



A GUARD AT HIS POST AND A SEARCHLIGHT BURNING THROUGH THE NIGHT HELP SCARE COMMUNIST RAIDERS AWAY FROM A PLANTATION

MALAYA, THE FORGOTTEN WAR

No man's land is just beyond the searchlights. A famous novelist reports on a ceaseless struggle

by GRAHAM GREENE

Graham Greene, author of such well-known books as The Heart of the Matter and The Power and the Glory, is one of Britain's most distinguished novelists. Mr. Greene spent two and a half months in Malaya, on LIFE's assignment, gathering his material for the report that follows.

A CLOUD of moral disapprobation hangs over Malaya—how heavily one only realizes on arriving in Indo-China. To the Englishman war is a departure from the normal, like passion. To the Frenchman war is just a part of human life: it can be pleasant or unpleasant, like adultery. "*La vie sportive*"—that is how a French commandant described to me his life on a small landing craft in the

delta south of Saigon, hunting for Viet Minh guerrillas in the narrow channels, within easy mortar fire from either bank.

One must be fair. It is partly a question of geography. Malaya is nearer the equator; it steams away under the almost daily rainfall, sapping the energy of tired, overworked men, too few for the jobs that the emergency has produced: too few directors of labor, too few planters. Apart from the planters and the officials belonging to the Malayan Civil Service, most men are here on a short-term basis: in their minds they are on that boat going home. If the emergency were over (the government does not officially call it a war), release might come sooner. But the war (let me call it by the right name) shows no sign of ever

reaching a climax. While the whole world becomes excited over whether war is on or off in Korea, the forgotten war in Malaya goes on. There is the daily drip of casualties: 400 civilians had been killed in the first 11 months of last year, one guerrilla camp destroyed, one surrendered, three guerrillas shot and six escaped. The war is like a mist; it pervades everything; it saps the spirits; it won't clear.

In the Malayan forest it is difficult to distinguish men from the trees, and just as easily a background swallows the human being. I want to try to detach a few men from the heavy scene, for a country remains a collection of individual men, however their fate is molded and compelled by politics.

Of all civilians in Malaya the planter is in

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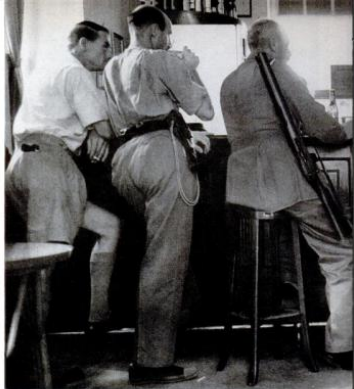
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RIFLES ARE SLUNG ON SHOULDERS, AUTOMATIC PISTOLS PROTRUDE

MALAYA CONTINUED

the position of greatest danger. One aim of the Communist commands is to ruin the country economically, to make it a territory not worth while maintaining, and the wealth of Malaya is chiefly tin and rubber. A tin mine compared to a rubber estate is relatively easy to defend, and so the main attack is directed against the planter. Who is the planter?

I had an idea before I went to Malaya, an idea picked up from an unsympathetic press, of a group of men, the harsh overseers of great capitalist enterprises, intransigent, unconstructive exploiters of native labor, drinking stengah after stengah in the local club, probably in the Somerset Maugham manner making love to each other's wives. But when one has lived a very short time in Malaya one learns that there is no such thing as the Planter—there is only X or Y.

Take X. He lives with his wife in a small house of two floors surrounded by barbed wire, the ground lit at night by searchlights as far as the first trees. He is a man of late middle age, a former prisoner of the Japanese, who might about now have been looking forward to the final, easier, more prosperous years. He is a great hunter, and

much of his time might have been given to his work as a game warden (for elephants have to be contended with as well as Communists, and one block of his plantation about the size of Trafalgar Square has been devastated by them as though by bombs—not a tree left standing).

