

PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

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SOUTH EAST ASIA is a vast fragmented tropical area occupying the southern fringe of the Asian continent between India and China. It extends more than 3,000 miles east to west, and 2,000 north to south. The population of over 225 million is growing with explosive force, and is expected to more than double before the end of the century. Seventy-five to 80 per cent of the people are still engaged in agriculture, and primitive methods, inadequate education, the absence of incentives, landlordism and lack of capital spell very low living standards. All the countries of the region, with the exception of Thailand (which was never colonized), have attained political independence since the Second World War.

One must be careful of generalization. South East Asia is not homogeneous: there are national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious divisions, to a greater extent, in fact, than is true of Europe. There are wandering hill tribes living by hunting and "slash and burn" cultivation, as well as modern commercial-industrial cities. The historical experiences of the countries that go to make up South East Asia have differed sharply, before, during and since the colonial period.

Still, there are common problems which should not be overlooked. The rural masses are everywhere oppressed by the same, or similar, congeries of circumstances—growing population, fragmentation of holdings, chronic indebtedness, usury, concentration of **landownership**, low productivity. Politically, the outstanding problem is the evolution of appropriate institutions, with viable indigenous roots, which will afford the peasants and other classes an opportunity to voice and right their grievances—in societies whose entire previous experience has consisted of either despotism, whether local or colonial, or grafted representative democracy, the social impact of which has only been skin-deep, since it has in fact disguised "top-down" rule.

The countries of South East Asia are, on the mainland, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, and, in the Malay world of isthmus and archipelago, Malaysia and Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.¹ Present boundaries correspond, at best, only roughly with pre-colonial cultural-historical realities; map-making was left to the colonial powers, and was still in process in the post-1945 period.

Western contact dates from the sixteenth century, and the objective

was the purchase or seizure of commodities prized in the markets of Europe. In the early stages, European **merchants** fitted themselves in to the existing pattern, as traders, plunderers, and rulers of the ports they were able to capture and hold. Penetration into the hinterland was sporadic and temporary, contingent upon the needs of security or acquisition of local produce. The indigenous social structure remained unaffected: at the base the homeostatic, amoeboid and broadly self-sufficient² village community, growing rice and, depending upon geographical location, fishing, holding land in common, but with hereditary familial tenure of plots, and to a large extent in normal times self-governing; superimposed upon this, the local ruler and his retinue of advisers, soldiers, concubines, etc., with whom should be included the craft specialists such as silversmiths and **ordnancers**, dependent upon engrossing the agricultural surplus by means of exactions on the villages and, often, upon piracy; and, finally, the traders—inland peddlers and coastal and ocean-going **merchants**—both indigenous and foreign (compared with neighbouring India and China, South East Asia as a whole was, for geographical and related administrative-logistical reasons, lightly populated and also, and partly as a result, comparatively prosperous, and so always exerted a strong demographic pull).

Expansion inland by the European powers and extension of their political authority and economic mastery (and therefore of their intrusion into and influence upon indigenous class structure) was patchy and piecemeal until the second half of the nineteenth century, when a more uniform pattern of "forward movement" emerged. The two most affected regions prior to the nineteenth century were Java, first ranking island of Indonesia in terms of population though not in size, and the Philippines. In Java, the Dutch East India Company introduced, in addition to mere collection of produce, a system of forced production and delivery of commercial crops, some of them, such as coffee, specially introduced for the **purpose**; basically, however, as regards impingement upon local social organization, this was still tribute, and the Company's major impact was felt in the elimination of the Javanese merchant classes in the interests of Dutch monopoly. In the Philippines, most of the islands, with the exception of those in the south, which were largely Muslim, were brought under direct Spanish administration and their inhabitants converted to Catholicism; huge landholdings were amassed by the Church, Spanish corporations and individuals, and wealthy Filipinos and mestizos (those of mixed blood) as a result of colonial land policy, while former peasant owner-occupiers were progressively impoverished by debt and forced to surrender their land and become tenants, share-croppers and labourers.

The tempo of Western interest in the region changed and quickened in the nineteenth century in tune with economic developments in

Europe and North America and concomitant world price changes.⁹ The accent shifted from consumption crops—tea, sugar, coffee, tobacco—though production of these continued and indeed greatly increased—to the growing and extracting of industrial raw materials; tin, copra, cinchona, petroleum and rubber. The tribute system was inappropriate to the satisfaction of the new demands and a great surge of direct Western investment characterized the last half of the century and the years before the first world war. From **1853** to **1873** world primary product prices were rising, and around the latter year a whole series of developments carried the process of economic development of South East Asia forward—the opening of the Suez Canal (1869), the extension of the telegraph cable to Singapore, the improvement of steam ships, the onset of falling prices in the industrial countries, the industrialization of further Western countries, the growth of the canning industry, the popularity of bicycles with their solid rubber tyres, and so on. From **1896** onwards, with rising primary product prices again and the introduction of the automobile, the surge of investment became a tidal wave, which swept over and transformed the South East Asian society.

Western direct investment necessitated Western direct political control, both to safeguard investments and to ensure to the European, as opposed to the indigenous and alien Asian, investor every possible advantage. Everywhere that control was consolidated, with the sole exception of Thailand, which nevertheless was forced, by the **Bowring (1855)** and subsequent treaties, to accept certain restrictions on her sovereignty which operated in favour of Western commerce and industry. In **1874**, following the Pangkor Engagement with the Sultan of Perak, Britain expanded from her commercial footholds in Penang, Malacca and Singapore, into the tin, and later rubber, estates of **Pahang**, Negri Sembilan, Perak and Selangor in Malaya. In **1873**, Holland launched the **Atjeh** war, to complete the pacification of Sumatra, focus of the new wave of investments in Indonesia. French occupation of Cochinchina (completed **1867**) in southern Vietnam foreshadowed engulfment of the rest of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. British conquest of Burma, begun in **1826**, was completed by **1886**. The Dutch and British defined their spheres of influence in Borneo in **1871**. Spain opened tentative doors in the Philippines, long cocooned in feudal and theocratic stagnation, to international trade and investment.

Indigenous social structures could not survive this assault. By the introduction of money economy, by the destruction of local enterprises, by the incorporation of the traditional ruling classes into their administrative systems, and by the recruitment of local and attraction of alien wage labour, the European colonialists shook self-sufficient subsistence village economy to its foundations, up-rooting, transplanting and beheading the living organism with ruthless effectiveness.

The village now needed money, for paying taxes, for buying imported European goods, and for other transactions hitherto avoided or conducted by barter. How was it to be got? Men were reluctant to leave their homes to work in European-owned factories and plantations, and in any case wages were pitifully low, and competition from the imported Indian and Chinese coolies fierce. Villagers could, and did, turn from rice production to the growing of commercial crops, but in marketing and shipping these they were subject to the cheating and discrimination of the middlemen, often aliens, and the discouragement of the colonial authority, and in addition prices fluctuated in bewildering and apparently capricious ways. In these circumstances, the demand for money in the village invariably exceeded the supply.

