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THE PATTERN OF COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

A brief survey of international
Communist operations in six countries



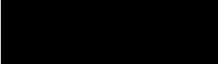
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Prepared by:



25X1A9a

Prepared for:



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THE PATTERN OF COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

SUMMARY

Development of the Communist movement in Southeast Asia has followed the line set by the Comintern more than 30 years ago. Policies of Communist parties in the area have been directed by Moscow and, more recently, also by Peiping. Operating under the guise of nationalism, these parties have followed a similar pattern, attempting to bring all the colonial areas of Southeast Asia into the fold of international Communism. Only in Thailand, which has long been an independent nation, has the pattern varied to any great extent.

Most countries of the area have more than one Communist party, sometimes because of individual differences, sometimes representing different ethnic groups within a country. Most of the parties are built of a hard core of theoreticians and leaders surrounded by assorted hangers-on who are malcontents or seekers of personal gain. Important support comes from the elements of the overseas Chinese population which still have strong ties to China regardless of the ideological force directing her destiny.

The hands of the Russian and Chinese Communists were clearly visible in the 1920's and the 1930's, when most of the Southeast Asian Communists worked under the direction of the Far Eastern

Bureau of the Comintern. Their influence was even more clearly evident in 1948 when, after representatives from Peiping, Moscow and Southeast Asia met with the Indian Communist Party in February, Communist insurrections broke out in Malaya, Indonesia, Burma and the Philippines.

Current evidence of Peiping's influence is the logistic support given the Viet Minh in Indochina, the activities of Chinese Communist agents in Southeast Asia, particularly among the overseas Chinese and other ethnic minority groups, and the financing of the low-interest loan program in Burma. Through the World Federation of Trade Unions, Peiping controls leftist labor organizations in many countries of the area. Through cultural missions, traveling businessmen, returning students and sightseeing trips, Peiping passes on instructions where official channels such as embassies are lacking.

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THE PATTERN OF COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

I. International Aspects of Movements in Southeast Asian Communism

The Third Communist International (Comintern) and Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), have clearly stated Soviet policy and tactics for developing Communist movements in colonial and semi-colonial areas. The policy plays down the class struggle emphasized elsewhere and intensifies the theme of nationalism and anti-colonialism, seeking to drive the foreign devils from the sacred soil of the fatherland.

Communism in Southeast Asia, appearing there in the early 1920's, has been developed in line with this policy and under the direction of the Comintern, Cominform and Peiping. It is not accidental therefore that Southeast Asia, a complex of many nations and many national and minority ethnic groups, is also a complex of national and international Communist parties and often-competing parties in majority and minority ethnic groups.

With these racial complexes and its pre-war colonial status, Southeast Asia was an easy target for Communism. Playing national group against European power and cultivating these groups' and minorities' desires for independence, the Communists sought to divide and conquer.

In some of the countries of Southeast Asia the minority Communist parties, rather than the national party, have assumed the

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leadership. The major Communist minority groups in most countries of Southeast Asia are formed from certain elements of the Overseas Chinese population. The Communist groups represent but a small percentage of the total Chinese population of the area but, well-organized and supported by Peiping, they are outspoken and appear to represent a far larger portion of the population than they actually do.

Communist parties in Southeast Asia are composed much as are those in Europe, the Western Hemisphere or elsewhere in Asia, with a small hard core of doctrinaire Communists surrounded by a larger group of dissidents, malcontents, social misfits and profiteers. They are drawn from all segments of the population--peasants, proletarians and intellectuals. In addition to these, many of the overseas Chinese--who normally care little about politics and are more concerned with earning a living--follow the movement because of their strong family and cultural ties to China, regardless of her politics. Because the Communists now control the mainland, many overseas Chinese feel that the future lies with the Communists. This feeling is often conditioned by their ability to trade with the mainland.

Throughout Southeast Asia the growth of Communism has followed similar courses, with one major exception: Thailand. While Burma, Malaya, Indochina, Indonesia and the Philippines were all colonies of metropolitan powers, Thailand has been a sovereign nation for

centuries. Even under the Japanese occupation, Thailand maintained a larger degree of self-government than have most occupied nations. Thailand has been also relatively self-sufficient, with an adequate food supply and an export surplus in rice, the most vital commodity of the area. But perhaps the farmers' ownership of their land is the main reason for the different approach to Thailand. Communism, which feeds on exploitation of the peasant class by wealthy landowners, on poverty and on food shortage, has had difficulty making much headway with the Thais, who are well-fed and clothed by standards of the area and whose lower classes already own their land. Only through an alien minority, the overseas Chinese, have the Communists been able to make anything but a minor dent in Thailand, and the Chinese Communists have become the largest alien minority party in Southeast Asia.

Elsewhere in Southeast Asia Communist growth has followed a single pattern, with but minor variations. Except in Burma and Thailand, Communism appeared in the early 1920's under the guise of nationalism and anti-colonialism. It started among the Thailand Chinese in the 1920's but the appeal was different. In Burma Communism began as a nationalist movement about 1930. In all but Burma the hand of the Communist element of the Kuomintang (KMT) was clearly visible, either directly or through its influence on key figures in the movement. This direction became particularly evident when the Communist elements were thrown out of the Kuomintang in 1927.

The trend until nearly the end of the decade favored formation of small groups, some organized into parties and some into less formal groups of Marxist extremists. In 1925 when the Comintern sent Borodin to China as its chief agent, he took NGUYEN ai Quoc with him as an interpreter. NGUYEN was by then the leader of Indochinese Communism and a member of the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern. In the course of his travels through China and Thailand to organize emigre Vietnamese into Communist cells, he brought with him the teachings and orders of the Comintern. NGUYEN helped found the Communist Party of the South Seas, which had representatives from several countries. In 1930 this party split into national organizations, such as the Malayan Communist Party and the Indochinese Communist Party.

About this time Communism began to appear in Burma, largely as an indigenous movement but with some impetus from Indian Communists. This move, too, started as nationalism with leftist leanings.