But the life that remains for him is very different—if one can call life this slow approach of inevitable violence. He has no assistant, for his assistant was murdered on the estate some months ago, and he cannot get another. Night and day the telephone rings at half-hour intervals from the nearest village to make sure the line has not been cut and that he can communicate if attacked. He was ambushed last year only a mile from his house but shot his way out and saved his wounded companions. Recently Communists came into the estate to question his tappers about his movements (his assistant made the mistake of visiting the blocks of the estate in regular order at a regular time). When he moves outside the wire, if only to the estate office a hundred yards away, he carries a Sten gun over his arm, an automatic pistol on his hip and two hand grenades at his belt. A man of great courage, vitality and a kind of buccannering kindness, he will not contemplate retirement—he is in the front line for life and there is no expectation of peace but death. The closest to peace is an occasional visit to relatively safe, bureaucratic Kuala Lumpur, the capital.



NEW MANAGER of a plantation posts sign above those of his murdered predecessors.



FROM THE POCKETS OF PLANTERS LINING A BAR AT KUALA LUMPUR

Who can be surprised if he drinks a brandy and ginger ale for breakfast instead of coffee? "Dutch courage," he says, pushing the starter of the little inadequately armored car, setting out for a round of the estate or moving slowly out at the blind corner past which the road to the village runs and where one day, from the jungle opposite, a Sten gun will almost certainly open fire. In the village a glass of warm beer with the ambiguous Chinese shopkeeper, surrounded by Chinese candles and chests of tea, who buys his cheap rubber and acts as his banker (paying out \$10,000 at sight)—and perhaps reports his movements. Then a pink gin or two at the Rest House, where the army officers live, before he drives back along the lonely two-mile stretch, slows down at the turn before that jungle wall, 10 seconds of stretched nerves, and then the false security of the rubber plantation, where death is just as likely to happen but where at least you can see it coming from some way between the gray monotonous uniform trunks. Perhaps he is half an hour late in returning, and his wife waits with the anger of love for the sound of the engine, until he is safely back in the prison of wire. That night the radio announces the murder of three more planters.

Or take B, who is another civilian doing his penitence job in the atmosphere of emergency. He is not a planter but a traffic superintendent at an important railway junction, where the East Coast Railway joins the line that runs from Kuala Lumpur to Singapore; a big broad man with an unexpected taste for books, a sensitivity in human relations (all his assistants are Indian) and a patience I never saw impaired. He looks like a sergeant major and behaves like a doctor.

The East Coast Railway ends in the state of Pahang. The Japanese destroyed the farther reaches of the line and this section is being laid down again—with rather mixed feelings, for already it is impossible to maintain safe service on the line that exists. The night mail on the southern Singapore line has been abandoned altogether; on the East Coast line eight engines are out of commission, I don't know how many freight cars. In one year there were 49 derailments on the whole system. As with the casualties among planters, most armies would find it hard to maintain their morale at this percentage of loss. A railway notice in each compartment conveys in English, Malay, Tamil and Chinese the ordinariness of the situation:

WARNING: TERRORISM

IN THE EVENT OF FIRING ON THE LINESIDE
PASSENGERS ARE ADVISED TO LIE ON THE FLOOR AND IN
NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THEY LEAVE THE TRAIN

I spent a few days with B in January. His house faces the inevitable jungle 100 yards away; barbed wire, a police sentry, the sense of constriction. Then the rains came, the worst for 25 years. To handits was added the problem of floods, washouts, landslides. One had a sense of unfairness, as when a serious incident occurred during a blitz in one's own civil defense area, and then the raids just

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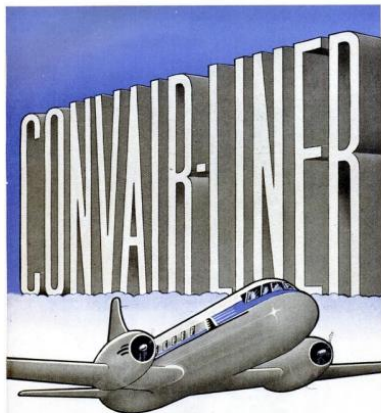


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MALAYA CONTINUED

went on instead of ending there. God, one felt, should allot each man one problem at a time.

Here is the schedule of the two allies, the Communists and nature, for a couple of days. The first move was nature's.