This being the case, money-lending could hardly fail to be a lucrative business. Chinese and Indian usurers moved in to meet the steady demand for cash, charging rates of interest as high as the market could bear, and of course the more desperate the borrower the weaker his bargaining position. Traditional village usages had limited the harm a man could do to himself and his family by prodigality or lack of foresight. Now all limitations were swept aside. Apart from those places where the responsible political authority took positive steps to prevent land alienation—as with the Dutch in Indonesia, and the Thai Government—more and more villagers found themselves surrendering the plots they had unwisely pledged as security for loans. Few understood the implications of either compound interest or European land law. They became rack-rented tenants or sharecroppers on the soil which had once been their own, or else were forced to move on to work as landless labourers or plantation coolies elsewhere. Naturally, it became no easier to escape from debt; in fact, the average peasant could anticipate a lifetime of almost unalleviated indebtedness. Even on Java, where the 1870 Dutch Agrarian Law sought to safeguard "native" rights in the soil, the sheer increase in numbers and consequent fragmentation of holdings, plus the disintegrating pressures of the new money flows, helped to break up the village.

It was not only Chinese and Indian, and sometimes local, money-lenders who capitalized on the plight of the peasant catapulted into the money economy. Local landlords found the lending of money to their tenants and neighbours an extremely rewarding way of stepping up the extraction of profit from the soil. A tenant owing money to his landlord was in no position to haggle about his share in the harvest, and an indebted neighbour could be pressed to the point of surrendering his plot. But although a section of indigenous society was thus accumulating capital, it was not being used by the landlords in a productive way, but rather to step up traditional modes of expenditure and saving (purchase of buffaloes and precious stones and metal, ostentatious consumption).

Where enterprise and capital were required, and the Europeans did not care to, or were in no position to, provide it, it was forthcoming mostly from the Chinese, Indian and other foreign communities. Often, as on Java, this was in large measure the outcome of preceding colonial policy which had actively encouraged the alien and discouraged local enterprise. But the result exacerbated the resentment and sense of injustice among the exploited rural masses, who, having been depressed into conditions of misery and hopelessness from Burma to the Philippines, nevertheless saw aliens waxing fat in their midst.

In these circumstances, an amorphous proto-political consciousness developed among the peasantry. As long as rural society had survived in its traditional form more or less intact, the notion that any action on their part could materially change their way of life had not arisen among the villagers. At infrequent intervals and in isolated incidents the peasants might rise in blind anger and despair to murder and pillage in protest against cruel oppression or intolerable exactions. Such action could be construed as nothing but a gesture of hopelessness. Western penetration forged important changes. Dissatisfaction was no longer local, but widespread throughout the rural areas. In Burma, where by the First World War the best part of Lower Burma was in the hands of absentee alien landlords, lawlessness and violence were endemic. Significantly, indications of more co-ordinated protest first appeared in Java⁴ and the Philippines,⁵ the areas of the most enduring the disturbing Western presence. The dissatisfaction was not at first directed exclusively against the colonial powers. The peasants' concern was land, and their anger was vented against the immediate agents of their disinheritance—the Indian and Chinese money-lenders and middlemen, and the indigenous landlords (the Saya San rebellion in Burma in 1930 affords an example). But here is to be sought the germ of nationalism. Awareness of their social dislocation gave the peoples of South East Asia a consciousness of common destiny."

As regards the non-agricultural sector, it was no part of the Western purpose to encourage local industry; it was markets that were sought, not competition. Traditional handicraft industries were hard hit by the competition of cheap mass-produced Western imports, and many disappeared or shrank. Modern manufacturing industry did not appear to replace them on the spot, except to the extent convenient to the European sector. The main sources of non-agricultural employment open to local people apart from mining and the public services were in the processing of commercial crops, the repairing and servicing of machinery and vehicles, and in the handful of factories producing such commodities as it was uneconomic to ship from Europe (cement, beer, soft drinks, biscuits, etc.). There was, therefore, a negligible proletariat, although many Marxist movements in South

East Asia concentrated, in the first instance, the greater part of their energies on what workers there were. It was not until 1953, for example, that **Aidit**, Secretary-General of the Indonesian Communist Party (P.K.I.), in an important article re-oriented the party with the statement that "The agrarian revolution is the essence of the people's democratic revolution in **Indonesia**".⁷

The stirrings of nationalism in the countryside were at first, therefore, headless. But parallel developments were in process of making good the deficiency. The colonial powers were increasingly in need of all kinds of clerical, technical and semi-professional services. A small section of the local people were therefore granted the privilege of Western education. However narrow this education in practice, it did facilitate the acquisition and dissemination of Western ideas. Once employed, the educated South East Asian was most commonly in a humiliating position of inferiority with respect to Europeans of equivalent education; this, coming on top of the subjugation of his country, naturally attracted him to the revolutionary stream of Western thought, to the Leninist explanation of imperialism, the Liberal ideal of national self-determination, the Socialist blueprint for economic development. These enabled him to rationalize, articulate and systematize his, and his country's experience. Moreover, Socialist ideas matched his own ambivalence: they were both of the West and critical of the West. The spread of literacy also brought knowledge of the achievements of existing nationalist movements, such as those in China and India, and awareness of external events as shattering in their implications as the victory of Japan over Russia in 1905, and the European civil war of 1914-18.

This predominantly urban and often Western-orientated *petit-bourgeoisie* was not ideally adapted to the task of harnessing the energies of the profoundly discontented rural people, and in fact religious revival in many cases preceded them out into the countryside; Islam and Buddhism were more immediately available rallying points than imported ideas of nationhood and anti-imperialism. For various reasons, however, religious teachers failed to consolidate their hold, and the organizations they had helped bring into existence—the Young Men's Buddhist Association in Burma and the Jam' Yat Khain and Sarekat Dagang Islamiyah in Indonesia, for example—fell most often into the hands of leaders who, though nominally of the appropriate religion, were far more secular-political in their outlook and aims.⁸

In the aftermath of the First World War, nationalism and anti-colonialism developed rapidly. The example of the Philippine revolution of 1896-1902 struck no immediate echoes, but there were uprisings led by the Communist Party (P.K.I.) in Indonesia (1926-7) and by the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang (Vietnamese Nationalist Party) in Vietnam (1930). The first South East Asian trade union, the Union

of Rail and Tramway Personnel (V.S.T.P.) in Indonesia, founded in 1908, was the precursor of many, and militant unionism had spread even to Malaya by the 1930's.