From 1930 until the outbreak of World War II in the Pacific the nationalistic trend was maintained, with the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern guiding the Communists of Indonesia, Indochina, Malaya and the Philippines.

During the war most Communist groups became nationalistic, anti-Japanese guerrilla armies, often cooperating with non-Communist groups against the common foe. This was particularly true in Burma, Indochina, Malaya and the Philippines. There was no guerrilla

fighting in Thailand, but the Free Thai Movement, a Communist-inspired group, did work with the Allies in obtaining information and carrying out sabotage missions. The guerrilla activities strengthened the Communist's hands by rebuilding the concept of nationalism and patriotism as the major motive of these groups. In Indochina and Burma the resistance groups became the backbone of the post-war governments of their countries. In Indochina, however, HO and the French disagreed over the colonial status of Indochina, and the Communists, under the name of Viet Minh, resorted to open warfare to gain complete control. In Burma the Anti-Fascist Peoples Freedom League moved directly from its guerrilla activities into control of the government. But, Communist elements have been purged from the league and it is now dominated by the Socialist Party.

In Indonesia the Communists were not very active during the occupation, but they did join with other nationalist groups in the fight against the Dutch which eventually led to Indonesia's independence. Veterans of this campaign still operate as militant arms of the two Communist parties of the country.

The first wide-scale Communist action to seize control of Southeast Asia began in 1948. In February 1948, representatives from Moscow, the Chinese Communists and Communist groups in Southeast Asia attended a meeting of the Indian Communist Party. Within a year, in a move somewhat reminiscent of the widespread European revolutions of 1848, the Communists launched rebellious

offensives in four countries--Burma, Indonesia, Malaya and the Philippines. Indochina already was rent by open warfare. The Communist combattants were remnants of the "nationalist" guerrilla forces that fought the Japanese during World War II. The Indonesian uprising was put down almost immediately and the other three 1948 rebellions now have been virtually quelled. The patterns of these uprisings are too similar to be coincidental.

The series of defeats has hurt the Communists, but not vitally. Wherever possible the Communists are now playing the game of "if you can't lick them, join them." In Burma, although the rebellion has not been fully put down, the Communists have joined the government in denouncing their common opponents, the KMT troops in Burma. In Indonesia the Communists are playing the role of full supporters of the Premier Ali Sastroamidjoko government, feigning a "united front." Insurrection still continues in the Philippines and Malaya, although the Philippine rebels have been virtually defeated and negotiations reportedly are under way.

The current pattern of Communist action is not completely clear, particularly on the point of Moscow-Peiping direction. Evidence does not show that Moscow directly conducts Communist action in Southeast Asia, except possibly in Indonesia. Semaun, who some reports state is the actual leader of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), has been in Moscow for several years and may be receiving and passing on the Kremlin's instructions.

Peiping's hand is more clearly visible than Moscow's. The Chinese People's Republic has diplomatic representatives in Burma and Indonesia and with the Communist pseudo-government in Indochina. Russia has representation only in Thailand and Burma and its missions are more trade-oriented than political. Moreover, Peiping at times operates through the Soviet Embassy in Bangkok. The Chinese diplomatic channels provide effective communication between Peiping and Communist elements in these countries. An additional channel is the Peiping-dominated Asian-Australasian Bureau of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), representing Communist-controlled labor movements in several of the countries. Another important Peiping channel is the China Democratic League, which is particularly active in Burma and Indonesia. Overseas Chinese students who return to mainland China for advanced study and the Communist-sponsored, mainland cultural and sightseeing trips for leading pro-Communist overseas Chinese provide another channel of control, indoctrination and infiltration.

There is no doubt that Peiping controls most of the Communist activities of the area; the only question is the degree of control. That Peiping is supplying arms to Communist insurrectionists in Indochina, Malaya and probably Burma is known. What these groups must give in return is not known. The Chinese Communists in Thailand are known to be receiving direction from Peiping, and Peiping agents operate throughout the area. Recent newspaper reports from

Burma mention the activities of Peiping agents among the Kachins of northern Burma. These activities tie in closely with the program of "nationality autonomous states" now under way in Red China. Using two of these states in particular, the Thai Nationality Autonomous State and the Thai-Shantou Nationality Autonomous State, Communist China hopes to appeal to the minority groups in Burma and Laos and the people of Thailand, all racially akin.

The pattern as it now appears is one of Peiping support to Communist movements in the area so that they may act as a fifth column. Toning down militant activities and feigning cooperation with existing authority wherever possible, the local Communists act as Peiping tools boring from within. Peiping is heavily emphasizing the wooing of overseas Chinese, that they too may act as a fifth column and, even more important in some countries, may use their important position in the national economy to disrupt and weaken their host countries.

II. Communism in the Southeast Asian Countries

A. Burma

Communism in Burma is reflected in a complex of parties, large and small, strong and weak, legal and illegal. These may be either peaceful or insurgent and include national and international parties. Adding to the confusion are the pseudo-party activities of Burma Chinese Communists. Still further confusing Burmese politics is the fact that the Anti-Fascist Peoples Freedom League (AFPFL), the coalition heading the Burmese Government since its independence, is dominated by Socialists with Marxist backgrounds who were at one time or another working with the leaders of all the Communist elements.

The complexity of Burmese Communism disguises its true strength. At present only the Burma Workers and Peasants Party (BWPP) appears to serve the Communist cause in any greater measure than a nuisance value. Communist insurrection begun in 1948 was virtually ceased. The Communists have obtained much propaganda value from the irritation caused by the presence of KMT troops in Burma, and this irritation has greatly helped the cause of local Chinese Communists. Agents from Red China are known to be operating in North Burma, in Kachin State and the Shan States, attempting to lure minority racial groups into cooperation with Red China through the recently-established autonomous states in Yunnan Province.

There are at least eight Burmese Communist groups, of which four are illegal and operating underground.