Friday, 10 a.m. One landslide on the southern line to Singapore. The morning mail train from Kuala Lumpur however had just got through, so nature had to move again. 2 p.m. Two more landslides to the south. By this time the breakdown train with a guard of troops was off to try to clear the line for the next morning's train.

At intervals through the night I could hear the telephone ringing—I was reminded of the planter's house. At 1 a.m. on Saturday the power plant was flooded and electricity failed. At 2:15 a.m. the Communists emerged from the jungle and derailed the breakdown train. At 4 a.m. the junction was completely cut off by road and the East Coast line was cut by floods. By breakfast time the water supply had failed—an odd added discomfort in the pouring rain. Even the station a quarter of a mile away must now be reached by wading. To the north a new landslide had taken place.

In the evening we waded through to the station and sat in the little refreshment room by the light of candles while the messages came in. Even the signal boxes were lit only dimly by oil lamps; figures disappeared in the dark of the long platform, and the whole obscure station and its wet acres had a strangely Victorian air as though electricity had not yet come into use. At 6 p.m. there was a washout to the south, and another landslide to the north. At 8:45 p.m. an East Coast train was derailed—by floods this time, not Communists. All the labor of the little town had to be called in to load freight cars with ballast by the light of lamps, but was there enough labor, enough ballast, enough freight cars? And at intervals the big patient man padded away and padded back to his glass, laughing at the wet, the cold, the enemy, waiting unfrilled for the next telegram of disaster. One talks in terms of soldiers and civilians, but there was never a better soldier than B. This campaign was as serious as the long plodding search in the jungle, his troops were ambushed by floods as well as commandos, and like a good officer he was loved by his men. So often in Kuala Lumpur I found myself thinking: if only government officials could work as these men, X and B, worked, but perhaps you do not find courage where there is no danger, and love, too, may be a product of active war.

THE nature of this war has been little understood abroad! It is not a nationalist war; 95% of the enemy combatants are Chinese and of the few Malays in the jungle the greater part are Indonesian terrorists. I visited Kelantan, a state where the Malays are in an overwhelming majority, and it was like visiting a foreign land. Here was peace: you could walk at will unarmed; no need for convoys on the road; there was an air of happiness and content; the clothes were brighter; even the sun seemed to shine more brightly because the jungle had, literally, receded. How tired one had become of that dark green hostile wall: the jungle is no longer neutral.

Our British consciences can be clear—we are not holding down Malaya: we are fighting a straightforward war against Communism and its Chinese adherents, and it is a more serious war than the use in the press of the word bandit suggests. Bandits could not year after year survive the hard jungle life as these men do: a few thousand bandits could not continue to operate against 100,000 armed Malayan police and 25,000 British, Gurkha and Malay troops. These men are the commandos of Communism, organized like a Russian division, with their political branches, their educational branches, their political commissars, their tireless and industrious intelligence service. No one knows where their GHQ lies—perhaps in one of the cities, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, perhaps even in the old and relatively peaceful city of Malacca—but the leader is known. He fought the Japanese in World War II and marched in the Victory Parade in London. For security reasons he cannot be named.

One must have spent at least a few days in the Malayan jungle to realize its difficulties and its tediums. A far denser jungle than that of Burma, it restricts movement to perhaps a mile an hour. Visibility is sometimes 20 feet. Almost every day water pours down upon it, making the steep slippery slopes of the innumerable hills a cruel effort to climb. One is never dry and at night one is never in quiet—the ugly din of birds with their barnyard cries comes between the newcomer and sleep. When you pause for a halt on the march you see the leeches make for your boots—thin matchsticks looping with blind purpose across the wet leaves, later to swell into fat gray slugs if they find an opening in your clothing. And always there is the jungle stench—the heavy odor of decaying vegetation. It clings to your clothes. When you come out, your friends will avoid you if they can until you have bathed and changed.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

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FIGHTING THE JUNGLE. Gurkha troops slither quietly through the tangled underbrush, carrying all their supplies with them, on a search for bandits.