Two things strengthened the association of nationalist and Socialist thinking: the Russian revolution and the impact of the inter-war depression. The obvious direct attraction of the first was quickly followed up by the forging of links between the nationalist movements and Russian leaders. The depression had catastrophic consequences for South East Asia, since the bottom completely fell out of the market for most of the commodities produced in the region.⁸ "Few countries", wrote an economist, "suffered a more violent contraction of economic activity in the thirties than the Netherlands Indies."⁹ Some paid-off Indian and Chinese labour drifted home, but there had been in the prosperous twenties a marked tendency for immigrant labour to bring over wives and families and make the countries of South East Asia "home". Political events in India and China were reflected in movements among the Indian and Chinese communities in South East Asia—notably in the growth of Communism among the latter. Paid-off local labour could return to the village, but this simply meant that the village, which could ill afford it, had to provide the "welfare services" that the colonial authorities failed to provide. Smallholders, who had taken to the commercial production of export crops during the boom years, were now driven back to subsistence farming. Moreover, under the various commodity control schemes adopted to shore up prices, the local smallholder was blatantly discriminated against in the interests of the generally high cost European estates.¹¹ As a microcosm of capitalism in action, the inter-war years could hardly fail to leave a clear imprint upon nationalist thinking: poverty, injustice and inefficiency were seen to accompany the wild and irrational economic fluctuations, in the grip of which the capitalist Western powers appeared to be powerless.

The development of representative institutions during these years was extremely uneven from country to country. The Volksraad in Indonesia remained unrepresentative and virtually powerless, while the French made little attempt to satisfy even the mildest of nationalist demands in Indo-China, crushing all opposition with indiscriminate ruthlessness (and thus helping to sew the seeds of Vietnam's subsequent agony). On the other hand, British Burma by 1937 had moved by stages to the point where there was virtual internal self-government, and the Commonwealth of the Philippines was inaugurated in 1935. Thailand, by the revolution of 1932, moved from control by the royal family to a constitutional monarchy, with at least the relevant apparatus of parliamentary institutions.

Development in this direction was abruptly halted by the Japanese invasion. South East Asian nationalists had long had their eyes on Japan, and some of the leaders had visited and studied there. Before

Pearl Harbor, the Japanese had already begun to train South East Asian nationalists in guerilla warfare, looking to their assistance in defeating the European colonial powers.¹² Between Pearl Harbor and the middle of 1942, the Japanese in effect took over the whole of South East Asia; the Vichy French handed over Indo-China, Thailand agreed to come into the war on the Axis side, and the other countries were invaded.

The Japanese period was important for a variety of reasons. First of all, the speed and decisiveness with which the Japanese forces defeated and humiliated the European armies made an indelible impression on the peoples of the region. The myth of white supremacy had been dealt a death blow, and it would never again be possible for a handful of white troops and administrators to hold down millions of Asian subjects. The Japanese rammed home the point by publicly exposing European prisoners to the most menial of tasks. Second, the Japanese presence gave the nationalists training and experience in the use of arms. This was partly by intention, as with the **Indonesian**-manned and officered auxiliary armies of Java, Sumatra and Bali, and the Burmese Independence Army. But it was also a result of the resistance movements that grew up throughout South East Asia as the initial goodwill or at least neutrality towards the Japanese gave way to disillusion and hatred. Naturally, it was allied policy to help these resistance movements to the maximum extent possible, and this was an extremely useful source of arms for the guerillas—the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, the People's Anti-Japanese Resistance Army in the Philippines (usually known as the Hukbalahap), the constituents of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League in Burma, the Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi (Viet Minh) in Indo-China. A third important result of Japanese occupation was the precipitous promotion of layers of South East Asian administrators, who had, under the colonialists, been restricted to the lower echelons of the service. This was important training for the tasks that lay ahead, because all the European powers had to some extent or another been guilty of culpable neglect of education and of discrimination in **employment**.¹³ A fourth factor was the encouragement, direct and indirect again, given to the development of local nationalism. Of course it was the Japanese intention to pass themselves off as "liberators", but their concessions were extremely limited until defeat began to loom. In Burma and the Philippines, where ready collaborators were found among the politicians, "independence" was declared by the Japanese in 1943. In Indonesia, where the nationalist leadership divided between those who took to the hills and those who tried to wrest every advantage from co-operation with the invaders, the Japanese allowed the collaborators, who included Sukarno and Hatta, to propagate the national language (Bahasa Indonesia) and to travel widely throughout the country stirring up anti-colonialist feeling and organizing. Later,

an Independence Preparatory Committee was sanctioned, headed by Sukarno, and it was the deliberations of this body which laid the foundations for post-independence policy and organization. Sukarno proclaimed independence two days after the Japanese surrender. Finally, the Japanese afforded the South East Asian Communists an opportunity which they grasped to some effect. In the Philippines, Vietnam and Malaya, Communists gained control of the resistance movement, and in Burma and Indonesia they played a substantial, though not controlling, part; only in the Free Thai underground was their role negligible.

The Japanese surrender found militant and uncompromising nationalist movements in being in all the former colonies, and their attitude and state of preparedness undoubtedly took the returning Western powers by surprise. I do not propose here to deal, except in passing, with Vietnam, for which an already voluminous and rapidly expanding literature exists,¹⁴ but the post-war fate of the others I intend to review briefly before turning to analysis of the present position and the prospects for Socialism.

The countries may be distinguished in terms of a number of variables. The Philippines, Burma, Malaya and Singapore, all formerly American or British possessions, attained independence peacefully, at least in respect of relations between the colonial authority and the authority recognized by the colonial power as its successor. The two countries which had, pre-war, advanced furthest along the road, the Philippines and Burma, were the first to secure independence, the former in **1946** and the latter in **1948**. Indonesia, on the other hand, had to wage a long armed struggle against the Dutch before freedom was conceded in **1949**, and the French fought until beaten at Dien Bien Phu in **1954**, by which time, unfortunately for the Vietnamese, the Americans had taken over their *role*.

However, among the countries attaining independence peacefully, a distinction has to be made between Burma on the one hand, and the Philippines and Malaya on the other. Burma cut itself off completely on attaining independence, leaving the Commonwealth and embracing policies of non-alignment and internal self-reliance. Britain and America, however, maintained important economic and strategic links with Malaya and the Philippines. There were various significant reasons for this. Malaya and the Philippines both housed important military bases commanding areas considered strategically vital for the West, while Burma did not. Moreover, Burma got its independence before Dulles became the dominant figure in the American administration in **1953** and launched his aggressive brand of anti-Communism in South East Asia. It is doubtful if he would have approved of the political complexion of the leaders to whom Britain entrusted power in **1948**, for the Burmese nationalist movement, for all its divisions, was pretty much left-wing in character throughout its spectrum

and Dulles would have interpreted the British grant of independence as a "surrender to Communism". In economic terms, Burma was of less importance to Western investors and manufacturers than either Malaya or the Philippines, and she had emerged from the war utterly devastated, half the national capital (excluding land) having been destroyed. These considerations, together with the adamant desire for freedom in all sections of Burmese society, undoubtedly carried weight with the British leaders.

