

was an illegal organisation. Shortly before the capture of Singapore, however, its assistance was accepted in mobilising the Chinese community in the struggle against the Japanese. Members of the Party were trained and armed by the British Military authorities and some escaped to form the nucleus of a resistance movement on the Mainland. During the Japanese occupation, the Party gained control of the main resistance movement, which was supplied by South-East Asia Command; and before the re-occupation of Malaya by British troops, they established some control over important areas of the Mainland.

3. On the liberation of Malaya full recognition was given to the part played by the resistance movement; and an attempt was made to gain the confidence of the leaders of the Communist Party (which was then recognised as a legal association) by inviting their co-operation in the work of rehabilitation. This attempt, however, soon proved impossible; it became clear that the Communists, playing as usual upon the opportunities of economic uncertainty, were attempting to win control largely by intimidation over the labour unions. During 1946 and 1947 the Party made great efforts to gain the support of the workers in rubber and tin, but order was improved and violence by bandit gangs decreased. The Party remained almost wholly a Chinese organisation, although a few Malays and Indians were found among its ranks.

The Communist Attack

4. The attempt to dominate Malayan industrial and political life by fomenting strikes and disrupting the country's economy was frustrated by Government action; and in the spring of this year the Party determined on a new line of attack. A decision was taken to start an armed attack on the authority of Government and on any person, of any community, who took the side of Government. Former members of the Malayan Peoples Anti-Japanese Army were mobilised, and special assassination squads were formed to liquidate those prepared to challenge the Communists. Estate and village populations were intimidated and victimised and numerous outrages and murders were committed. In the first few weeks, the prime objective of the insurgents was the assassination of European planters and plantation and mine staffs in out-lying areas, and the destruction of buildings and stocks on rubber estates, with a view to disrupting the country's economy. The majority of those murdered were Chinese, some were local Kuomintang leaders, but the majority were simply law-abiding persons who would not join with the Communists in their campaign.

5. Since the attacks began in May, 199 civilians, including 14 Europeans, had been murdered up to the end of September; and a number of armed attacks had been carried out by large bodies of men on police stations and isolated mines.

Government Counter Measures

6. Strong measures were taken by Government to meet this further phase of the Communist menace. A state of emergency was proclaimed throughout the Federation, leaders have been arrested for deportation, a large number of suspected persons have been detained for screening, the Communist Party (with three subsidiary organisations) was declared illegal and new regulations affecting Trade Union Organisations were made. The army has been reinforced by the Guards Brigade, the Fourth Hussars and First Inniskillings. The regular police force has