tactics from time to time. Therefore, a training school was set up, with great secrecy, in Kuala Lumpur, where officers were briefed on the objectives, formations and tactics of the CPM and its supporting organization and given instructions in practical methods of obtaining and exploiting intelligence.<sup>24</sup> The initial objective was to draw up an Order of Battle of the CPM and the *Min Yuen* and to compile lists of suspected Communists helpers and sympathizers. Jackson's views on Templer desire to establish an efficient and centralized intelligence system was supported by Kumar Ramakrishna with the statement "intelligence was very important. The Military Intelligence Officer (MIO) works with the SB, as the SB generated background information and they work coordinated with the MIO to generate contact information (they translated the background information into contact information) which later on the jungle patrols can use to go and hunt down the CPM guerrillas in the jungle".<sup>25</sup>

After the foundation of the SB, the Intelligence task forces that were responsible in eliminating the Communist armed insurrection, were hand over to the Police Forces effectively. From that point onwards, the SB was mostly significant and responsible for fighting against the CPM for 12 years, until the end of the First Emergency, on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1960. The SB was set up prematurely by restructuring the Organization into several Sections as stated in Chart 1 below:

Chart 1: Malayan Special Branch Organizational Chart (1948-1949)



Sources: Comber, L. *Malaya's Secret Police 1945- 1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, 2008, p. 61.

\*\* In early days of SB Formation, the SB Organization was in charge under the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

## **Analysis of the strength of the SB during the Malayan Emergency 1948-1960**

The SB have carried out numerous tactics and strategy in order to eliminate the CPM in the First Emergency. During the early campaign, the SB was not well-prepared. There were weaknesses and poor development in the implementation of tactics and strategy. The SB, under the guidance of the British Intelligence M16, conducted intelligence gathering tactics/counter-intelligence by establishing the SB training school in Kuala Lumpur<sup>26</sup>. In the SB Training School, the officers and SB field operatives were taught numerous modules by the British Intelligence instructor. They were known for their expertise in fighting the German Nazi during the World War Two.<sup>27</sup>

### **Collecting high quality and input of Intelligence**

In order to obtain intelligence first hand, the SB captured the enemy alive. By doing so they could extract intelligence information from the enemy<sup>28</sup>. The SB officers and staffs were trained to pursue the enemy alive, unlike the army infantry, whose approach were to kill the enemy, as they were trained to eliminate threats effectively<sup>29</sup>. The SB were taught a certain proverb during the Intelligence courses “dead enemy can’t talk thus they are useless. Go for the live ones”<sup>30</sup>. Hence, the SB kept the enemy alive so as to extract intelligence from the Surrendered Enemy Personnel (SEP) and Captured Enemy Personnel (CEP). Every interrogation was conducted briefly by the SB officers, particularly, the Chinese as most of the SEP and CEP were Chinese. Needless to say, it was an exhausting process. This was because SB officers needed to be patient when dealing with the SEP. The officers in charge of the interrogation process would apply psychological approaches on the enemy. These approaches were known as the “brainwash session”<sup>31</sup>.

We must question why the brainwash session was important when interrogating? Probable answers were the enemies were Communist. They had become one for so long as they lived with Communist members, they slept and ate with their comrades in arms, and were indoctrinated by the Communism ideologies for a long period of time. The SEP believed that Communism was their way of life and will be their future saviour. A man who lived in such conditions might have problems in determining what is good and what is bad. Thus, the brainwash session was essential to change the enemy’s perceptions towards the ruling government and the government’s SF<sup>32</sup>.

When the enemy began to trust and believe the government, they would automatically insist on cooperating with the SB to provide the SF with good intelligence. However, information retrieved from the interrogation process were not necessarily one hundred percent accurate. The SB might classify the information as possibly doubtful of its accuracy, depending on how well the interrogation was conducted (Brainwash), as well as the level of cooperation given by the enemy<sup>33</sup>. There might be some questions raised by the public: did the SB utilized torture method during the extraction process to obtain intelligence information from the enemy? This question is rather controversial and sensitive when it comes to human rights. Torturing was unnecessary during the interrogation process<sup>34</sup>.

As a matter of fact, it might change the perception of the surrendered enemy personnel and in most cases, it made them reluctant to cooperate with the SB. They might cooperate, but, under duress. This will affect the accuracy of the information given. Nevertheless, through the interviews that I have conducted, certain respondents firmly justified that the SB used torturing methods, indeed, to extract intelligence

information from the SEP<sup>35</sup>. It did occur but certainly not on a regular basis. In certain cases it might be the last resort taken.