Burma had had a singularly unfortunate colonial experience in terms of the demoralization and disintegration of traditional social structure and way of life, and it was natural that all sections of society should be anti-Western, to the extent of eventually virtually closing the Burmese borders to visitors from the West. There were, in contrast, important sections in Malayan and Philippine society that had benefited from colonial rule, and were therefore prepared to work with the West even after independence. Western policy was, in turn, predicated on their assumption of responsibility. The early introduction of "Filipinization" by the Americans meant that lucrative careers were open to talented Filipinos; moreover, it was indigenous businessmen who, along with Americans, benefited from the economic development of the islands—in marked contrast to the situation in Burma where it was mainly immigrant Indians who benefited from Western rule. In Malaya, the Malays feared Chinese domination, and it had been British policy, by and large, to counterbalance Chinese wealth by placing political power in the hands of those who were regarded as the original inhabitants of the country; also, Malaya had enjoyed in the past, and was to enjoy again, unexampled prosperity under British rule, and there were therefore not lacking businessmen in the Chinese community who thought of British rule, and the continuation of British protection after independence, as safeguards for the profitable and untroubled continuation of private enterprise.

We have already noted, however, that there were left-wing nationalist movements in Malaya and the Philippines, both dominated by the Communists, and having their origin in the anti-Japanese resistance. At the end of the war, both had ambitions to take over: the Huks (short for Hukbalahap cadres) declared a "People's democratic government", and the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (M.P.A.J.A.) had like pretensions. Both were short-lived, but that was not the end of the matter. The Huks continued fighting, and the Malayan Communist Party (M.C.P.—former M.P.A.J.A.) rose in rebellion in 1948. The subsequent campaigns against these two Communist-led insurrections were of great importance for the political future of the countries concerned. In both cases, the metropolitan powers played a significant, and in the case of Malaya at least, a decisive part; American military aid and advice at a vital point in the campaign against the Huks enabled Magsaysay

(more or less) to break the back of their resistance, while it was British troops and police that bore the brunt of the long war against the Communists in Malaya.¹⁵ Certain factors favoured the security forces. In Malaya, the M.C.P. was almost entirely Chinese in composition, and it was forced to operate in the predominantly Malay rural areas; during and immediately after the war, moreover, communal tensions had been heightened by Chinese reprisals on Malays who had collaborated with the Japanese (whose main repressive measures were of course aimed against the Chinese). In the Philippines, although the Filipino people had, to a much greater extent than the inhabitants of any other South East Asian country, resisted the Japanese with great tenacity and ferocity, and, therefore, had much sympathy with the old resistance now operating in their midst in the shape of a movement of social protest, the *élites* remained solidly committed to the American cause (as they had during the war gone over solidly to collaboration), and the flow of U.S. money and support in the end was the telling factor. Both emergencies had unfortunate repercussions for the trade union and Labour movements, which were purged and suppressed for suspected sympathies with the guerillas.

In Malaya and the Philippines, therefore, the *élites* who inherited power were confirmed in their anti-Communism and in their pro-Western policies by the nature of the post-war internal events that faced them and by the way these were tackled. Although Burma's Communists also staged an insurrection, the governing groups there did not think it necessary to call in Western help to suppress it, and the matter remained a domestic one which did not mould foreign policy. It should be noted that the divergent experiences of the men who came to make up the armed forces of the South East Asian independent countries had great influence in determining their political outlooks: in Indonesia the army had been blooded in a long and bitterly contested anti-colonial war, and subsequently in fighting rebels who were aided by the imperialist powers, and therefore remained indelibly anti-imperialist in outlook (to the extent that the recent army take-over in Indonesia is unlikely to foreshadow radical changes in Indonesian foreign policy); in Malaya and the Philippines, however, the armed forces had gained their experience against left insurrectionary movements, with civilian allies, and therefore remained basically conservative in outlook.

Much that has been said about Malaya and the Philippines is true too for Thailand. As a result of the 1932 revolution, the greater part of the middle classes obtained satisfaction in terms of participation in power, prestige and monetary reward, and the revolutionary left was therefore to a degree starved of articulate educated leadership. The army was, and is, an established, conservative, security-minded social group. The decision to side openly with the Americans after the war had critics at the time, but active opposition to it had, until recently,

been slight. American aid has certainly benefited the urban areas, and the comparatively comfortable standard of living in the countryside has up to now afforded advocates of radical social change little in the way of purchase. It is convenient in much of what follows to regard Thailand as being in the same category as Malaya (after 1963, Malaysia) and the Philippines, while Burma has, in some important respects, more parallels to offer with Indonesia.

In Burma, as in Indonesia, the army developed directly out of the anti-Japanese resistance. In the years immediately following the end of the war, the armed forces of the Burmese Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League were an important factor in defeating British attempts to foist something less than full independence upon Burma, while in Indonesia the armed nationalists went straight from fighting the Japanese to fighting the returning Dutch. In neither country could the colonial power find any worthwhile body of local support against the translated resistance movements, and in general it may be said that the independent governments of the two countries arose out of the war and immediately post-war national liberation movements, whereas those of Malaya and the Philippines arose out of opposition to the equivalent movements in their own countries.

The distinction between what have come to be known as the "neo-colonial" and the "non-aligned" powers in South East Asia is a significant one, and must be seen in connection with class relationships in the respective societies, in particular the relationship between the traditional ruling classes and landlords on the one hand, and the western-educated middle classes on the other. In pre-war Burma, big landlordism itself was largely a product of colonial rule, and aliens were the main beneficiaries. In addition, the educated Burmese was subject to restrictions on the kind of employment he might have expected, since Indians filled large sections of such employments as the public services and the professions. Nor was it easy for the local capitalists to take advantage of what business opportunities were available, since Indian capital had a stranglehold on petty trading and small business. A like situation prevailed in Indonesia, where internal trading was almost a monopoly of the Chinese, and the traditionally business-orientated indigenous groups, such as the Minangkabau, were hard pressed to keep a corner open for their own entrepreneurial activities. Here, too, the landlord was alienated from the Western-educated middle classes. The Dutch had absorbed the traditional ruling classes and big landowners into their local administration, and accorded them high material rewards and prestige, to the point almost of social equality in certain respects. For the Indonesian who had scrambled his way up the narrow and steep path of education, in contrast, all was different. Once employed, it would be at an inferior salary as compared with Europeans performing the same work and with equivalent or even inferior qualifications, and there were humiliating

social discriminations to endure. At least in Burma the representative legislative institutions offered some opportunity for power, but in Indonesia the Volksraad was virtually powerless, and in any event, Indonesians were not in the majority.

All was different in Malaya and the Philippines. In the former, the nationalist movement right up to the Second World War was formless—there were extremely left-wing and anti-imperialist Chinese unions by the thirties, and, especially on the east coast, foci of discontent centered on Islam among the Malays. For the rest, the situation bore no strict comparison with that of its neighbours. For the educated Malays, there were privileged positions in the British administration, for the Chinese unlimited business opportunities, and in the professions employment for Indians and the educated of all communities. The poorer classes were fractured by racial differences—Indians on the estates and public services, Chinese in the mines and as city wage labour, Malays in the subsistence agricultural sector. The position was, then, that the educated of all communities could find chances to deploy their talents and earn satisfactory rewards, and at that stage there was insufficient resentment against the entrenched position of the Malay feudal classes in the civil service, police, etc. to generate much heat. Moreover, whatever their poverty, the Malay rural masses felt more loyalty to their own traditional ruling classes than they felt common cause with the poor of other communities. British policy kept possible sources of friction to a minimum by emphasizing separate development of the communities and sectors rather than integration. (The consequences are being felt today, since the chance to start promoting a national language, and building up a common educational system, was let slip, and newly independent Malaya had to start more or less from scratch in these touchy areas.)