MALAYA CONTINUED

THERE are many British units operating in Malaya—the Royal Fusiliers, the Royal Marines, the Worcestershires, the South Highlanders, to name only a few—and if I take my example from the Gurkha Rifles it is only because they were hospitable enough to have me with them on one of their smallest routine operations in Pahang. The enemy however does distinguish between the Gurkhas and its other opponents. A captured intelligence report exhibits a rather unfair contempt for the Malay Regiment. British troops are described as courageous but noisy—they can be heard coming a long way off—while the Gurkhas are ferocious and silent.

The Gurkha is a mercenary. His vocation is to kill his official enemy, and perhaps because he has a genuine vocation he is extremely tractable. There is no woman trouble with the Gurkhas—they carry with them to their contentments a happy, domesticated life of wives and children. In return for their pay the Gurkhas give their British officers absolute loyalty, and their officers return them a quality of love you will not find in any other unit. Officers of the British Army complain that their colleagues in the Gurkhas never stop talking of their men. Their men are their passion.

A Gurkha patrol works by the compass, and not by paths. It moves as the crow flies, but far less comfortably. The RAF had bombed a certain area and 200 Communist commandos were believed to be milling around somewhere within those particular map squares. One Gurkha platoon of 14 men under a British officer was considered a sufficiently strong reconnaissance. The patrol struck straight out through the kitchen quarters, through the thin belt of rubber, into the jungle. Only nine miles separated us from our objective, the main road on the other side of the block of jungle, but it took two and a half days of walking and two nights to get there. We had started late and we began to camp after five hours' march. When our position was plotted we had penetrated rather more than three miles. There had been an interminable succession of 500-foot hills, the slippery laterite slopes set at an angle of almost 45°. Even the Gurkha sometimes slips and falls as he holds himself up by the branches of trees, the rubber soles of his jungle boots taking no grip in the mud and slime of leaves.

The track of the enemy

EXPERIENCE has justified this arduous compass trail. If you patrol by paths you avoid the worst hills, which sometimes rise in this area to 2,000 feet, and you never have to carve your way through the undergrowth, but you are staking all on finding tracks on the one path you follow. The Gurkha technique means that in the course of a day you cut across many paths in your search for signs of the enemy; a newly broken lamboo with the juice still wet may be the only indication.

The march is halted by 4:30 to allow time for camp to be made before dark. First the sentry posts are chosen, then with their kukris (that wonderful all-purpose weapon) boughs are cut, shelters made for the men in pairs with one ground sheet stretched overhead to keep out the night rains and one laid on the bed of branches and leaves, a clearing made for the radio with its aerial tressed up to a height of 100 feet. Darkness has begun to fall when the kukri becomes a can opener. In a can about 9x43 inches is the Gurkha ration—rice, raisins, curry powder, tea, sugar and a little spirit

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JUNGLE SKIRMISH ENDS as troops of the British First Devonshire Regiment file into a clearing with the body of a dead guerrilla draped over a pole.

MALAYA CONTINUED

lamp with hard fuel for cooking. The small flames glow like nursery night lights in the dark. My companion stands upright listening, but not for Communists. He whispers, "There is one bird I always listen for—at dark and at dawn. There it is. Like a bell. Do you hear it?" I could hear nothing but the clamor of the jungle barnyard. At 6 in the morning he is standing by our bed in the new mud of the night's downpour. "There. Do you hear it?" he whispers. "Like a bell."

And so after two and a half days' heavy marching and scrambling with no result but the discovery of two abandoned camps, one emerges nine miles from where one started—two little buttons can be added to the map in the operations room, that is all; no sign even of the air strike except an empty shell and a landslide that might have been caused by rain; a routine patrol, routine leeches, routine fatigue and a routine stench.

But we could bathe and change, while for the Communist troops in their wet green prison there is no change.

And so to keep the spirits up they have the lectures, the courses in Marxism, the hectographed *Lenin News* and the *Red Star*, the meetings for self-criticism. What an odd, humorless, naive contrast it is to the remorseless terrorism. We can build up a picture of this life from captured documents. We learn of Lee Kheng who is "not hygienic enough"; of Ah Chye who "possesses the friendly group spirit"; of Lau Beng who is a little lazy, slipped in his studies and "not too agreeable" in his behavior (he is sometimes "fearful of the situation" and his comrades regard him as "rather immature").