Burma Communist Party (BCP)

One of the earliest Communist groups was the Burma Communist Party, or White Flag Communists, founded in 1930. The party grew from the left-wing nationalist movement called the Nagani Book Club, founded in 1937 by Thakins NU, SOE and THAN TUN. These men later became the leaders of the AFPFL, the Communist Party of Burma, or CP(B), and the BCP, respectively. They originally were associated with the Dobama Asi Ayon (DAA), or Thakins' Party, which was founded in 1930. The moderate left program of the DAA failed to satisfy many of the Thakins, and they formed the BCP, which in the pre-war period urged revolution as the means to freedom. During the war the BCP, under the guise of collaborating with the Japanese, worked with British authorities to create a resistance movement, culminating in the formation of the AFPFL in 1943. The BCP became the leading member of the league, and the Party's leader Thakin THAN TUN (who still heads the BCP today) became secretary-general.

In July 1946 the AFPFL began to rid its organization of Communist elements and TUN was forced to resign the secretary-generalship. In October of that year the BCP was expelled from the league. After attempts to heal the breach between the BCP and the AFPFL failed, the BCP went underground and started a campaign of armed rebellion which, while at present relatively quiet, has not been fully stopped. In the fall of 1953 the BCP was declared illegal by the Burmese Government.

Communist Party of Burma (CP(B))

In February 1946 rivalry for power within the BCP between THAN TUN and Thakin SOE, as well as SOE's insistence upon immediate revolution, split that party. SOE formed the CP(B) or Red Flag Communists. In July 1946 the CP(B) was declared illegal and SOE was imprisoned. Shortly afterwards both the ban and the imprisonment were lifted, but the ban was reimposed in January 1947 and has remained in force since then. Efforts to reunite the BCP and CP(B) have been unsuccessful thus far, largely because of personal differences between TUN and SOE.

Peoples Volunteer Organization (PVO)

The third illegal group is the Peoples Volunteer Organization, which grew out of the wartime Patriotic Forces of Burma (PFB), an armed resistance group. The PVO has split into several bands or parties, most of them using some form of the original name. When the PFB was ordered to disband and become part of the Burma Army, a large group refused and formed the semi-military PVO. They stayed within the AFPFL for a short time, and then joined the Socialist Party in forming the Marxist League.

After the outbreak of Communist-led insurrection against the Burmese government in early 1948, the PVO split. The so-called Yellow Band PVO remained loyal to the government and a member of the AFPFL, while the PVO White Band, or PVO(W), broke away and joined the BCP in the Peoples Democratic Front. At the time of its

break with the APPFL, the PVO(W) was declared illegal. A split of the White Band in March 1950 left one segment, known as the Revolutionary PVO and headed by Bo NYUNT MAUNG, affiliated to the front. Shortly after the split, another group, led by Bo LA YAUNG, made peace with the government. It was called the Surrendered PVO(W) and later became part of the Peoples Peace Front (PPF).

Peoples Comrades Party (PCP)

The March 1950 split in the PVO(W) came when Bo PO KUN realized that the BCP was trying to dominate the Peoples Democratic Front. He led a large segment of the White Band out of the front to form the Peoples Comrades Party, leaving the Revolutionary PVO segment in the front. It was declared illegal in October 1953.

Peoples Peace Front (PPF)

The Communist Peoples Peace Front was formed in April 1951, consisting of the Surrendered PVO(W), the DAA and the followers of AUNG THAN, brother of the martyred leader of the APPFL, AUNG SAN. It is a legal organization and has three representatives in the Burmese Chamber of Deputies. In 1951 the PPF joined the Burma Workers and Peasants Party and the Mahabana Party in the so-called Triple Alliance.

The DAA, still associated with the PPF, has moved further left than it was in the 1930's, although its leader, Thakin TUN OKE, is considered to be more moderate than most of its members. The party is much weaker than it was at the time of its founding in 1930, when it was the gathering point for the leading Marxist thinkers of that period, the Thakins.

Peoples Unity Party (PUP)

In May 1952 the Surrendered PVO(W), still led by Bo LA YAUNG and desiring to follow a course of extreme Marxism, which AUNG THAN opposed, broke from the Peoples Peace Front and formed the Peoples Unity Party. It is a legal Communist Party without parliamentary representation.

Mahabama Party

The Mahabama Party is the weakest link of the Triple Alliance. It is the successor to the wartime Mahabama Party headed by Dr. BA MAW, which was a national socialist party modeled along Nazi lines and which cooperated with the Japanese. After disappearing for a period, it reappeared in March 1951 with a policy of nationalism and Marxism. Since that time it has moved further to the left, joining the Triple Alliance in late 1951. It has a parliamentary representation of one.

Burma Workers and Peasant Party (BWPP)

The Burma Workers and Peasants Party is the major overt Communist Party in Burma. It was formed in December 1950 when a group, headed by Thakin LWIN, withdrew from the AFPFL. The BWPP came out almost immediately for the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat. It is considered the most orthodox of the Communist parties, the best disciplined and the strongest threat to the stability of the present government, and it is believed to be the legal front for the underground Communist parties. It has nine representatives in the Chamber

of Deputies and is the strongest element of the Triple Alliance.

The party has a number of front organizations, the most important of which is the Burma Trades Union Congress (BTUC), affiliated with the Communist-dominated WFTU. This affiliation provides a link between the BWPP and Peiping. Other links with Peiping and Moscow may exist. But such a connection is rather new in Burmese Communism, which, if associated with Communism in any other country originally was closest to Indian Communist circles.

Overseas Chinese Communists

Local pro-Communist Chinese work mostly through the Burma Branch of the Chinese Democratic League (CDL), an international Chinese Communist organization. The CDL operates in Burma with the blessings and financial support of the Peiping Embassy. Although the overseas Chinese in Burma are not as numerous as in other countries of Southeast Asia, they nevertheless control important segments of the national economy and could pose a threat to the Burmese government. Fortunately for the Burmese, the number of hard core Communist Chinese is only a small fraction of the one-quarter to one-half million Chinese in the country.