The nationalist movement of the Philippines was, of course, by contrast, the oldest in South East Asia. But after its frustration at the hands of American power in the period **1899-1902**, American policy successfully diverted its energies in the direction of co-operation in the attainment of independence by constitutional means. Especially after American entry into the First World War, "**Filipinization**" of the civil service, other public services, the judiciary, etc., was so rapid that for the large numbers of educated Filipinos there were plenty of opportunities to attain satisfactory positions of power, prestige and high income. American respect for property-rights had prevented them from touching the power and wealth of the land-owning classes. Further, the Filipino businessman had greater scope than his counterpart in either Burma and Indonesia; there were Chinese in the Philippines, but their grip on commerce was weaker than in Indonesia, since Spanish policy had discouraged them whereas the Dutch had encouraged them. American policy, therefore, succeeded

in creating a Filipino oligarchy of landowners, businessmen and educated middle classes in the bureaucracy and the professions.

It can be appreciated, then, that the educated middle classes in Burma and Indonesia naturally wanted not just a political revolution leading to independence, but also a social revolution to blow the resented groups—alien traders, privileged landowners—out of their entrenched positions which were identified with colonial power. In Malaya and the Philippines, on the other hand, the landlords, businessmen and educated middle classes could work together for political independence without seeking to disrupt the existing social system—indeed, their aim was to take over the system as it was, and simply fill the vacuum left by the departing colonialists; this identification of interests was immensely strengthened by the events of the post-war period, when the revolutionary up-risings exposed clearly the common danger which the privileged groups ran.

Not surprisingly, all the nationalist movements in Burma and Indonesia were "socialist", at least in vocabulary.¹⁶ Colonialism was identified with the Western capitalist countries; to be anti-colonialist was to be anti-capitalist. For Indonesians the adjective "capitalistic" had the indelible connotation of ". . . selfish, predatory, forsaking of human and social interests in the search for profits, and thus inconsistent with the spirit of democracy",¹⁷ and the same could be said of the Burmese. Even those nationalist leaders with rather moderate views in practice had learned to apply Marxist vocabulary, as the most apt and appropriate available, to the situation in which they found themselves as colonial subjects. Moreover, unlike their counterparts in Malaya and the Philippines, the educated middle classes in Burma and Indonesia could, in a dichotomous class situation see themselves as on the side of the workers and the peasants as against not only the colonialists and their alien Asian agents but also as against those indigenous elements of society (big landowners, top feudal administrators) committed to, and supported by, the colonialists. They could therefore formulate decidedly revolutionary aims. Moreover, all the nationalist groups paid at least lip service to the need for planning of some kind after the attainment of independence in order to promote development; "planning" was held up against the social chaos created by unregulated capitalism-colonialism. Socialism, then, was a broadly accepted, if rather undefined aim of most of the nationalist groups.

The situation was different in Malaya and the Philippines. Although objectively it could be seen that whoever capitalism had benefited it had signally and flagrantly failed to benefit the mass of the people, here as in Burma and Indonesia, yet here those who might otherwise have given articulation to the misery of the masses were themselves integrated into, and interested in the survival of, the capitalist system. Anti-colonialism was not anti-capitalism; it was simply a search for

a bigger *rôle* in the partnership with the colonial power, and a jockeying for advantage in the commercial and business fields. It was, in fact, part of the independence agreements with the metropolitan powers that they should retain military bases, important investments and economic privileges, and that the new independent governments should favour private enterprise and foreign investment. Nor was there any incentive to tackle landlordism and feudalism in the countryside, since the big landed interests were fused in a coalition, which, whatever its internal strains, held together in a situation where there was the threat of organizations like the Huks and the M.C.P. The neo-colonial arrangement was one in which both parties benefited in the short run.

But the *régimes* which emerged in Burma and Indonesia were also coalitions, representing a great variety of interests, such as the bureaucracy, the local business community, intellectuals (writers, academics, teachers, etc.), religious groups, trade unions, peasant organizations, those landowners who had not been fatally identified with the colonial power, the armed forces, and so on. It is obvious that these were not, and could not be, cohesive or progressive coalitions: united, more or less, in the pursuit of independence, they were susceptible to divisive strains very quickly thereafter. For many of the social groups concerned, there was no desire for further social change now that the goal of independence had been attained, and with it greatly enhanced power, prestige and wealth. The bureaucrats, for example, heirs to the top posts and privileges of the evicted colonial administrators, saw no reason for further social upheaval. Nor by and large did the army. For others, something remained to be accomplished, but that something fell far short of being revolutionary in scope or implications: for example, the local businessmen or would-be businessmen sought to take over some of the economic interests of the colonial power and to dislodge the "second layer of imperialism" in the shape of foreign Asian entrepreneurs. For yet others, the winning of political independence was but the first step in a long process of re-shaping society on a Socialist pattern. It was clear that these groups, whose intended social revolution went far beyond the displacement of the colonialists and alien Asians from the plum positions in society, were bound to clash with the new establishments, for their aims of land reform, progressive taxation, state enterprises and egalitarianism clashed at almost every point with the interests of the new, national, bourgeoisie. The point has been well put by the Dutch historian Jan Pluvier, talking about Indonesia: "In all governments between 1949 and 1957 the parties who predominated represented what might be called the middle classes—the economic bourgeoisie, the Western-educated intellectuals, the civil servants. It is true that only a very small minority belonging to these groups can be classed as bourgeois-capitalist, and, as a result, the majority were able

to adhere to some Socialist ideas without embarrassing consequences for themselves. But their Socialism was directed more negatively against foreign (Dutch and Chinese) capitalism than positively towards any real programme of socialization. Moreover, whatever disharmony might exist among these parties and on whatever issues they were fighting each other openly or *intriguing* against each other in secrecy, they were in complete agreement that the proletariat, whether rural or urban, should be kept in its place."¹⁸

Of the forces to the left, neither Social-Democrats nor Communists fared very well. The Communists in both Burma and Indonesia staged armed revolts in 1948; the first goes on in the remoter parts of Burma to this day without seriously threatening to take over power, while the P.K.I. was fairly easily crushed, and its recovery was *slow* and painful. As for the acknowledged Social-Democrats, that is those who believed that it would be possible to introduce land reform, *redistributive* legislation and nationalization by constitutional means, they suffered from certain grievous weaknesses. Although exceptionally strong in the sense of counting in their ranks some of the ablest and finest men in South East Asia, they were woefully weak in terms of popular support and in organization. Also, they were, despite their intelligence, rather formalistic in their approach, transferring mechanically procedures and approaches appropriate in the West to the quite different circumstances of South East Asia. However desirable it might be to have free elections, cabinet government and stable parliamentary majorities as the bases for sound and rational (and incorrupt) economic planning, these things were quite simply Utopian and unattainable. The most elementary prerequisites and conditions for the establishment and working of the necessary institutions were *absent*.¹⁹