Love is treated with a rather stern sympathy (the jungle troops include many women). We learn from a captured copy of the *Lenin News* that male and female comrades who are not married are not allowed to stay together, but in special cases permission may be obtained from the higher authorities. "We do not prohibit anybody making love. [The Party has resolved the question of love before.] But such love must be proper. Once love is established, one should report it to the organization and the exact circumstances. The matter will have to undergo the organization's investigation, then both parties will be informed in accordance with the resolution." Questions are set for discussion.

1. Why is the love of Communists a serious instinct?
2. What is the proper view of love?
3. Are the present few kinds of improper love still appearing in our area?
4. Under what circumstances are they appearing?
5. What is the cause?
6. What is our attitude towards love?
7. How are we to overcome improper love? How deal with it?

It is strange to think of such questions written in that script running backwards in a beautiful formal pattern that seems to the uninitiated eye nearly unchanged since that made by the brush of the poet Mei Sheng when, 2,090 years ago, he wrote this of love (as translated by Ezra Pound):

Blue, blue, is the grass about the river
And the willows have overfilled the close garden.
And within, the mistress, in the midst of her youth,
White, white of face, hesitates, passing the door.
Slender, she puts forth a slender hand. . . .

What has happened to China?



JUNGLE CAMP FOLLOWERS found with Communist guerrillas in jungle are crestfallen as they wait, hands tied behind their backs, to be taken to jail.

Perhaps this is a greater mystery than the combination of these naive idealist discussions and acts of terrorism; history has taught us to be familiar with that kind of schizophrenia. We are back in the age of the religious wars. But we cannot picture this slow, dreary Malayan conflict without strange contrasts. A patrol finds a lone guerrilla apparently engaged in a literary exercise—hectographed sentences in which he had to spot and correct mistakes. A planter and his wife have driven into the Kuala Lumpur Club to a Scottish dinner, with "Scotch Broth, Salmon Frae the Dee, A Wee Bit Haggis, Champit Tatties and Bashed Neeps, Moor O'Dinnet Special, Sugar Peas and Roast Potatoes, Balmoral Sundae." Had they reached that wee bit haggis when the news was brought them that their 2-year-old daughter had been shot by Chinese Communists at point-blank range? "The Party has resolved the question of love."

This is the work of the Chinese commandos, but you cannot measure the enemy's strength only by the few thousand fighters who emerge from the jungle to shoot up a car or a patrol, to murder a planter, to derail a train. Their strength is estimated at between 3,000 and 5,000. In this dense country one numbers casualties on the fingers—the death of a dozen Communists is a major victory and they have no difficulty in acquiring new members. Their real strength lies in the unarmed combatants of the ground organization known as the Min Yuen. Here we are on speculative ground, but it is unlikely that this organization runs into less than six figures. Its main responsibility is supply, but it is employed also for intelligence, propaganda and liaison work, and it is responsible—perhaps that is its chief success—for the suspicion which rises everywhere like the mist from the saturated Malayan soil. Don't mention what time you are leaving on the telephone—the operator may be a member of the Min Yuen. Don't talk about your movements in front of your waiter or your room boy. Do you remember that young resettlement officer they killed last month? He told his Chinese taxi girl where he was going next day.

In Indo-China they have at least the satisfaction that in the north they are fighting a real war. You can be encouraged by success; even a defeat is something you can define in the form of a lost post or a decimated company. In Malaya the real successes may never be recognized, and defeat is in the minds of men. You cannot win the Malayan war by military force: with the jungle against you, you can only contain the enemy until other measures succeed.

