

not happen to them again.⁸⁷

As early as 1969, the emerging MNLF had garnered foreign support to include arms and military training. At first, arms were reportedly from communist sources, particularly China.⁸⁸ Later on, at the height of the MNLF offensive, Libya, Indonesia and Malaysia were identified as possible sources of firearms.⁸⁹ Libya's Qaddafi publicly declared that he had given arms and funds to Muslim dissidents in the Philippines.⁹⁰ No evidence linked Indonesia as a source of arms and Kuala Lumpur denied interference in Philippine affairs.⁹¹ Yet, the first 90 mujahideen, including Misuari and the MNLF's first Central Committee, were given military training in Pulau Pangkor Island, Perak, Malaysia, arriving through Sabah in 1969,⁹² under British tutelage according to one interviewed trainee.⁹³ Then Sabah's Chief Minister Tun Datu Mustapha Harun allowed Sabah to be used as a training camp, supply depot, communications center and sanctuary for the MNLF from 1972 to 1976.⁹⁴

Libya and Sabah/Malaysia were the main but not the only sources of MNLF's foreign support during its early critical years. In particular, small boats equipped with powerful outboard motors ferried arms from Sabah's port of Sandakan to Mindanao. These included Belgian rifles, anti-personnel mines, grenades, plastic explosives, Browning carbines, and tens of thousands rounds of ammunition.⁹⁵ Such hardware reportedly came from "Persian Gulf sheikdoms" using the Sabah government's private jets, and, on occasion, a chartered flight from Pakistan.⁹⁶ According to various

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ T. J. S. George, p. 231.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁹⁰ Nehemia Levtzion, *International Islamic Solidarity and its Limitations* (1979), 28 citing *The Times* (London) (17 August 1972), and *Conflict Studies*, 41 (December 1973).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁹² Sali Wali, "On the Birth of the MNLF," (7 September 1980). He was a member of the MNLF's First Central Committee and wrote this account after he joined the government.

⁹³ Madale, p. 182.

⁹⁴ Che Man, *Muslim Separatism: The Moros of Southern Philippines and the Malays of the Southern Thailand* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1990) p. 139, citing Lela Garner Noble, "Roots of the Bangsa Moro Revolution 4(97) (1983) *Solidarity*, pp. 41, 43.

⁹⁵ T. J. S. George, p. 235.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 236.