An important Peiping effort to woo the Burma Chinese was its low-interest loan program financed through Burma branches of the Bank of China and Bank of Communications. Under this arrangement, Chinese were allowed to borrow money at about half the going rate if they agreed to support the Communists and Communist causes and renounced any connections with anti-Communist groups.

B. Indochina

In Indochina's three states are five Communist parties. In Vietnam there are the Dang Lao Dong (Workers Party), often still called by the name of the earlier Viet Minh, and a Chinese Communist Party of Vietnam. In Cambodia there are a Chinese Communist Party of Cambodia and the Khmer Issarak. In Laos there is the Lao Issarak. The Khmer and Lao Issarak groups (issarak means free) are directly controlled by the Lao Dong. The two Chinese parties appear to be also under its direction, but they also may receive orders from Peiping. The four lesser parties [are small and] are used mostly to appeal to the national groups they represent and to implement instructions to those groups.

The Communist rebels led by HO chi Minh have created a pseudo-state called the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), which is completely dominated by the Lao Dong Party. The Lao Dong, established in March 1951, is the successor to the Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi (Vietnam Independence League), usually abbreviated to Viet Minh. Just as the Viet Minh was created to appeal to a larger segment of the economy than its predecessor, the Indochinese Communist Party, the Lao Dong was created to broaden that appeal. DRV and Lao Dong officials have openly stated that no change in orientation or motivation accompanied the change in name. HOANG quoc Viet, an official of the Lien Viet united front of "democratic parties" forming the DRV government, stated upon the death of Stalin:

Mourning for and grateful to Comrade Stalin the entire Vietnamese people and cadres are all the more determined to carry out President HO chi Minh's behest to learn the doctrine of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin, apply it to concrete conditions in Vietnam, push the resistance, wipe out the French colonialists, American interventionists, and Vietnamese traitors, and build Vietnam into a new democratic country advancing to socialism.

The Lao Dong Party is the leading and controlling element of the Lien Viet, which exists more in name than in fact. HO is president of the Lao Dong and DANG xuan Khu (aka TRUONG Chinh) is secretary-general. (Some reports have said HO is dead and TRUONG has taken over, but these have not been confirmed.)

The history of Indochinese Communism is closely tied to the history of HO chi Minh (known in the pre-war period as NGUYEN ai Quoc). At the Treaty of Versailles Conference, HO, then in France working with French leftish leaders, presented demands for Vietnamese independence to President Woodrow Wilson. These demands were not met. HO then became associated with the Third International and, between 1919 and 1925 traveled between France and the USSR.

In 1925 he went to China with Borodin, the chief Comintern agent in China. While in China he organized Vietnamese emigres into Communist cells and formed the Viet Nam Cach Menh Thanh Nien Hoi (Vietnamese Revolutionary Youth League). He also organized similar groups in Thailand. As a member of the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern he helped form the Communist Party of the South Seas, which later split into individual national Communist parties, including the Indochinese Communist Party (PCI) in 1930. The

next year the party was recognized by the Third International and admitted to the Comintern.

When the Popular Front Government came to power in France in 1936, the PCI emerged as a legal party in Cochinchina. In 1939, when the Popular Front Government fell, most of PCI leaders withdrew to China. During World War II the party was the leading component of the Viet Minh and was hardly distinguishable from it. On 11 November 1945 the PCI was dissolved and replaced by the Cultural Association for the Study of Marxism, headed by DANG XUAN KHU, now secretary-general of the Lao Dong. The Marxist study group continued until 1951, when the Lao Dong was formed.

The Lao Dong Party is, despite its name changes, the Communist Party of Indochina, openly admitting allegiance to Moscow and Peiping. The Lao Dong remains the backbone of the DRV pseudo-government.

C. Indonesia

Three Communist groups exist in Indonesia, two Indonesian and one Chinese. The native groups are organized into political parties fully active in the life of the nation: the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), or Communist Party of Indonesia, and the Partai Murba, or Proletarian Party. There is no Chinese Communist Party in Indonesia comparable to those in other countries of the area. The Chinese are organized in a pro-Communist front organization and operate through the Chinese Communist Embassy in Indonesia.

Thus far cooperation between the Chinese Communists and the PKI has been scant; but if they should ever combine, the resulting strong, legal Communist party could threaten the Indonesian Government, the rest of Southeast Asia and, thus, the free world.

Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI, Communist Party of Indonesia)

The leading and oldest Communist party in Indonesia, the Partai Komunis Indonesia, was organized in May 1920. Of the early leaders of the organization, the only one still prominent is Semaun, who is now, and has been for several years, in Moscow and actually may be controlling the party from there. From its earliest days, when the party associated itself with the Comintern, it has been definitely Moscow-oriented. The leaders in Indonesia, Aidit and Alimin, have both spent some time in Moscow and probably received their training there. In a recent clash between these two, Aidit emerged the victor

and Alimin is now out or on the way out of power. Like other Communist parties of the area organized shortly after World War I, the PKI was established with the overt semblance of being a nationalist movement to gain independence for colonial Netherlands East Indies.

On the local scene, the tactics of the PKI have changed in the past few years. In 1948 PKI policy called for an all-out revolution to seize control of the government, and the party launched an abortive rebellion in Madiun in September of that year. With the advent to power of the Wilopo government, the PKI switched to the tactic of presenting a national front, through which they hoped eventually to gain control. They have continued their support of the new Sastroamidjojo cabinet as well, although they still have no cabinet representation. Currently the PKI has 16 members in the appointed Indonesian Parliament, the third largest delegation, after Masjumi and the Partai Nasional Indonesia. The delegation is headed by Sakirman and Paradede. The party also has six other seats through two of its affiliates, SOBSI and the Barisan Tani Indonesia, which have three each.

The present estimated strength of the party is about 100,000, although it probably controls a much larger number through its many front affiliates. The largest such group is the Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia (SOBSI), the largest labor federation in the country. Its largest member unions are in the fields of trans-

portation and petroleum and among the sugar estate workers. SOBSI is affiliated with the WFTU and possibly acts through it as a contact between the PKI and Peiping.