This was supported by Comber as he highlighted “Unsubstantiated allegations of police brutality do emerge from time to time”<sup>36</sup>. Besides the doubtfulness on the accuracy of the information retrieved, the interrogation process was also disadvantageous as it was time consuming, taking four to fourteen days before the enemies started spilling what they know<sup>37</sup>. Furthermore, the SB teams took some time to analyse the reliability of the intelligence resources by comparing and cross-referencing the information obtained from the person interrogated with other SEP or CEP<sup>38</sup>. If the information given was quite similar, the SEP might be telling the truth. Other than that, the interrogation process also required and involved a lot of manpower/human resources to conduct the process (four to eight persons),<sup>39</sup> which was disadvantageous for the Police Forces as they had insufficient manpower during the First Emergency. It might affect the effectiveness of the Police Forces as too much manpower was concentrated on this single task.

### **Ways of collecting Intelligence on the field**

Apart from interrogation, the SB also established a number of listening post to obtain intelligence. Listening post was someone who might have contacts with the enemy sympathizers. Their task was to obtain intelligence on the enemy’s movement, the locations of the enemy’s jungle base and the locations of resupplies<sup>40</sup>. Normally, listening post will have a static position where the agents can monitor the movement of the enemy agents or Communist sympathizers. Among the strategic locations to place listening post were the village, the town, the main market, restaurants, social clubs, Chinese temples, and public concentration, such as, the New Village and the Aborigines compound<sup>41</sup>. It was an effective method for the SB to gain information on the enemy’s activities in small locations<sup>42</sup>. Besides that, it was an easy method applicable to anybody that were willing to serve, or cooperate with the government, since anyone could serve as listening post. This method was also an advantage for the SB as they could limit the involvement of their manpower from carrying out such task. It was also an advantage in the sense that the SB could outsource the job to the public, or any individual that they felt was suitable for the job.<sup>43</sup>

However, there were also certain weaknesses to this method. Most of the time, the Listening Post was an informer for the SB. In certain conditions, the SB need to monitor the informers regularly so that they do not go against the SB, by providing false intelligence (assuming that there was a chance for the informer to turn against the government by being a “double agent”). The listening post also were given financial compensation and this was costly to be carried out continuously,<sup>44</sup> as those informer will become a burden for the Police Forces during financial recession period.

Nevertheless, the most vital tactic implemented by the SB during the First Emergency was to gather intelligence from the enemy, this was done by looking for the captured enemy documents and rolled slips (secret directive messages). The information found often will disclose important intelligence, such as the time and place for meeting the CPM leaders, the location of the Assault units’ movement, future sabotage intention or plan, and location of rendezvous point of the guerrilla units<sup>45</sup>.

This information, if obtained by the SB, could cause great damages on the enemy’s behalf. The SB might conduct an ambush at the stated place and location. However, in order to obtain such documents, the SB needed to rely on the Police Jungle Squads to get the enemy’s documents, as most of the time, the documents could only be

obtained from the body of the dead enemy<sup>46</sup>. The documents could also be found on the enemy jungle courier, however, it was almost impossible to obtain them, since the enemy jungle courier was secretly dispersed by the CPM Underground Organization. In addition, it was hard for the SB to capture the jungle courier as they blended well into the society<sup>47</sup>. Captured enemy documents were proven to be the best information that led to the defeat of the CPM during the Malayan Emergency,<sup>48</sup> as these documents could provide the SB with tonnes of information that explained the future intention of the enemy sabotage plans to the government, and the policies that will be carried out later<sup>49</sup>.

Despite the advantages in helping the SB to neutralize the CPM organization in First Emergency, the captured enemy documents also had certain disadvantages. Firstly, it required a lot of time for the SB officers, particularly, the Chinese, to inspect the documents. This was because the documents were written in Chinese secret codes, symbols, and messages<sup>50</sup>. Secondly, special skills were needed to interpret the data accurately. This posed a problem to the SB as they have difficulty in obtaining sufficient Chinese translators<sup>51</sup>.