One partial exception must be noted, and that is the case of the island state of Singapore. But this is a very special case. Singapore is a modern city, whose *per capita* living standards are the highest in Asia, outside Japan. The present ruling party, the People's Action Party (P.A.P.) inherited excellent municipal services and has built and improved upon them. Their record in the provision of housing and in public health has justifiably attracted international notice. The P.A.P. is predominantly Chinese, reflecting in this the racial composition of the city. Its leaders are extremely shrewd politicians, theoretically well-versed and adept veterans of the most practical aspects of political *manœuvring*. They have to cope with a very strong, persistent and clamorous body of left-wing criticism and action, and so far they have succeeded in containing it. Their formula is a consciously moderate and empirical one, preferring "gas and water Socialism" plus economic planning to full-scale nationalization plus radically redistributive policies. In this, they are simply adjusting to the facts of life in Singapore, which is a commercial and industrial centre where the powerful Chinese business interests have the power to make

or break governments. The **P.A.P.** has to accommodate profit-making to its scheme of things, and this it has done by trying to encourage and steer investment in desired directions. In doing so, the party has of course exposed itself to the charge of "selling out". In handling this criticism, the leadership has argued that the preservation of parliamentary democracy, free trade unions and high living standards are goods in themselves, and that these things would be jeopardized and probably lost under a more dogmatic socialist régime, which might well not only chase away Singaporean capital across the Straits of Johore into Malaya, but also kill the city as an international entrepot.²¹

However, Singapore is in rather a special position. There is, for example, no peasantry engaged in subsistence farming, since the city's hinterland is devoted to the cultivation of commercial crops and market gardening. Even so, there is always the possibility of a government much further to the left taking over. Despite the efforts of the **P.A.P.**, there is much serious poverty,²² and gross inequalities of wealth are all too obtrusive. Moreover, there are social and educational grievances among a section of the educated—the Chinese-speaking—which provide a constant pool of actual and potential left leadership. There are also, in practice, limitations on the operation of democracy and the labour movement. So that even in Singapore, the chances of this kind of pragmatic, manipulative, democratic and compromising "welfarism" enduring are problematical. It may well be questioned, further, how far this welfarism is entitled to the epithet of Democratic Socialism, since the operations of the **P.A.P.** however much they benefit the people in the way of modern municipal housing, T.B. clinics, etc., obviously create excellent conditions for capitalism in the way of a healthy labour force, and a division of the left into those supporting and those attacking the **P.A.P.**

That Singapore's experience is not exportable was demonstrated very clearly by the short marriage with Malaya in the Federation of Malaysia (1963–5). The **P.A.P.** sought to extend its organization into Malaya, and to seek a rôle in Federal politics. In this it was absolutely frustrated by the conservative Malayan feudal-business ruling groups in the Federal capital of Kuala Lumpur. They showed unequivocally that even the mild reformism of the **P.A.P.** was totally unacceptable to them, and, indeed, that they had no intention of allowing democracy to operate to the extent that it might conceivably pose a threat, however remote, to their own hold on power.²³

Outside Singapore, then, those politicians describing themselves as Social-Democrats fared badly. In Malaya, Thailand and the Philippines there was, as there still is, no real rôle or future for them in the conventional political arena, which is dominated by the feudal and business and/or military groups. In Indonesia, their impatience with administrative and legislative inefficiency drove some of them into

unwise involvement in the anti-Sukarno Sumatran revolt of 1958, from which the whole Socialist Party of Indonesia (P.S.I.) ultimately suffered, since it was banned in 1960. In Burma, the inability of the parties prepared to work within a democratic framework to produce durable governments with the capacity to govern led to the imposition of military rule, and the Social-Democrat politicians went down with the rest.

One of the problems which genuine Social-Democrats had to face, apart from the totally inauspicious objective circumstances of the contexts within which they had to work, was that the word "Socialist" continued to be appropriated by other parties, as an incantation possessed of great popular power. This is a matter to which I return shortly.



For the peasant three-quarters or four-fifths of South East Asia, the fruits of independence proved meagre and sour. Nothing much changed in strict economic terms. Population continued to rise, and the size of holdings to fall; landlords still collected disproportionate rents, money-lenders still charged usurious rates of interest, middlemen still bought cheaply and sold dearly. Rural living standards showed no tendency to rise, and indeed in parts of the region were demonstrably falling.²³ It was small consolation to see and hear that it was some of one's own people who were now enjoying the rewards of top government posts, or of having taken over the businesses of Europeans, Chinese or Indians.

The peasants found themselves, as a political force, virtually headless again. But things had decisively changed in one respect. Having once demonstrated that they could exercise crucial political leverage, they could no longer be safely ignored. There were many calls on their attention, not least from the governments they had helped to create.

The ruling groups were aware of the problem of the countryside, and knew that it had to be tackled as a political necessity. But they had to work, because of the social interests they represented and depended upon, within constraints that were shackling. For the sake of appearances, piecemeal instalments of legislation, aimed at specific abuses, were introduced, and showcase projects for rural development mounted. But the truth was that they could not afford, politically, to make these reforms effective. To produce any significant change in the rural areas beneficial to the peasantry would necessarily have entailed hurting powerful groups in the ruling coalitions. The fate of these shop window reforms was in practice to be quietly stifled or universally evaded.²⁴

Another important weapon resorted to by governments was nationalism. Nationalism had flowered in the rural masses, and its symbols and trappings could be used to appeal to their emotions. In Burma,

the military Revolutionary Council gave rein to the anti-Indian sentiments of the people, and encouraged a heightened chauvinism which took the form of expelling thousands of Indians, and, as we have seen, virtually closing the borders to Westerners. Indonesian leader Sukarno created his own ideology to give his people pride in their past, their achievements and their potential. His "Marhaenism", a blend of elements from Marxism, Islam and Indonesian ideals, was specifically aimed at the villages, glorifying them as examples of indigenous democracy and Socialism in practice. In terms of infusing Sukarno's speeches, and the speeches of his colleagues, with peculiarly Indonesian slogans, phrases and words, Marhaenism worked very well. But in terms of genuinely influencing actual administration, its impact was, not altogether surprisingly, slight. Cambodian leader Norodom Sihanouk sought to focus nationalist feelings on the traditional princely line.