Another important affiliate of the PKI is the Barisan Tani Indonesia (BTI, Indonesian Farmers Corps), which holds three seats in the Parliament. It is strongest in Central Java. The PKI has many other affiliates, in almost every facet of Indonesian life, particularly among the youth. Like the Partai Murba, it also has a militant arm, PERBEPESI, an organization of veterans. The PKI probably receives most of its funds through these affiliates.

The PKI is an example of what is called a "soft party." The top echelons of the party are well-trained and well-organized. Once past this upper crust the party tends to fall apart except in carrying on the simplest activities, requiring only blind obedience. This softness is largely due to the low literacy rate in the country, which limits the teaching of doctrinary Communism to the masses.

At present the party is joining in a national front movement, but what its status will be when definite plans for a general election are announced is in considerable doubt.

Partai Murba (PM, Proletarian Party)

The party has, at times erroneously been called a Trotskyite group. This description is fervently denied by the Murba, which considers itself a nationalist Communist party rather than an internationalist party. Although the party does not advocate world revolution and does not recognize the leadership of Moscow, its

domestic line and its attitude toward the US and the rest of the world is hardly distinguishable from that of the PKI or other Moscow-oriented Communist parties throughout the world.

The Partai Murba was founded in November 1948 by Tan Malaka, the Moscow-trained Communist who later broke with the Third International because of his nationalist principles. He was an early leader of Communism in Indonesia. In the spring of 1949 he was reported to have been executed by the Indonesia Government as a danger to the security of the nation; however, these reports often have been denied, leaving the question of his present existence in much the same doubt as that of HO chi Minh.

The present chairman of the party is Sukarni Kartodiwirdjo. Maruto Nitimihardjo is vice-chairman and Sjamsu Udaya is secretary-general. In the current Indonesian Parliament, which is not an elected one, the party holds four seats, including the second vice-chairmanship of the Communications and Public Works Section. It supports the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI), which heads the present Government.

Sukarni claims for the party a dues-paying membership of 200,000 and about 500,000 fellow-travelers. The first figure seems high to most observers, although the second figure seems plausible when counting the various groups affiliated with PM. In the field of labor the party controls the Sentral Organisasi Buruh Republik Indonesia (SOBRI, the Central Organization of Indonesian Workers), a

rival of the PKI-dominated SOBSI. In addition to the approximately 50,000 members in SOBRI, the largest group of which is formed of gas and electric workers, SOBRI reportedly has infiltrated many SOBSI unions.

A propaganda arm of the PM is the Pelita Murba (Lamp of the Proletariat), a weekly published in Bandjermasin. The party also has a small militant arm of veterans of the rebellion against the Dutch, called the Laskar Rakjat Murba (Proletarian Peoples Army).

Recent attempts of the Partai Murba and the Partai Komunis Indonesia to settle their differences and unite into one party have failed because of the insistence of each to its own position on Moscow leadership, the PKI accepting Moscow leadership and the PM rejecting it.

Activities of Overseas Chinese Communists

The overseas Chinese in Indonesia are not organized into formal political parties. Instead of the traditional party structure, Communist and anti-Communist elements have used the community organizations of the overseas Chinese. The major Chinese Communist organization is the Chung Hua Ch'iao T'uan Tsung Hui (General Organization of Overseas Chinese Organizations), which is a federation of social, cultural and benevolent organizations, schools and publications. Included in this federation is the Min Chung Sheng Huo She, usually called the Min Sheng She (Peoples Livelihood Society), which is in turn a sub-federation of societies and is considered

to be the leading Communist group in the larger federation and in Indonesia. Leading figures among the Chinese Communists are ANG Jan-goan and SU To-tjan. The organizations are in direct contact with the Chinese Communist Embassy in Djakarta, which orders their policies.

The Chinese Communists control many schools, publications, labor unions and guilds and chambers of commerce. The influence exercised through these groups and the hierarchy of community organizations, particularly youth groups, gives the Communists an important advantage in molding Chinese public opinion throughout the country. And the important economic role of the Chinese in Indonesia makes them a considerable factor in the life of the country.

Although there is no organized Chinese Communist Party in Indonesia, a few Chinese are members of the Indonesian Parliament and are affiliated with regular Indonesian political parties. One Chinese, ONG Eng Die of the Partai Nasional Indonesia (which is currently in power), is minister of finance. But there is very little organized cooperation between the Chinese Communists in Indonesia and the Indonesian Communists, even though the Chinese Communist Embassy in Djakarta may be acting as a communications center between Moscow, Peiping and Djakarta. Most observers believe, however, that if the money, skill and organizing ability of the Chinese in Indonesia are ever linked with the Indonesian Communist movement, the result might well be disastrous for the free world.

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The combination could develop an extremely strong Indonesian Communist Party, capable of taking over Indonesia with its wealth of resources and its strategic position vis-a-vis Malaya, the Philippines and Australia threatening Southeast Asia and, therefore, the free world.

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D. Malaya

Malaya, including the Federated States and the colony of Singapore, is the last major country in Southeast Asia remaining in complete colonial status. Malaya differs from other Southeast Asian countries also in other ways, most notably in the status of its Chinese. In the colony of Singapore the overseas Chinese are in the overwhelming majority, making up at least 90 per cent of the population. In the Federated States they form a very important minority. In all Malaya the Chinese form more than 40 per cent of the population, almost equal in number to the Malay population of the country. Thus the Chinese cannot be considered a minority group but one of two major elements in the national community. Despite the Chinese majority in the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), the overseas Chinese of Malaya are predominantly pro-government and politically active locally, a national consciousness unique among Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. The two major elements in the country, the Malays and the Chinese, through their leading organizations, the United Malay Nation Organization and the Malayan Chinese Association, are now working together toward establishment of a democratic Malay nation.

Most of 3,000 to 5,000 members of the MCP are drawn from the Chinese peasant and laboring groups. The membership of the MCP is augmented by two important arms, the Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA) and the Min Yuen or Peoples Movement. The MRLA is the guerrilla force that has been battling the British in the jungles since 1948.