### **Weaknesses within the operation of the SB**

The SB organization was not parallel to the seriousness faced by Malaya in the early Malayan Emergency. For instance, in the early Emergency, the SB had problems acquiring sufficient manpower and human resources for their operational task.<sup>52</sup> This happened since the British did not expect to deal with an armed insurrection after the World War.<sup>53</sup> Short, in his book, highlighted that the British was only prepared for the Emergency, after the arrival of Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer, in 1952.<sup>54</sup> Although the Police Forces were seven times bigger than the British units, in 1948, the quality of the officers was slightly lower, due to insufficient experience in battlefield against guerrilla based enemy. Since the establishment of the SB in 1948, there had been a massive shortage of staff who served in the SB. Apart from insufficient staff and personnel, there were also issues regarding the quality of field intelligence gathering by the SB operative's.<sup>55</sup> The qualities of intelligence were poor due to the lack of training skills of the officers in the SB. After the establishment of the SB training School in Kuala Lumpur, the quality of the field intelligence seemed to improve tremendously.<sup>56</sup> What they needed were good leaderships and a strict emphasis on the training modules.

Gonzago stressed that the school had taught the SB conceptual theories on effective intelligence data gathering, and counter-intelligence duties.<sup>57</sup> This method of learning was class-based and used field modules, where the SB personnel's were taught by the British Intelligence M16 instructors, and, the Britain Scotland Yard Police.<sup>58</sup> Through the establishment of the SB School, the SB evolved into the best Intelligence agency in Malaya, specialising in eliminating the CPM, together with the Malayan Security Forces, until the end of the Emergency.

### **Limited resources of logistics and finance**

Secondly, the SB, in the early Emergency, had insufficient amount of basic necessities to run the organization, such as logistics, weapons, equipment, and, financial/pecuniary resources. Most of these resources were funded by the British. The SB had technical difficulties with its major organization. The global economic at the end of the World War Two, was the worst. The British faced many economic difficulties during the World War Two. Apart from that, the country's economy was near the brink of bankruptcy, as British war debts amounted to 3.3 billion Pound Sterling.<sup>59</sup> The British economic recession seemed to be inevitable, prior to 1951, due to its debts from the World War Two, as most of the financial resources were channelled to Britain's war efforts.<sup>60</sup>

The British Administration had to divert their financial assets, in order to protect their colonial interest that were scattered overseas. Malaya, for instance, was one of the



countries that acquired extra protections from the Colonial government, as the country was dealing with security threats, which might have affected the economic resources and interest of the British in the Malayan territory.<sup>61</sup> Financial constraint was a problem for the SB. Limited budgets were given to fund the SB operations, and this was the most challenging internal problem faced by the organization. Intelligence gathering on the field required a huge amount of financial resources, as the informers were given salaries. This was costly in the long-term run for the organization.<sup>62</sup>

Besides that, intelligence operations also used their expenditures to support other expenses, such as, food for patrols teams, rations, supplies of logistics, weaponry and armament systems, uniforms and other basic equipment that were related to the financial budget of the SB Department. The restricted budget affected the efficiency of the SB to carry out operations against the CPM in the jungle. Meanwhile Chan highlighted that due to the limited financial budget of the SB Department, there was an issue regarding with establishing the line communications, as the SB did not provide sufficient wireless radio sets during reconnaissance mission on the field. Although the wireless sets were provided by the Department, it was not enough to support the requirement of the Forces. Thus, this resulted in inefficiency during task execution by the SB officers or personnel on the ground.<sup>63</sup>

### **Insufficient Chinese Personnel and translators within the SB Organization**

Meanwhile, the third problem was the insufficiency of Chinese personnel in the SB, particularly, the Chinese translators.<sup>64</sup> This was the most crucial problem faced by the SB, as they needed sufficient Chinese staff to decode the CPM's messages and captured documents, retrieved from the enemy<sup>65</sup>. Initially, the SB worked closely with the Emergency Information Service (EIS) and the Department of Psychological Warfare, to overcome the problem of limited Chinese translators. The EIS were responsible to extract intelligence from the enemy, by interrogating the SEP and CEP.<sup>66</sup> The reason why the Chinese were reluctant to join the Police Forces was explained by Short as "an ethnic clash between the Malays and the Chinese on races and political grounds".<sup>67</sup> Under General Templer's plans, the British Government carried out a campaign to persuade the Chinese to join the Police Forces. Without the Chinese's participation in the SB, the British would have faced a total lost in the war against the CPM armed insurrection. The CPM was a Chinese-based political party, and given that, majority of its supporters and members were Chinese.