In all three cases, the leaders claimed a right to the use of the word "Socialist" to describe their aims and actions. Yet it is doubtful how far they were justified in doing so. What it often amounted to in practice was a combination of anti-Western sentiments and moves, plus the desire to modernize and industrialize. It is true that much could be done which had every appearance of Socialism in action. For example, Burmese and Indonesian leaders could expropriate Western businesses. But the beneficiaries of these operations were not so much the common people as the bureaucrats or military men or local businessmen who took over their running. It is true that the Burmese Revolutionary Council appears to be pushing ahead with serious land reform, but facts are hard to establish when Western visitors, including journalists, are excluded. Cambodian "Royal Socialism" is insufficiently radical for some of the younger intellectual~.~~

It is important to note, too, how particularly the Government of Indonesia used international issues as a means of curbing and harnessing the revolutionary left. Now that the nationalists were in power, it was dangerous to have the continuing social unrest channelled into anti-Government feeling by the Communists. But there were a large number of issues upon which the rulers could enlist the backing of the Communists—the returning of West Irian, for example. The anti-Western militancy of the governments of Indonesia and Burma and Cambodia has often been thought of as "Communist" in the Western Press. This is a misunderstanding. It is in fact a measure of the embarrassment of the ruling groups who had in the fight for independence allied themselves with groups further to the left and now found themselves the targets of the unrest they themselves had been partly responsible for arousing during the struggle for freedom.

The manipulation of the symbols of nationalism and Socialism in some of the countries, and of the symbols of nationalism alone in

others, is in fact to do with the retention of political power. But the nationalism of the peasantry is to do with land. As long as their demand for land on fair terms is unsatisfied, the revolution is incomplete, and the ruling groups are simply fighting a delaying action. Their regimes cannot be toppled without the use of force. There is, for reasons suggested above, only a negligible proletariat in South East Asia.²⁴ The dynamic for radical social change can only come from the peasantry.

But the calls on the emotions of the rural people come not only from the direction of revolutionary socialism. Religious leaders, communalists and regionalists are all trying to harness the feelings of resentment and frustration. In the rural east coast of Malaya, the theocratic and anti-Chinese Pan Malayan Islamic Party flourishes among the Malay peasants. The peoples of the South Moluccas in Indonesia seek independence from Djakarta.²⁵ The hill tribes of Burma rise against the central government.

Revolutionary Socialist forces must seek to focus the discontent and wrath of the rural masses on the gross disparities of wealth between themselves and the urban *élites*,²⁶ and to guide them to the correct conclusions. This is not an easy task. This emerges from the history of the Indonesian Communist Party (P.K.I.), Asia's oldest and the third largest in the world. Despite economic stagnation and hardship, despite years of propagandizing by devoted cadres, and despite a membership of three million, plus perhaps another 7 million sympathizers in front organizations, the P.K.I. in 1965 could not openly challenge the Indonesian Army.²⁷ The P.K.I. leaders have been cautious because they have appreciated all along how far they have to go before they can make a reasonable bid for power. Yet the P.K.I. is far and away the largest and best organized body of its kind in South East Asia. The Malayan Communist Party consists of a few hundred guerillas encamped in southern Thailand, plus an unknown number of agents and sympathizers in Malaysia and Singapore. The Hukbalahap guerillas in the Philippines, although still active in parts of Central Luzon, are well below their peak post-war strength. In Thailand, a Left challenge to the ruling *élites* is an unfulfilled promise rather than a reality. In Burma, the Communist Parties are in rather impotent revolt—but here the interesting question is how far and how fast the Left military administration itself will go in the direction of bringing Socialism to the countryside.

That the peasantry will eventually act to assert their human dignity and their human rights is certain. In most parts of South East Asia, they have deeply entrenched anti-capitalist ideas, which is a sound starting point. There are also features of traditional South East Asian life which make the soil rather hopeful for the seed of Socialism. In the first place, there is a very strong tradition of mutual self-help in the village.²⁸ In Indonesia this is called *gotong royong*, and has played

a large part in Sukarno's ideological thinking. Selosoemardjan has shown³¹ that whereas large officially-fostered co-operatives often fail, small spontaneous ones limited to the traditional horizons of the village have worked. There is certainly a strong co-operative tradition upon which to build.

Second, as compared with South Asia and the Far East, South East Asia has fewer paralyzing social traditions and institutions through which to break in order to start modernizing. It is interesting to speculate on the reasons for this, but it is safe to say that part of the explanation lies in the extremely broken nature of South East Asia geographically, for this has always militated against the establishment of extensive and enduring empires, such as were possible on the larger land masses of India and China. Therefore, nothing so elaborate as the Hindu caste system or the Chinese mandarin system had a chance to evolve and fossilize in the region.³² It is very noticeable, to take one point, how emancipated the South East Asian female is as compared with her pre-1949 Chinese counterpart, or her counterpart in Indian rural society today.³³

Little has been said here about the development of South East Asian trade unionism, which is politically divided, and almost everywhere subject to strict limitations on freedom of action.³⁴ But something should be said about the objective external conditions favourable to the development of Socialism in South East Asia. As Martinet has pointed out,³⁵ small Socialist countries cannot adopt a Chinese-style economic self-sufficiency *vis-à-vis* the Western capitalist powers. They would have to rely, in present circumstances, on Western trade and markets. This dependence puts strong neo-colonial weapons in the hands of the Western powers, and they are undoubtedly ready to take advantage of this leverage to influence internal events in the South East Asian countries. The fight for greater international control over trade and aid policies is, therefore, also part of the fight for the liberation and advancement of the peoples of the developing countries.

This is an exciting and crucial period in the evolution of Socialist thought as the European movement lifts its eyes outwards from the limited and, to some extent, unrepresentative problems of the West to the problems of the world as a whole. Familiar controversies, about violence, power, redistribution, are seen in fresh perspective and given a new lease of life. No position founded on a complacent view of the European achievement in raising working class living standards can call itself socialist. The poor and underprivileged that ought to concern us include the poor and underprivileged of Asia, and our Socialist theory must account for their plight and draw the correct conclusions or else fail in its purpose. It should be clear from what has gone before that the related tasks of socialism in South East Asia are the smashing of neo-colonialism, which protects and supports the

most reactionary ruling groups, and the raising of the living standards of the rural masses, who have so far gained little from the political upheavals of the post-war period.¹⁴