Recent news reports from the area indicate that the guerrillas have been contained although the job of wiping them out will be a long and bloody one. The Min Yuen is the logistical arm of the MCP and the MRLA. Its function is to obtain food, funds, military supplies and recruits for the guerrillas and, in the course of doing this, spread propaganda, train party workers and organize attempts to disrupt the national economy. The combined strength of the MCP and its two arms is about 15,000, with about 4,000 of these armed.

Support for the guerrilla operations, both voluntary and forced, comes largely from villages on the fringes of the jungle, on both the Malaya and Thailand sides of the border. On the Malaya side were many villages of "squatters" on the jungle edges. Because of their assistance to the guerrillas, the British have moved the larger part of these people, mostly Chinese, to villages further from the arena of combat, greatly handicapping the work of the guerrillas.

The arms and equipment of the guerrillas have come from two major sources. One source is materiel captured from the British in the course of the fighting since 1948, the same year that fighting broke out in Burma, the Philippines and Indonesia. The other source is the arms left from World War II, when the MRLA predecessor, the Malayan Peoples Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) was posing as a nationalist group driving the invader from Malayan soil. The methods of obtaining arms is comparable to that of the Huks in the Philippines.

The MPAJA and the MCP-MRLA set-ups are the most recent aspects of the Communist movement in Malaya. In the early 1920's pro-Communist Chinese started the movement in Malaya under the guise of nationalism and anti-colonialism. It followed the same general pattern of Communism in China, working through the Kuomintang until the KMT ousted the Communist elements in 1927. In 1928 Malayan Communists were included in the formation of the Communist Party of the South Seas (CPSS). Directed by the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern, the CPSS helped develop Communist growth and organization in each South-east Asian country. When the CPSS was dissolved in 1930 in favor of national parties, the MCP came into existence. The party continued its underground operations under the Far Eastern Bureau until the beginning of World War II hostilities in the Pacific, when it emerged as the MPAJA. During the 1930's the MCP endeavored to build up its strength, particularly in the labor field. Other activities included infiltration of schools, the press and organizations. These activities are still being carried on, but with very limited success.

The outlawing of Communist activities has hampered severely the work of the MCP since the war. Publications of the party are irregular and appear in limited numbers. Documents captured by the British or turned in by surrendering defectors indicate the clear purpose and direction of the party. They call for creation of a "peoples' democratic republic" based on the principles of "democratic centralization." This repetition of the standard line indicates that the international

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Communist origins of Malayan Communism, and in particular, its Chinese Communist orientation, have not changed from the days of its founding in the 1920's.

The severity of the jungle campaign and its lack of pronounced success has created certain difficulties within the MCP itself. Dissention and defection increased during 1953 and some leaders, notably AH Kuk, were slain by guerrilla members. Guerrillas surrendering to the British brought AH's head with them.

The actual leadership of the Communists is in some doubt. However, CHENG Ping (aka CHEN P'ing) and YUENG Kwo (aka YANG Kuo) are believed to be party secretary-general and deputy secretary-general, respectively. Little is known of their backgrounds and little as to training in Moscow or Peiping or length of affiliation with the party.

E. The Philippines

Two Communist parties exist in the Philippine Islands, one native and one Chinese. Because Communism is illegal in the country, these groups do not function as political parties running candidates for election. Being illegal, they are forced to carry on some of their activities through front organizations. The Philippine Communists have received wide notice because of their militant arm, the Huks. Capture of various leaders has weakened this arm and attempts to negotiate a truce have been reported. There has been little known formal contact between the Chinese and Philippine Communists.

Partido Komunista de Pilipinas (PKP, Philippine Communist Party)

The impetus leading to the formation of the Philippine Communist Party was mostly from within the country. Burma is the only other such case in Southeast Asia; groups in other countries received impetus from the USSR or China. To this day the PKP still acts fairly independently of other Communist groups. The party developed as an outgrowth of a laborers and peasants movement. The earliest organizations in this movement were the Union Obrera Democratica de Filipinas (Democratic Labor Union of the Philippines), founded in 1902, and the Congreso Obrera de Filipinas (Philippine Labor Congress). The Congress, usually called the COF, was founded in 1912, uniting all existing labor groups in the country. It became a means for dissemination of Marxist thinking and supplied many of the early PKP leaders.

In the 1920's, the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern and the Pan Pacific Trade Union Secretariat of the Internationale of Red Trade Unions (Profintern) made some attempts to spread Communism in the islands. They worked through foreign Communist agents in the Philippines, including Tan Malaka of Indonesia, and attempted to indoctrinate Filipinos abroad at international labor conferences. Of the latter-day PKP leaders Crisanto Evangelista and Guillermo Capadocia were active in these efforts. During this period, Chinese Communist agents were active in the country, but mostly among the Chinese minority.

In 1927 or 1928 Evangelista formed the Partido Obrero (Workers Party), which was a direct forerunner of the PKP. At the Profintern Conference in Shanghai in 1928, Evangelista conferred with Malaka and Chinese and American Communists. In 1929 the party split over the issue of the class struggle, and Evangelista and his "Red" faction organized a rival group called the Congreso Proletario de Filipinas (Proletarian Congress of the Philippines). This organization carried Communist banners for the first time in the 1929 May Day parade. Although it worked closely with leftist peasant groups, leadership came mostly from the labor elements.

The PKP, established on 7 November 1930, also had labor leadership. Shortly after its formation, it set up close contact with the Communist Party of the United States. In May 1931 many of the most prominent PKP leaders were arrested, and in 1932 the Philippine Supreme Court declared the PKP to be a seditious and illegal organi-

zation and sentenced the leaders to prison terms.

From 1933-1937 the party operated underground, functioning through the newly-organized Socialist Party, which PKP records described as a "legal front" for its underground activities.

By this time the PKP was a member of the Comintern. In 1937 President Quezon granted amnesty and legal status to the PKP. Party records indicate that this amnesty was obtained through the influence of US Communist elements. From then until the Japanese invasion, the PKP operated along peaceful "united front against Fascism" lines in accordance with the international policy of the Comintern.