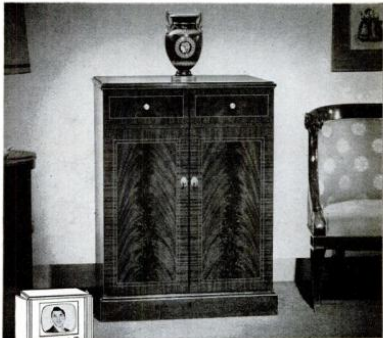
The squatters move

THE most important weapon is starvation. No one can subsist on the jungle, and any large cultivated area will be spotted sooner or later by air reconnaissance. It is here that the Briggs Plan, if thoroughly accomplished and efficiently maintained, offers hope. The main sources of the terrorists' food supply are the Chinese squatter areas—patches of unauthorized cultivation on the edge of the jungle. The squatters are not necessarily Communist sympathizers, though it is hard to see what they can possibly lose by a Communist victory. But who of us would refuse food to a terrorist at the point of a bayonet? Following the Briggs Plan, these squatters are being brought together into new villages which can be surrounded with wire and properly policed. The old huts are burnt. The squatters are provided with building materials or houses, a small sum of money and a legal tenure of their new land.

It is a formidable task. There are about 400,000 squatters to settle; there is a shortage of wire and transport (trucks have to be

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MALAYA CONTINUED

provided to take their possessions to the new settlements); there is a shortage of police for guarding the settlement and of proper arms for the police. There is sometimes a defeatism on the part of European officers. A Communist military patrol on one occasion passed unchallenged through a wired-in village, both gates wide open, at 2 in the morning. The European officer, when this was reported to him, shrugged the affair off. What difference did it make? You couldn't keep the Communists out with a bit of wire. This is what I mean by defeat in the mind.

Even if the Briggs Plan is successfully accomplished this year the war will go on. Nearly half the population of Malaya is Chinese, and the Chinese have a long tradition of indifference, of sitting on the fence. It is not the attitude that responds actively to the threat of violence. If you are a bus owner you will pay blackmail to the Communists rather than have your buses burnt on the road; if you are a rubber tapper you will pay a proportion of your wages (you will have heard how Tan Lee on the next estate was found with his throat cut, tied to one of the trees). Some of the wealthiest Chinese businessmen in Malaya are believed to be supplying funds. The Kuala Lumpur manager of one of the great Chinese rubber companies was picked up in January. Every town can be a source of supply in food and money; the risk is a little greater than in the squatter area—that is all. But in some places the terrorist will be able to depend on the inertia of the native police. I have watched a road check in progress. The checking point could be avoided altogether by two simple detours, and the check itself simply consisted of a constable taking a glance at a driver's papers and passing his truck through without a look at the contents. We are fighting in Malaya with blunted weapons.

Nonetheless the Briggs Plan—taking the most pessimistic view of it—is a turn of the screw of discomfort. Living in the jungle on the bare margin of subsistence, these men cannot stand much more privation. When one remembers the strained nerves of the European, even with his periods of relative safety in the cities, his whisky at sunset, his hope—if he survives another year—of leave, one sometimes feels a measure of compassion for these men, struck from the air, hunted however ineffectively by patrols, led by the leeches, with insufficient food and medicines, their success measured in a resettlement officer or a planter killed, a bus burnt, a patrol ambushed and a Sten gun captured. The nights are very long in the jungle. By 6 it is dark except for the shine of phosphorescent leaves; by midnight the rain will be falling down on yesterday's soaked leaves, cutting past the giant trees through the thick undergrowth, and long after the storm is over the rain will continue to drip from the reservoirs of foliage. There will be nearly 12 hours of virtual darkness, and even Marx must fall.

Here is the opportunity for another weapon which we have only recently begun to wield: the attack on the mind. These men live by hope—hope that in perhaps six months, a year, Chinese forces will be pressing into Malaya through Siam, that instead of being a few hunted platoons in the jungle they will emerge as the seasoned spearhead of the invasion. News of a Western defeat in Korea is worth a hundred successful ambushes to these men. We have to weaken their hope, and we have to destroy their confidence in each other.