The CPM movement also consisted of the Malays and the Indians, however, they made up a small minority of the total members. Hence, the Chinese were badly needed by the SB, in order to penetrate the CPM underground Organization. Leong claimed that "the only way to penetrate the CPM organization was by sending a Chinese SB field agent into their jungle base and strongholds, because, if the SB sent Malay operatives, the enemy can immediately detect them, as their appearance seemed unconvincing to be working on the same side as the enemy".<sup>68</sup> In spite of the above problems, the Chinese SB also faced a greater challenge, as they put their life at risk.

Chan mentioned that "Among the greater challenges faced by the SB Chinese operatives during the First Emergency was not being welcomed and accepted well by the citizens, in our presence on the ground, where we operated. We were often labelled by the locals as *Running Dogs*, particularly, by the Chinese resettlement. Somehow we were used to it as during the First Emergency, most of the villagers in the resettlement were seventy percent controlled by the Communist. Since the possibility of Chinese SB personnel's were being followed by the CPM agents during reconnaissance missions

was unavoidable, we also faced the risk of being assassinated by the CPM mobile units at any time”.<sup>69</sup>

### **Difficulties faced in uncovering the Enemy’s Secret Underground Organization**

Meanwhile, there was a difference on the challenges encountered by the SB during the Second Emergency. The SB had difficulties in penetrating the CPM’s Secret Underground Organization. The first challenge faced by the SB was penetrating the CPM Secret Underground Communication System. This was a major problem as the CPM’s communication system was hard to be detected, due to several measures taken by the CPM. First of all, there was a greater degree of secrecy within the CPM organization. The communication systems were difficult to be located, since they were conducted in discreet,<sup>70</sup> to the extent that even the CPM members did not know who was responsible for the procedures.

The delivery procedures were conducted by the most trusted couriers in the organization.<sup>71</sup> Apart from penetrating the CPM’s communication systems, the SB also faced problems in locating the Dead Letter Box (DLB)<sup>72</sup>. In order to protect the security of the DLB, the Communist chose the safest locations that were beyond the SB’s expectation. Thus, the only way to determine the location of the DLB was by relying on the SEP, to provide the SB with the location of the DLB. Even though the SB obtained information from interrogating the SEP and CEP, the accuracy of the information was still questionable. However, it is important to note that not all of the SEP or CEP will be able to determine the exact locations of the DLB, as the locations were changed, from time to time.<sup>73</sup>

Furthermore, even if the DLB had been successfully located by the SB, the SB might not be able to decode the messages and bait the enemy instantly. Apart from the DLB, the Communist underground organization had also manipulated newspaper advertisements as a tactic to communicate with other Assault and Underground CPM units.<sup>74</sup> This was another challenge faced by the SB during the Second Emergency. It required special skills and abilities to detect the secret messages hidden in newspaper advertisements. In order to penetrate the CPM’s Underground Communication System, the SB initiated “Turning Operations”,<sup>75</sup> where the captured CPM were induced by the SB to provide cooperation. They were required to work closely with the SB to penetrate the Communist communication system from the inside.<sup>76</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The SB had demonstrated a significant development in stopping the CPM armed insurrection in the country. As the Communist movement were spreading rapidly in the First Emergency, the SB had improved their skills in counter-intelligence tactics and strategies. However, in the early Emergency, the SB faced difficulties, in terms of the technical aspects of the organization that have been discussed previously. Despite the problems that occurred, the SB was successful in overcoming all of them. In the First Emergency, the SB was focused on the quality of sources of intelligence from the field. The government was aware of the turbulent situation, this in return, resulted in the establishment of the SB Training School in Kuala Lumpur. Various modules that stressed on the development of effective counter-intelligence, and counter-guerrilla warfare, were taught by the British Special Air Services and M16 instructor. This definitely created a higher chance for the SB to defeat the CPM aggressively. The First

Emergency had significantly show that the SB was unprepared, weak, and poor in providing the MSF with reliable intelligence information. Despite the problems of poor equipment, organizational management, logistics, insufficient training and various other challenges, the SB have proven to be efficient since they learnt from their weaknesses and previous mistakes. Although the SB faced greater difficulty during the First Emergency, they had proven that despite all the weaknesses and challenges, they managed to be successful in defeating the CPM insurrection, within a short period of time, considering the fact that the Communist armed insurrection posed a number of tough problems. The CPM was defeated in 1960. Their remaining forces then retreated into the remote jungle sanctuary of the Southern Thailand. After eight years of building up their strength, the CPM once again initiated a full-scale attack on the MSF.