NOTES

1. The standard geographical work is: C. A. Fisher: *South-East Asia* (London 1964). Short specialist historical-political accounts, country by country, are contained in G. McT. Kahin (ed.): *Government and Politics of Southeast Asia* (Ithaca 1964); the book is also useful for the descriptive bibliographies following each section.
2. But see J. C. Leur: *Indonesian Trade and Society* (The Hague 1955) for a discussion of early South East Asian patterns of internal and international trade.
3. See my articles in C. D. Cowan (ed.): *The Economic Development of South-East Asia* (London 1964) and *Journal of the Historical Society of the University of Malaya*, October 1964.
4. See G. McT. Kahin: *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca 1952).
5. See, e.g., T. A. Agoncillo: *Revolt of the Masses* (Quezon City 1956).
6. See E. H. Jacoby: *Agrarian Unrest in South East Asia* (London 1961), pp. 38-9 *et passim*.
7. D. N. Aidit: "Haridepan Gerakan Tani Indonesia" ("The Future of the Indonesian Peasant Movement"), *Bintang Merah (Red Star)*, July 1953.
8. See F. R. von der Mehden: *Religion and Nationalism in South East Asia* (Madison 1963).
9. Sugar collapsed from over 25s. per cwt. in the early 1920's to 5s. per cwt. in the mid-1930's. Tin, which had hovered round the £300 per ton mark in 1926-7, averaged £142 a ton for 1930 as a whole. Rubber, which had been as high as 4s 8d. per lb in 1925, reached a low of just over 11d. a lb in 1932.
10. B. Higgins: *Indonesia* (New York 1963), p. 64.
11. See, e.g. P. T. Bauer: *The Rubber Industry* (Cambridge, Mass. 1948).
12. See W. H. Elsabee: *Japan's Role in Southeast Asian Nationalist Movements* (Cambridge, Mass. 1953).
13. In 1940 only 240 Indonesians, out of a population of 60 to 65 million, graduated from high school.
14. An excellent recent account is J. McDermott: *Vietnam Profile* (London 1965), which can be obtained from C.N.D., 14 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1, price 2s. 6d.
15. For an orthodox interpretation of the Emergency in Malaya (1948-60) see G. Z. Hanrahan: *The Communist Struggle in Malaya* (New York 1954). For a left-wing view see *Berita Pemuda*, vol. III, No. 3, March 1965. For the Hukbalahap movement, see W. J. Pomeroy: *The Forest* (London 1965).
16. See Jeanne S. Mintz: *Mohammed, Marx and Marhaen* (London 1965): "... every significant organ of political expression in Indonesia . . . has been or has claimed to be socialist", (p. 6).
17. Selo Soemardjan: *Social Changes in Jogjakarta* (Ithaca 1962), p. 291.
18. J. Pluvier: *Confrontations* (O.U.P. 1965), p. 36. This is an excellent class analysis of the Indonesian revolution.
19. For a fuller discussion of this, see my forthcoming book *Problems of Independence on Asia* (Pergamon Press).
20. For some typical articles by P.A.P. leaders, see Dr. Wong Lin Ken: "Social Democracy, the Intellectual Left, and the Nation"; Lee Kuan Yew: "The Future of Democratic Socialism in Afro-Asia"; Dr. Goh Keng Swee:

"The Economic Problems of Democratic Socialism in Malaysia"; all in the P.A.P.'s 10th Anniversary Souvenir entitled *Our First Ten Years* (Singapore 1964).

21. An account of the slums of Singapore, which is startlingly reminiscent of early nineteenth century British reports on the housing of the labouring classes, is to be found in: *Upper Nanking Street, Singapore* (Kuala Lumpur 1961) by Barrington Kaye.
22. For an account of the political background to Singapore's break-away see M. Leifer: "Singapore in Malaysia: The Politics of Federation" (*Journal of South East Asian History*, vol. VI, No. 2, September 1965).
23. This was the impression even in prosperous Malaya. See, e.g. Professor Ungku Aziz: "Poverty and Rural Development in Malaysia" (*Kajian Ekonomi Malaysia*, vol. 1, No. 1, June 1964). The peasant economy of Malaya is "... an economy of poverty and chronic debt, relieved only in years of exceptional prosperity . . . and normally at levels not much above the appalling poverty of most of Asia" (T. H. Silcock: *The Economy of Malaya*, Singapore 1957, p. 1.)
24. For a Philippine example see D. Wurfel: "The Philippines" in G. McT. Kahin (ed.): *Government and Politics of Southeast Asia* (Ithaca 1964), pp. 750-1.
25. For the programme of the Burmese Revolutionary Council's Burma Socialist Program Party, see *The Burmese Way to Socialism* (Rangoon 1962); for a review of agrarian problems in Burma, see: *Narodni Azii i Afriki*, 1965, No. 5; for a discussion of the socialist content of Sukarno's ideas see Jeanne S. Mintz: *op. cit.*; and J. M. Pluvier: *op. cit.*; for an introduction to the Cambodian background (and a bibliography) see R. M. Smith in G. McT. Kahin (ed.): *op. cit.*
26. Even in Malaya, nearly 60 per cent of the population is still engaged in agriculture (E. L. Wheelwright: *Industrialisation in Malaysia*, Melbourne 1965, p. 2).
27. See G. Decker: *Republik Maluku Selatan* (Gottingen 1957), and J. C. Bouman, *et al.*: *The South Moluccas* (Leyden 1960).
28. It is very striking how wealth is concentrated round one or two major cities. This is particularly so with Bangkok in Thailand, but can also be seen in Penang, Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. This point is made by the Thai and Malaysian contributors (Dr. Puey Ungphakorn and Lim Chong Yah) in Cranley Onslow (ed.): *Asian Economic Development* (London 1965), but later ignored in the editor's discussion at the end of the book.
29. See my analysis in *New Society*, 7 September 1965. I am not suggesting here that the communist parties are the only possible vehicles for revolutionary socialism in South East Asia, only that they are at present the best organized and most experienced, and yet are *still* far from power anywhere (outside Vietnam). Alternative revolutionary socialist movements are by comparison hardly visible.
30. See, for example, references to mutual co-operation in M. Swift: *Malay Peasant Society in Jelebu* (London 1965); J. E. de Young: *Village Life in Modern Thailand* (Berkeley and L.A. 1955); G. C. Hickey: *Village in Vietnam* (London 1964); etc.
31. See Seloemardjan: *op. cit.*, pp. 285 *et seq.*
32. I am aware of the exceptions that could be made to this statement.
33. See R. Burling: *Hill Farms and Paddy Fields* (New Jersey 1965), p. 2, *et passim*.
34. See W. Galenson: *Labour in Developing Economies* (Berkeley and L.A., 1962); T. H. Silcock: *Commonwealth Economy in South East Asia* (London

- 1959) for a bibliography on labour organization: Iskandar Tedjasukmana: *The Political Character of the Indonesian Trade Union Movement* (Cornell 1958); Charles Gamba: *The National Union of Plantation Workers* (Singapore 1962); Alex Josey: *Trade Unionism in Malaya* (Singapore 1957); etc.
35. See G. Martinet: *Marxism of our Time* (London 1964), pp. 92 *et seq.* Also K. Nkrumah: *Neo-colonialism* (London 1965), *passim*.
36. There follows a short relevant bibliography of readily available books:
- W. M. Ball: *Nationalism and Communism in East Asia* (Melbourne 1952).
- V. Thompson and R. Adloff: *The Left Wing in Southeast Asia* (New York 1950).
- F. N. Trager *et al.*: *Marxism in Southeast Asia* (1960).
- S. Rose: *Socialism in Southern Asia* (London 1959).
- J. H. Brimmell: *Communism in South East Asia* (London 1959).
- M. Kennedy: *A Short History of Communism in Asia* (New York 1957).
- Alex Josey: *Socialism in Asia* (Singapore 1957).
- W. Kolarz: *Communism and Colonialism* (London 1963).
- A. C. Brackman: *Indonesian Communism* (New York 1963).
- References in these works should enable the reader to move to the relevant articles and basic documents (e.g. the Cambodian Embassy's *Considerations sur le Socialisme Khmer*, Paris 1961).