Leaflets in the jungle

THE direction of our propaganda is in the hands of Carleton Greene, who is responsible for building up Britain's broadcast service to Russia and Eastern Europe. He has been lent to Lieut. General Sir Harold Briggs, the Director of Operations, for one year. It is too soon to tell how far the new propaganda drive will succeed, but that there is a drive is the important thing. Surrender leaflets on waterproof paper—leaflets showing the faces of their comrades caught in the steel mesh of the Bren gun, the unpeaceful features of the violently dead, the hanging mouth, the unclosed eye ("Would you rather be dead like these?") and scenes of the quiet life in the city, at the restaurant, the moving picture theater, the park, led by the surrendered terrorist ("Or surrender and live like these?"); rewards for the betrayal of their own comrades, the rewards for some of the high officers running up to over 4,000 American dollars—these leaflets are dropped in thousands from airplanes, left by patrols at old camp sites in the jungle. In this terrain where visibility is often 20 feet I asked myself how can a leaflet ever reach its destination. Thousands of course are wasted but a few get home. Allied deserters have come in carrying surrender leaflets with them.

It is easy for the visitor to criticize. He suffers only an agreeable measure of apprehension, driving along the winding roads beside the jungle wall, where every bend provides an ambush point. He has

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a return ticket. The claustrophobia of distrust has not time to close over his mind. Only when he sees his first body, or when an acquaintance made a few weeks before is murdered in an ambush does the visitor feel a pale reflection of the strain endured by the men in the country districts. Then perhaps momentarily it occurs to him that his return ticket may not be used, and he begins to look with the same enmity at the Chinese standing in their shop doors as he drives by.

Here is a long-term danger for Malaya. Individual Chinese have cooperated with us, many Chinese have been murdered and dismembered for unknown reasons, presumably because they have refused to help the Communists. Yet the chief impression is one of indifference. The Chinese, like the Syrian in West Africa, has settled in the land to make money, and a dead man cannot earn. He waits. The Japanese have come and the British have gone. The Japanese have gone and the British have returned. It is best to wait and see. It is always best commercially to be on the winning side. A while ago a man jumped onto a moving bus in Singapore. He had escaped from his captors and his hands were bound and bleeding. The bus was full of Chinese and not one passenger moved to untie his hands.

Yet one of the leading members of the Chinese community, who has shown his courage in the emergency, said to me, "Only the Chinese can fight the Chinese. You must have a Chinese regiment in the jungle." But so far the government forbids this. In any case the Chinese will not serve at the Malay scale of pay, and you cannot have two scales. Is it possibly an unwise economy, when so many millions are being spent with so little result, not to raise the service pay to the Chinese level?

One is haunted by the thought that all these measures are short-term ones. If we forced the surrender of 5,000 Communists by starvation would it really be the end? Could the troops go home and the police return to traffic duties? The idea of Communism would remain and sooner or later the jungle would be alive again with secret inhabitants. Communism is a threat to the rich and sometimes to the intellectual, but the poor and the illiterate have nothing to lose. There is only one man who is threatened by Communism, whether he is rich or poor, educated or a peasant, and that is the Christian.

The other day at Phat Diem, in the north of Indo-China, I watched the Viet Namese Catholic bishop inspect his outposts, the unpaid militia who had helped clear the bishopric and who now held it free from the Communist enemy. I heard the young men sing their hymns; I watched the platoon leaders come up with their bouquets of flowers for their bishop. There were only 2,000 of these men here, and there were not enough uniforms yet to go round, but I would have felt more confidence fighting in their ranks than in the ranks of the 100,000 armed Malay police. They reminded me a little of the Home Guard in 1940. The Home Guard was never tested as these few men so often are when the guerrillas sleep up across the wide flat paddies, but their strength was an idea, and that idea love of their country. Christianity too is a form of patriotism. These Viet Namese belonged to the City of God and were proud of their city that lay behind the no man's land of rice. "You see," I wanted to say to my friends in Malaya, "it can be done." An idea was fighting an idea.



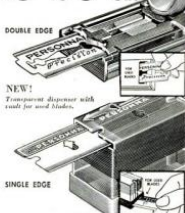
BISHOP REVIEWS HIS TROOPS in Phat Diem. Monsignor Le Huu Tu is senior bishop of an area containing 2,600,000 (one-fourth Catholic). He is the world's only Catholic bishop (besides the Pope) to have his own private army.

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