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Note

\* **Amer Fawwaz Mohamad Yasid** currently serving as Lecturer at Department of Strategic Studies, Faculty of Defence and Management Studies, National Defence University of Malaysia (UPNM). He obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Public Management from Northern University of Malaysia (UUM). Meanwhile in 2017, he graduated Master of Arts (Strategic Defence and Security) from University of Malaya (UM). His current research focuses on Military and Police Intelligence, Counterinsurgency and Malayan Emergency respectively.

\*\* **Noor Hishmuddian bin Rahim** served as Lieutenant Colonel in Malaysia Armed Forces. Currently he is serving as Senior Lecturer at Faculty of Management and Defence Studies, National Defence University (UPNM). His expertise focuses on Law of Armed Conflicts, Criminal Law and Military Law respectively.

<sup>1</sup> Komer, R. W. *"The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organization of A Successful Counterinsurgency Effort"*, A Report prepared for Advanced Research Projects Agency, RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, California, USA, February 1972, R-957-ARPA, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Pye, L. W. *Lessons from the Malayan Struggle against Communism*, New York: Princeton University Press, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Comber, L. *"Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency"*, Singapore: ISEAS, 2008, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Clutterbuck, R. *The Long, Long War: The Emergency in Malaya 1948-1960*, London: Cassel, 2008, p. 100

<sup>5</sup> James P. Ongkili. "The British and the Emergency, 1948-1960: An evaluation" in *Darurat 1948-1960*, Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia Armed Forces Museum, 1984, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Comber, L. *Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960*, p. 12

<sup>7</sup> Mohd Reduan Haji Asli. *Pemberontakan Bersenjata Komunis di Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2008, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Short, A. *In Pursuits of Mountain Rats: The Communist Insurrection in Malaya*, Singapore: Cultured Lotus, 2000, p. 80.

<sup>9</sup> Mohamad Yasid , Amer Faawaz. Peranan Pasukan Cawangan Khas Polis Diraja Malaysia (PDRM) Dalam Menangani Ancaman Komunis, 1968-1989. SEJARAH: Journal of the Department of History, [S.l.], v. 25, n. 2, nov. 2017. ISSN 1985-0611. doi: <https://doi.org/10.22452/sejarah.vol25no2.2>.

<sup>10</sup> Clutterbuck, R. *"Riot and Revolution in Singapore & Malaya 1945-1963"*, London: Faber & Faber, 1973, p. 48.

<sup>11</sup> According to Paget, at that time, the CPM was an official political party, approved by the British government, in Malaya. See Paget, J. *Counter-insurgency Campaigning*, London: Faber & Faber, 1967, p. 46.

<sup>12</sup> Ling, Ho Hui. Kesan Perang Korea Keatas Tanah Melayu 1950-1953: Satu Tinjauan Umum. SEJARAH: Journal of the Department of History, [S.l.], v. 10, n. 10, nov. 2017. ISSN 1985-0611. doi: <https://doi.org/10.22452/sejarah.vol10no10.8>, p. 161

<sup>13</sup> Fernando, J. M. British Colonial Policy and the Development of Political Parties in Malaya, 1945-1957: Taming the shrew. SEJARAH: Journal of the Department of History. [S.l.], v.16, n. 16, nov. 2017. ISSN 1985-0611. Available at: <https://ejournal.um.edu.my/index.php/SEJARAH/article/view/9198>.doi: <https://doi.org/10.22452/sejarah.vol16no16.6>, P. 115

<sup>14</sup> General Sir Gerald Templer was appointed on 5 February 1952. A soldier of considerable talents, Templer had a distinguished war record as the divisional commander of the British Army. His military career became brighter after defeating the German Nazi in Europe. He was then appointed as The Director of Military Government in the Western Zone, and later on, became The Director of Military Intelligence in the War Office, London. He served in Malaya for 2 years, until 1954, where he came back to London after getting promoted as the Field Marshal. Templer then became the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. For further details, see Jackson, R. *The Malayan Emergency: The Commonwealth's War 1948-1966*, London: Routledge, 1990, p. 24 and Oong Hak Ching, *Chinese Policy in Malaya 1942-1955*, Bangi, Selangor: UKM Press, 2000, pp. 179-180.

<sup>15</sup> An interview with Associate Professor Dr. Kumar Ramakrishna, Head Centre of Excellence for National Security, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, at his office on 16 March, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Cloake, J. *Templer: The Tiger of Malaya: The Life of Field Marshal Sig General Templer*, London: Harrap, 1985, pp. 227-228.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. Cloake, *Templer: The Tiger of Malaya: The Life of Field Marshal Sig General Templer*, pp. 227-229.