During the Japanese occupation an armed peasants movement took over leadership of the party, which had been a small, weak group dominated by trade union leaders. Remnants of Philippine Chinese Communist influence in the party were greatly reduced during the occupation. In January 42 the Japanese arrested some of the top PKP leaders, including Evangelista and Capadocia. Evangelista was executed and a "Comrade Vy" assumed the leadership. It is believed the Vy was Vincente Lava, the first of the Lava family to become prominent in PKP leadership.

In 1942 the PKP joined other radical groups to form the Hukbalahap (Huk) guerrilla units to fight the Japanese, eventually gaining full control of the Huks. In 1943 the Japanese drove the Huks to the mountains. About the same time the Socialist Party and other peasant organizations were abolished. The Chinese elements

in the party and their own guerrilla units were placed under the PKP Politburo in a "Chinese Board." From this point on the influence of the Chinese in PKP activities declined. In 1944 the Central Committee of the PKP decided to abandon its waiting policy and recommenced active aggression against the Japanese. It also established local Huk-dominated governments in the provinces for post-liberation use. At this time Pedro Castro and Geruncio Lucuesta were installed as party leaders. When the US invaded the Philippines in October 1944, the Huks seem to have become disorganized; the local government system did not go into effect and many Huks surrendered their arms.

In the post-war period the PKP grew stronger, reaching its apex in 1950, although in 1947 and 1948 a struggle for party leadership disrupted party activities. Jose Lava, Jesus Lava and Luis Taruc, with the support of the Huks, challenged the leadership of Castro and Lucuesta. The Lava-Taruc group came out on top. In 1948 President Roxas declared the Huks illegal. The Central Committee then committed the PKP to armed conflict. This armed effort began about the same time as Communist insurrections began in Malaya, Burma and Indonesia.

In 1949 President Quirino granted legal status to the party, but his attempts to arrange an amnesty failed, and an investigation of the PKP was started by the Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities of the Philippine House of Representatives. From January

to October 1950, when PKP strength was at its peak, the combined PKP-Huk membership was only about one-tenth of one per cent of the population, but it was a strong and well-organized group. In June of 1950 Balgos and Capadocia, two of the PKP leaders, left Manila and joined the huks in the mountains. In a reorganization of the guerrilla units, the name of the Huks was changed to Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (HMB) (The Peoples Liberation Army). However, the name Huks remained in common use. In October 1950 several leaders were captured, and another group was taken in June 1951. In the interim, in May, the PKP was declared illegal again. In early 1952 the Huks were eliminated from the island of Panay, after military action brought a mass surrender. In the battle, Capadocia, the last of the pre-war leaders was slain.

At present the strength of the illegal PKP and Huks is small. The PKP claims about 3,000-5,000 members and the Huks about 4,000 of which only about 2,500 are armed. The party is closer to Communist China than to other Communists in the Philippines or elsewhere. It has received technical assistance and advisers from the Chinese, but few supplies or funds. It has had no direct contact with the USSR.

Leadership of the PKP is currently in the hands of Jesus Lava who is secretary-general and leader of the party. His most likely successor, in case of death or imprisonment, is Casto Alejandrino, chairman of the National Military Department of the PKP and commander-in-chief of the Huks. Luis Taruc, publicized commander of the Huks in 1942, remains the "grand old man" of the liberation movement, but

is apparently without policy-making power in the party. However, if Taruc surrenders to the Philippine Government as current rumors predict, many Huks are expected to join him. Jose Lava, in prison since 1950, also may be directing operations of the PKP through his brother Jesus.

Most of the current PKP leaders are young and, except for Taruc, none have been in the forefront longer than 10 years, in contrast to leadership of other Communist parties in Southeast Asia.

Communist Activity Among Philippine Chinese

Communist Chinese activity is centered in three areas of the Philippines--Manila, the Bicol region of Southern Luzon and Iliolo and environs. The structure of their organization, however, is not clear. It appears to include at least two facets: The Chinese Board (C) of the PKP and an undefined underground organization, which at times has been referred to as the Chinese Communist Party of the Philippines and about which little is known.

The Chinese Bureau is listed under the National Organization Department of the PKP. It is headed by a secretariat consisting of a secretary-general and the heads of four sub-departments--education, organization, communications and finance. Reorganization along these lines was effected in 1952 and is significant in that it provided no military department like that in the PKP set-up. This omission seems to indicate that the active Chinese Communist guerrilla forces of the occupation period and after had been disbanded by 1952. The Bureau was originally founded in 1942 as a liaison unit between the

PKP and the Chinese Communist Party in China. Since its founding, the CB seems to have lost most of its influence, having fallen from a strong factor in the PKP and among local Chinese Communists to a minor dot on the PKP organizational chart. This change in stature is not solely due to increased PKP dominance in internal affairs but also to the growing importance of the underground organization.

The structure of the underground arm is perhaps one of the best-guarded secrets in the realm of Asian Communism, if, indeed, such a structure does exist. Some Communist documents obtained by Philippine authorities and some reports from the islands mention a Chinese Communist Party of the Philippines. Little exact information on such a party is available and it is assumed that, if such a group exists, it is the underground organization. It is known that Communist Chinese have been very active in the Philippine Chinese community.

They have infiltrated many schools and organizations and attempted to gain control of the newspapers. These methods have been the basic Chinese Communist tactics to gain control of Chinese Communities in Southeast Asia since the Communists were ousted from the Kuomintang in 1927.

Operating under instructions from Communist headquarters in China, Chinese Communists for the most part have cooperated with the PKP, although usually acting on their own in matters pertaining to the Chinese community. During the war several Communist Chinese

guerrilla units cooperated with the Philippine Communists. Most famous of these were the Hua Chi detachment and the Hsueh Kan militia.

In addition to infiltrating various components of the Chinese community, the Communists have taken advantage of some of the well-established vices of the area--gambling, bribery, smuggling and prostitution--to further their causes. Smuggling and the extortion campaign directed at Chinese throughout the world have helped swell the Communist coffers.