<sup>18</sup> Comber. *Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, p. 46.

<sup>19</sup> Sir Arthur Young was a Commissioner of the City of London Police. He came to Malaya, in 1952, on a year's secondment, to undertake the reorganization programme. Soon after his arrival in Malaya, he initiated the *Operation Service* which was designed to instil a sense of service and courtesy to the community, into the Federation Police, as practiced in Britain. The objective was to get the Malayan policemen, of whatever race, accepted as helper and friend of the people, rather than as an oppressor. See Jackson, R. *The Malayan Emergency: The Commonwealth's War 1948-1966*, p. 25 and Comber, *Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, pp. 175-177.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Comber, *Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, pp. 178-180.

<sup>22</sup> Barber, N. *The War on the Running Dogs: How Malaya Defeated the Communist Guerrillas 1948-1960*, London: William Collins, 1971, p. 178.

<sup>23</sup> Short, A. *In Pursuits of Mountain Rats: The Communist Insurrection in Malaya*, p. 360.

<sup>24</sup> Colonel Arthur Young handed the SB to Guy Madoc. Madoc improved an existing SB School, by personally teaching tactics and techniques to the heads and deputy heads of SB Department in Malaya. See Cloake, J. *Templer, The Tiger of Malaya: The Life of Field Marshal Sig General Templer*, London: Harrap, 1985, p. 232.

<sup>25</sup> An interview with Associate Professor Dr. Kumar Ramakrishna, Head Centre of Excellence for National Security, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore on 16 March, 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Colonel Arthur Young handed the SB to Guy Madoc. Madoc improved an existing SB School, by personally teaching tactics and techniques to the heads and deputy heads of SB Department in Malaya. Ibid. Cloake, J. *Templer, The Tiger of Malaya: The Life of Field Marshal Sig General Templer*, p. 232.

<sup>27</sup> An interview with Former Senior Assistant Commissioner (SAC) Datuk A. V. Navaratnam, Former VAT 69 Police Commander (1969-1983) at his house in Klang, on 18 April 2016.

<sup>28</sup> Comber, L. *Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, p. 79.

<sup>29</sup> An interview with Superintendent Stephen Kingsford Gonzago, Former SB field operatives and Commander of Bukit Aman Special Branch E3M (Special Tactics and Operations) (1956-1992), at his house in Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, on 5 April 2016.

<sup>30</sup> An interview with SAC Datuk Dr. Leong Chee Woh, Former Deputy Director of Royal Malaysia Police Special Branch (1981-1984), on 24 August 2016.

<sup>31</sup> C.C. Too, "Psychological Warfare and Some Aspects of the Psychology of the People in Southeast Asia in Areas Where Communist Insurrection is Likely to Arise", Impromptu Speech to the Staff of the Faculty at United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, USA, 15 October 1962, Arkib Negara Malaysia: 2008/000241, p. 12.

<sup>32</sup> An interview with DSP Chan Kok Kong, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1951-1984), at his house at Bandar Menjalara, Kepong, Selangor, on 8 April 2016.

<sup>33</sup> An interview with Superintendent Stephen Kingsford Gonzago, Former SB field operatives and Commander of Bukit Aman Special Branch E3M (Special Tactics and Operations) (1956-1992), at his house in Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, on 5 April 2016.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. Comber. *Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, p. 83.

<sup>35</sup> There were few respondents who admitted that the SB carried out torture methods, during extracting information from the SEP or CEP. However, this was not conducted on a regular basis. In reality, the long and exhausting process of interrogation will acquire psychological and emotional strength for the SB officers to stay on track. In most of the events, the torturing took place when the SB officers felt that they "were not patient enough" to wait, due to the necessity of the information which needed to be retrieved quickly. Although torturing was against human rights, it was the last resort for the SB to deploy such actions onto the SEP. On the other hand, this event will not take place if the SEP was willing to cooperate.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. Comber, *Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, p. 84.

<sup>37</sup> An interview with Superintendent Stephen Kingsford Gonzago, Former SB field operatives and Commander of Bukit Aman Special Branch E3M (Special Tactics and Operations) (1956-1992), at his house in Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, on 5 April 2016.

<sup>38</sup> An interview with DSP Chan Kok Kong, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1951-1984), at his house, in Bandar Menjalara, Kepong, Selangor, on 8 April 2016.

<sup>39</sup> An interview with Former ASP Salleh Gomu, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1967-1977), at his house, in Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur, on 12 April 2016.

<sup>40</sup> An interview with Superintendent Stephen Kingsford Gonzago, Former SB field operatives and Commander of Bukit Aman Special Branch E3M (Special Tactics and Operations) (1956-1992), at his house in Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, on 5 April 2016.

<sup>41</sup> An interview with Former Assistant Superintendent Police (ASP) Meor Roslan Dato' Meor Jaafar, Former Police Special Branch operatives (1978-1984), at his office in Sungai Besi, Kuala Lumpur, on 16 November 2016.

<sup>42</sup> An interview with SAC Datuk Dr. Leong Chee Woh, Former Deputy Director of Royal Malaysia Police Special Branch (1981-1984), on 24 August 2016.

<sup>43</sup> An interview with DSP Chan Kok Kong, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1951-1984), at his house in Bandar Menjalara, Kepong, Selangor, on 8 April 2016.

<sup>44</sup> An interview with Former ASP Salleh Gomu, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1967-1977), at his house in Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur, on 12 April 2016.

<sup>45</sup> An interview with DSP Chan Kok Kong, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1951-1984), in his house at Bandar Menjalara, Kepong, Selangor, on 8 April 2016.

<sup>46</sup> An interview with General Tan Sri Datuk Ghazali Seth, former Malaysia Chief of Armed Forces (1981-1986), at his office in Phileo Damansara, Petaling Jaya, on 17 November 2016.

<sup>47</sup> According to the SB intelligence, there were two types of couriers: Jungle Couriers and "Open Route Couriers". Jungle Couriers were uniformed Communist guerrilla members who often travelled in the jungle between the Communication Posts. Their movement were unpredictable, and therefore, they were not a good target for the Security Force patrols. Meanwhile "Open Route Couriers" were the trusted members of the public, who possessed the Identity Cards. They also had an excuse for travelling. Many of them were women and they were used widely to send messages between the CPM State Secretaries, Regional Bureau, and the members of the CPM High Command (Politbureau). They did not enter the jungle, thus, there will be jungle couriers waiting for them to collect the messages to be sent to their directive routes. Through evidence, it was a hard task for the SB to eliminate the jungle courier, while the open routes courier were easier to be neutralized in all events. Further details, see Arkib Negara Malaysia. (1954). "INTELLIGENCE APPRECIATION FOR OPERATIONAL PLANNING FOR THE SECOND HALF OF 1954". File Number: 1957/0537807, p. 12.

<sup>48</sup> According to General Tan Sri Datuk Mohamed Ghazali Mohd Seth, during an interview on 17 November 2014, at his office in Damansara, Kuala Lumpur, directive letters were the most important intelligence, recovered from dead bodies of the eliminated CPM guerrillas. Periodically, directive letters provided tactical intelligence for the MSF, as they disclosed information regarding the location of communist secure bases, the members meeting places and time, the rendezvous point of the CPM assault groups, the location of food and ammunition dumps, and in certain cases, the hit list target of the Communist forces on the government, or, important military installations, including military, and security personnel. The possession of directives letter will help the MSF in pursuing and eliminating the

Communist aggressively, and at the same time, will put the Security Forces one step ahead of the enemy's movement.

<sup>49</sup> C.C. Too, *Psychological Warfare and Some Aspects of the Psychology of the People in Southeast Asia in Areas Where Communist Insurrection is Likely to Arise*, p. 10.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. C.C. Too, *Psychological Warfare and Some Aspects of the Psychology of the People in Southeast Asia in Areas Where Communist Insurrection is Likely to Arise*, p. 21.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. Comber. *Malaya's Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, p. 60.

<sup>52</sup> Nagl. J. *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, USA: University of Chicago Press, 2005, p. 65.

<sup>53</sup> An interview with Associate Professor Dr. Kumar Ramakrishna, Head Centre of Excellence for National Security, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, at his office, on 16 March, 2015.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. Short. *In Pursuit of Mountain Rats: The Communist Insurrection in Malaya*, p. 352.

<sup>55</sup> An interview with SAC Datuk Dr. Leong Chee Woh, Former Deputy Director of Royal Malaysia Police Special Branch (1981-1984), on 24 May 2015.

<sup>56</sup> An interview with SAC Datuk Dr. Leong Chee Woh, Former Deputy Director of Royal Malaysia Police Special Branch (1981-1984), on 24 May 2015.