Estimates of Communist Chinese strength in the Philippines have varied from a few thousand to fifty thousand. Party membership probably numbers a few thousand, but the many sympathizers who often vacillate with a change of regime, probably swell the number to fifty thousand.

F. Thailand

The pattern of Communist activity in Thailand has differed from that of other Southeast Asian countries in a few important respects, largely because it has been an independent nation for many years. Thailand's independence prevented the Communists from masquerading as nationalists as they did in Indochina and elsewhere. For the same reason Communism did not appeal to the Thais and grew up mostly among minority groups, the Chinese and the Vietnamese.

Communism also has run into other difficulties in Thailand. It has not been popular with many of the devout Buddhist Thais, who regard it as an alien heresy. Although the Communists have managed to infiltrate some elements of the Thai Buddhist priesthood, most Thais have not yielded to the Communist appeals. Furthermore, Thailand is a fairly prosperous country. Most Thais are well-fed, well-clothed, own their land and have saving. Under such conditions Communism does not flourish.

At the same time, however, Thais have unwittingly spurred the growth of Communism among the minority races. Thais are jealous of Chinese ambition and skill and the fact that the Chinese, almost to the man, are far more prosperous than the Thais. The Thailand Chinese control more than 80 per cent of the country's economy, a situation which does not please the Thai people or the Thai Government. To counteract the growing foreign influence on the Thai economy the government has passed certain restrictive measures on

aliens, excluding them from certain professions and limiting their landholdings according to type and conditions. The regulation of aliens were aimed at the Chinese, but they also affected the Vietnamese minority. The Communists have played up these restrictions to stir discontent among the minorities, and these groups have been more receptive to Communism than have the Thais.

Chinese Communist Party of Thailand (CCP (T))

The largest Communist Party in the country is the Chinese Communist Party of Thailand. Membership estimates for the party range from 2,000 to 40,000. The actual membership is probably about 2,000-3,000 hard core members, and the rest members of pro-Communist organizations, such as the Teochiu Association, a social organization composed of emigrants, and their descendants, from the area around Swatow, China.

The CCP(T) probably dates back at least to 1927, when the Communist elements were ousted from the Kuomintang in China. The party remained underground regardless of changes in its legal status. For a brief period after the 1932 coup overthrew the absolute monarchy, Communism was somewhat open. In 1933 Communism was declared illegal and remained so until 1946. In that year the Thais repealed the anti-Communism law under pressure from the Soviet Union, to secure Soviet approval of Thailand's application for UN membership. In November 1952 Communism was again declared illegal; a series

of mass arrests of Communist leaders and sympathizers followed, and several pro-Communist publications were suspended. Few of the top leaders were arrested, however.

While the names of the top leaders are in doubt, Major CHIU Chi and I Mei-hou are believed to be the guiding spirits of the party. Direction of party activities is clearly from Peiping, with the Russian Embassy in Bangkok sometime acting as an on-the-spot agent between Peiping and the party because Thailand does not recognize the Peiping regime and has only a Nationalist Chinese embassy.

Infiltration of the Chinese community is mostly within some of the dialect associations, schools and some newspapers and periodicals. The strong grip Communists once had on the important Bangkok Chinese Chamber of Commerce has been broken.

While the Chinese Communists in Thailand are an active and loud group, they represent only a small percentage of the Chinese population of more than 3,000,000, about one-sixth of Thailand's population. Many of the pro-Communist sympathizers are only weakly attached to the party and may easily desert the cause. Yet, their general political apathy causes them to follow the line of least effort and of allegiance to the homeland. Because of the strong Chinese hold on the Thai economy, pro-Communist inclinations in the Chinese community could make it the unwitting fifth column of Peiping.

Thai Communist Party (TCP)

Communism among the Thais is clouded by confusion. There is a Thai Communist Party (TCP), but reports citing the Communist Party of Thailand often have not been clear as to whether they refer to the TCP or the CCP(T). While some sources state that the TCP dates back to 1928, it appears that these references are to the Chinese organization. Because many Chinese have also adopted Thai names, the mere noting of unidentified Thai names does not indicate which group is meant. The TCP appears to have been of virtually no importance until a few years ago and of not much more importance now. The CCP(T) is believed to have established the TCP to attract the Thais to Communism. Its small membership, believed to be only in the hundreds, is probably composed mostly of Sino-Thais who are also members of the parent Chinese group. Except for a few members of the intellectual or professional community, it has attracted little response.

Free Thai Movement

Another Thai group is either Communist-dominated or Communist-duped: The Free Thai movement led by ex-Premier PRIDI, now operating in the Thai Nationality Autonomous State in Yunnan Province, China. This movement is the continuation of the war-time anti-Japanese group of the same name that cooperated with the US. PRIDI himself was referred to as a Communist when, during his 1933 tenure as premier,

he submitted an Economic Plan closely resembling the plans and lines of the USSR. He admitted to socialist leanings but denied he was a Communist. It may well be that he is not a Communist even now, but that he and the Chinese Communists are using each other--PRIDI, to try to regain power with Communist aid, and the Chinese, to capitalize on PRIDI's prestige and following to set up a Communist state in Thailand as a satellite of Peiping.

Tong Hoi Viet Kieu Cuu Te Tai Thai (General Association for Mutual Assistance to Overseas Vietnamese in Thailand)

The Vietnamese Communists in Thailand, numbering about 50,000, are long-time Thailand residents and emigres of the past 30 years. Some reports say that about half of this group are Communists or pro-Communist sympathizers working with the Viet Minh and HO chi Minh of Indochina. In 1929-1930, HO was in Thailand forming Vietnamese emigre units. The Vietnamese Communists are organized into the Tong Hoi Viet Kieu Cuu Te Tai Thai (General Association for Mutual Assistance to Overseas Vietnamese in Thailand). The association is not active in internal Thai affairs.

III. Appendix: SOURCES USED

Part I:

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