<sup>57</sup> An interview with Former Superintendent Stephen Kingsford Gonzago, Former SB operatives and Commander of Bukit Aman Special Branch E3M (Special Tactics and Operations) (1956-1992), at his house, in Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, on 5 April 2016.

<sup>58</sup> An interview with DSP Chan Kok Kong, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1951-1984), at his house, in Bandar Menjalara, Kepong, Selangor, on 8 April 2016.

<sup>59</sup> Watson, J. B. *Success in World History since 1945*, London: John Murray Press, 1989, p. 99.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. Watson, *Success in World History since 1945*, p. 111.

<sup>61</sup> An interview with Associate Professor Dr. Kumar Ramakrishna, Head Centre of Excellence for National Security, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, at his office, on 16 March, 2015.

<sup>62</sup> An interview with SAC Datuk Dr. Leong Chee Woh, Former Deputy Director of Royal Malaysia Police Special Branch (1981-1984), on 24 August 2016.

<sup>63</sup> An interview with Former Deputy Superintendent (DSP) Chan Kok Kong, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1951-1984), at his house in Bandar Menjalara, Kepong, Selangor, on 8 April 2016.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. C.C. Too, *Psychological Warfare and Some Aspects of the Psychology of the People in Southeast Asia in Areas Where Communist Insurrection is Likely to Arise*, p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> According to Leong Chee Woh, there are at least 600 SB personnel strength at the beginning of 1948. In comparison, the CPM strength was likely to be about 5000-6000 strength which ten times far more superiority than the SB manpower.

<sup>66</sup> Lim Cheng Leng. *The Story of Psy-Warrior Tan Sri Dr. C. C. Too*, Batu Caves, Selangor: LCL Publications, 2000, p. 133.

<sup>67</sup> Dougherty, James. E. "They Call 'the Guerrilla War in Malaya'" in Osanka (ed.) *Modern Guerrilla Warfare: Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements 1941-1961*, New York: Free Press, 1970, p. 303.

<sup>68</sup> An interview with SAC Datuk Dr. Leong Chee Woh, Former Deputy Director of Royal Malaysia Police Special Branch (1981-1984), on 24 August 2016.

<sup>69</sup> An interview with DSP Chan Kok Kong, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1951-1984), at his house, in Bandar Menjalara, Kepong, Selangor, on 8 April 2016

<sup>70</sup> An interview with General Police Inspector Tan Sri Datuk Seri Norian Mai, Former General Police Inspector (1999-2003), at his house, in Shah Alam, Selangor, on 15 January 2016.

<sup>71</sup> An interview with Former Assistant Superintendent Police (ASP) Meor Roslan Dato' Meor Jaafar, Former Police Special Branch operatives (1978-1984), at his office, in Sungai Besi, Kuala Lumpur, on 16 November 2015.

<sup>72</sup> According to former DSP Chan Kok Kong, the Dead Letter Box were the place where the CPM guerrillas left their directive or instructions letters for their members to be retrieve later, as a part of secret communication systems between the CPM High Command and their subordinate.

<sup>73</sup> An interview with SAC Datuk Dr. Leong Chee Woh, Former Deputy Director of Royal Malaysia Police Special Branch (1981-1984), on 24 August 2016.

<sup>74</sup> An interview with DSP Chan Kok Kong, Former Special Branch Staff Officer E1A (SB Communist Underground Sections) (1951-1984), at his house, in Bandar Menjalara, Kepong, Selangor, on 8 April 2016.

<sup>75</sup> “Turning operations” was a term used by the SB when the Surrendered Enemy Personnel or the Captured Enemy Personnel cooperated with the Security Forces and went into the jungle, to attack their comrade-in-arms, or, induce them to surrender. Turning operations derived from the British Intelligence Service M15 in 1939. After the start of the World War 2, the captured German Spies who had infiltrated into England were “turned around”. Instead of executing them, they were manipulated by the British to transmit false information to Germany, through counter-intelligence missions. See Comber, L. *Malaya’s Secret Police 1945-1960: The Role of the Special Branch in the Malayan Emergency*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, p. 8 & p. 100.

<sup>76</sup> An interview with Superintendent Stephen Kingsford Gonzago, Former SB field operatives and Commander of Bukit Aman Special Branch E3M (Special Tactics and Operations) (1956-1992), at his house, in Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, on 5 April 2016.

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